

A SACRAMENT SERMON ON LUKE XXII. 20.

This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.—
LUKE XXII. 20.

THE text is a proposition, and there are in it, as in all propositions, two parts—

1. A subject or thing spoken of, *τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον*, *continens pro contento*—the cup for the wine.

2. A predicate, or what is said of it—*It is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*

In which observe—

[1.] The phrase or manner of predication; it is sacramental, such as is ancient and usual, where the name of the thing signified is given to the sign; the wine is the testament; that is, the sign and seal of it.

[2.] A specification of that covenant or testament of which the cup is a sign or seal; it is *καινὴ διαθήκη*, the new testament.

[3.] The ground of both; that is, how the wine cometh to be designed to such a use, or how the testament is said to be new, *ἐν τῷ αἵματι μου*, in or by my blood.

[4.] The amplification of this ground, by two circumstances—

(1.) By the ordination or disposition of his blood, *τὸ ἐκχυνόμενον*, which is shed, so it came to be the ground of the new testament.

(2.) The persons for whom—*ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν*, *For you.*

Doct. That the Lord's supper hath a special respect to the new testament of Christ, which was ratified by the shedding of his blood.

There are four things to be explained in the opening and improving of this point—

(1.) A testament; (2.) A new testament; (3.) This new testament is to be considered as founded on Christ's blood; (4.) The respect which this cup hath to the new testament.

First, That the new covenant hath the notion of a testament. It is not only a covenant, but *διαθήκη*, a testament.

First, In the general, a testament is a man's last will about the disposing of those goods which he leaveth at his death; so is the covenant of grace a free and firm disposition of the mediator's good things, to be possessed by the heirs of promise according to his will. A covenant it is with respect to the manner of agreement; a testament with respect to the manner of confirming it by the testator's death; a covenant in respect of God, a testament in respect of Christ. As it is a covenant, so it is a stipulation between God and his people, promising mercies to them, and requiring duties from them; like a marriage

covenant between a man and his wife, or the testator and the heir. God hath ever delighted in this way of transaction, that he might mix his sovereignty with love and sweetness, and that this solemn obligation might be a help to faith and obedience, as being an indenture solemnly drawn up and agreed between God and us. As it is a testament, so it respects the death of Christ, by which it is ratified. The apostle telleth us, Heb. ix. 16, 17, 'Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.' Men that make a will in their lifetime have a power to change and alter it at their pleasure; it is but *voluntas ambulatoria*, as the civilians say; but when he is once dead, the inheritance is so alienated and transmitted to others that it cannot be reversed; but the heir may challenge his right, and the will must be put in execution. So here, by the death of Christ the new covenant is made firm, valid, and effectual; without which neither we nor the fathers under the law could be saved by it; for God never intended to give remission and eternal life, which he promiseth in the new covenant, but for and in the consideration of Christ's death. Now this notion of a testament hath more of free grace in it. A covenant, in the first notion and apprehension that we have of it, seemeth to have more of debt, but a testament more of grace. A covenant hath more of bargain and compact; therefore we call God's first transaction a covenant of works; but a testament hath more of gift. A testament is merely for their good for whom the testament is made. Legacies are more free than wages; therefore the notion of a testament is only proper to the covenant of grace. We do not call the covenant of works a testament. This in the general.

Secondly, More particularly in the new covenant all things concur that belong to a testament.

1. There is a testator, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. A testator is one that hath a just title and a full power to those goods which he disposeth of, and so giveth the same right which he had in them to other persons after his death. Our Lord Christ had a full right and power over those things he disposed of, as the heir of all things, Heb. i. 2; and by virtue of his purchase, according to the pact and agreement between the Father and him, which is set down Isa. liii. 10, 11. By the covenant of redemption Christ was bound to lay down his life as an offering for sin; and then the Father would make him a fountain of grace, life, and peace to poor sinners. The death of Christ cometh under a twofold consideration, according to the twofold relation which he sustaineth, as an act of a mediator or a testator. Consider God's transaction with us as a covenant, so he is a mediator; as a testament, so he is the testator. As mediator, so his death was a meritorious ransom or price, to purchase the inheritance and to expiate the offences of the heir. As a testator, so his death was necessary to make the covenant valid, and the blessings of the new covenant in force. For as the testator hath no intention to give his inheritance, and part with the title and possession before he die, so God did never intend to give remission and eternal life but with respect to Christ's death; and if Christ had not died, the promise had been vain, and of

no force. Remission of sins and eternal life could not have been given under the law, unless the mediator had been to pay the price of the same under the gospel, neither could believers either then or now obtain any benefit but by his death.

2. There is a writing, or an instrument, and deed of conveyance, disposed into a testamentary form, written and sealed, for the assurance, comfort, and benefit of the heirs of promise, and they are the scriptures which, by the catholic and general consent of all the christian world, are called the Old and New Testament, because therein Christ hath disposed and bequeathed what he hath purchased for us. To this writing we must have recourse, as the ground of our hope, right, and claim. All the books written since Christ's coming in the flesh bear this title in the front, and are called *καυή διαθήκη*; and the whole drift of those books is to set down the death of Christ as a testator, and to seal up the great inheritance of eternal life to every faithful christian, as the son and heir of Christ, and to state the terms according to which we enter ourselves heirs. Ministers of the gospel are called ministers of the new testament, 2 Cor. iii. 6. Their great work is to bring souls to mind and seek after Christ's legacies. Sometimes the gospel may be looked upon as an act of oblivion, as it offereth pardon and justification to all who in a sense of sin and fear of wrath flee unto Christ, and putting their cause into his hands, do give up themselves to do the will of God. Sometimes it is called a charter, as it holdeth forth the hope of eternal life to the justified and the sanctified. But in a respect it is a testament or deed of gift, to assure the believing world, and to encourage them with confidence, to lay claim unto righteousness and eternal life, as heirs of Christ, and to seek after the fruits of his purchase in this life, and the full possession in the life to come. The gospel is our law security; therefore it is said, John xx. 31, 'But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name.' This is the drift of the whole gospel.

3. There are notaries, and they are prophets and apostles, who by the Spirit indited and drew up this testament. Therefore it is said, Eph. ii. 20, 'Ye are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone;' that is to say, Christ is placed and laid as the foundation of our comfort and hope in the doctrines and writings of the apostles and prophets; they did commit to writing such truths concerning him as are necessary to salvation. So it is said, Eph. iii. 4-6, 'How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery which I writ before in few words (whereby ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the gentiles should be fellow-heirs of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel;' that is, that they might draw up Christ's testament.

4. There are legacies left us by our Lord Jesus Christ in this blessed testament; they are pardon of sin, favour with God, grace, life, glory, all things that are necessary to our blessedness. God's covenant notion is God all-sufficient.

But more especially two legacies are more notable, which imply the rest—the one initial, the other consummate.

[1.] Pardon of sins. This is expressly mentioned in the parallel place to the text, Mat. xxvi. 28, 'This is the blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' This is the great legacy which Christ hath left to his redeemed people when he made the covenant. It was sin that plunged us into mischief, and cut us off from the favour of God, and did forbid all further and longer communion with God and enjoyment of him. Therefore this is that which is in Christ's eye, to obtain the pardon of sins: Eph. i. 7, 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;' and Col. i. 14, 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.' This is *gratia removens prohibens*. Sin was the wrong done to God, that brought such a loss upon us of God's favour, image, and fellowship. This Christ came to remove, by repairing God's honour, and giving satisfaction to provoked justice.

[2.] The next great legacy is eternal life, which he bequeathed and disposeth to the heirs of promise: Luke xxii. 29, 30, 'And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my Father's kingdom;' and John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me may be where I am, and behold my glory.' Sin is our great trouble, happiness our great desire. The grand scruple of the world was to have their fears quenched by the expiation of guilt, and their desires satisfied by the enjoyment of a fit happiness. These are the legacies left us by our Lord.

5. There are terms according to which these legacies are to be enjoyed. The new covenant is so a testament that it still remaineth a covenant, copulatively, not privatively, a testamentary covenant; while it provideth for our comfort and safety, it doth not abolish our duty; it requireth something from us, as well as bestoweth something upon us—*etiam hæreditates habent sua onera*, &c. Men may put conditions into their wills and testaments; therefore the sacramental form doth not disannul our obligation. The conditions are faith, repentance, and new obedience. Faith: Rom. iii. 25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' Repentance: Acts. iii. 19, 'Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' New obedience: Heb. v. 9, 'He is become the author of salvation to all them that obey him.' Only I must give you this caution, that all things required of us as conditions and duties are also disposed as legacies in the covenant: Jer. xxiv. 7, 'I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.' So Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27, 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them;' and Zech. xii. 10, 'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon him whom they have

pierced, and mourn for him.' This is the proper intent of a testament, that certain unspeakable gifts are designed unto us antecedently to all conditions performed by us; as Christ giveth himself to us, bestowing the first grace. Conditions of the covenant are conditions in the covenant. God doth not only bestow them, but give them. The articles are promises: Heb. viii. 10, 'For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.' Not only privileges, but qualifications. He requireth them so as we may be sensible of our obligation, and acknowledge our duty so as to strive to do our utmost in the use of means, and turn these precepts into prayers, and it is our act at last; and some of this we must find in us before we can take comfort. What he requireth he promises to bestow. God is no Pharaoh, to require brick where he giveth no straw; he giveth us not only pardon, but faith; not only heaven, but holiness; and giveth a new heart as well as the new Jerusalem.

6. There are heirs: Gal. iii. 29, 'And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise;' and Rom. viii. 17, 'If children, then heirs.' The blessing of Christ's testament is no common thing cast abroad at random. There are certain persons to whom it doth belong, others to whom not. None are described by name, but by character, which is as good as if described by name; and which character must be interpreted exclusively. Compare John xvii. 9 with 20, 'I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe.' Christ hath left nothing to the carnal world in this testament, but all believers are comprised. As to the wicked, there is not only a preterition, but a positive exclusion. A preterition is a sufficient bar against any man's testament, because he is not named in the will, nor designed to any favour by it; but the carnal and the wicked are excluded: Ps. l. 16, 'As to the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to do to take my covenant into thy mouth?' and Acts viii. 21, 'Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.' But let us see how the heirs of promise are described. Sometimes by God's election and the appointment of God, who, in his unchangeable counsel, designeth the heirs of promise: John vi. 37, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast off;' and Luke xii. 32, 'Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a kingdom.' Christ's testament is made in compliance with God's decrees; but because this is a secret not known till afterward, therefore the heirs of promise are described in the gospel or testament itself, Heb. vi. 18. There you have one description, 'Who have fled for refuge to take hold of the hope that is set before us;' those who, being chased by the terrors of the law (as the man that was guilty of casual homicide was by the avenger of blood at his heels), do take sanctuary at the Lord's grace in Christ, and are resolved to continue there, waiting for his mercy unto eternal life. Sometimes they are described to be 'the called:' Heb. ix. 15, 'That they which are called might receive the promise of eternal

inheritance.' The heirs of the new testament are the called. Some are not called at all, as the gentiles, to whom the gospel is not preached. Some are called, but refuse or neglect to accept of this grace; as they that were bidden to the marriage of the king's son made light of it: Mat. xxii. 5, 'So many are called, but few are chosen.' Others seem to bind themselves to the observation of the covenant, but do not indeed come under the bond of it. Others are called, and are obedient to the heavenly call; they that choose the things that please God, and take hold of the covenant, Isa. lvi. 4. These are heirs, the effectually called. Again, they are described by their dedication to Christ: 1 Cor. iii. 23, 'All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ's is God's.' As Jesus Christ gave up himself to God, humbled himself to do all the work of God; so they to Christ: 'To them to live is Christ.' Sometimes by their sanctification: Acts. xx. 32, 'To give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified;' and Acts xxvi. 18, 'That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith.' Faith, as it beginneth in brokenness of heart, so it must end in holiness of life, or else we have no title to the inheritance. Such as are washed from the filth of their corruptions by the blood of the new testament: John xiii. 8, 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me;' and 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'But now ye are washed, but now ye are sanctified.' Now some of these descriptions agree to the lowest degree of grace; others include a more perfect measure. Let not poor sinners think themselves excluded from the testament of Christ if they have not such a measure of grace as others. If they cannot make out their title by their holiness, they should by their brokenness of heart; if not by the bold challenge of faith, yet by their humble plea. There are fathers, and young men, and babes in Christ; even babes have their share in Christ's testament: 1 John ii. 12, 'I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.' The qualification is sometimes laid down to suit with the strongest, tallest christian, sometimes with the weakest, because Christ's testament was intended for the use of little children as well as for fathers and young men. If you run for refuge, if you receive Christ as offered in the gospel, if you resolve to please God, and take hold of his covenant, these are the characters of the heirs of promise.

7. There are seals, which are the sacraments; in this text, 'This cup is the new testament;' that is, the sign and seal of it. It must be understood sacramentally, for properly the new testament implieth higher legacies than the sacramental cup. But you must expound it as other sacramental phrases are expounded; as see the like; circumcision is called God's covenant, Gen. xvii. 10. 'That in the 11th verse is meant a token of the covenant; so ver. 13, 'My covenant shall be in your flesh;' that is, the sign of it. The apostle explaineth all this: Rom. iv. 11, 'And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith.' It is a sealing sign appointed by God to make us truly and really sure of our right to Christ's death and blood shed, and all the benefits purchased thereby. It is a confirming sign, not to infidels, but believers. To infidels miracles are for a sign, 1 Cor. xiv. 22; but to believers the ordinances of the gospel, as they excite

our faith by the eye, more to mind and regard the grace contained in the testament itself.

8. There are witnesses of this testament. The witnesses from heaven are the 'Father, Word, and Spirit;' and the witnesses on earth, 'the Spirit, the water, and blood;' the one external, the other internal; the one of the truth of the gospel, the other of our interest, as well as the truth of the things themselves.

[1.] The witnesses from heaven: 1 John v. 7, 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.' the blessed Trinity, that Jesus is the Son of God and the saviour of the world, in whom all our confidence should be placed, and on whom we should leave the weight of our souls. God seeketh no farther amends for all our wrongs, nor other price for what we need. The Father, Word, and Spirit witness this. The Word, that is Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God, whom the apostle calleth the Word. The Father witnessed by an audible voice from heaven when Christ was baptized: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;' which was given very solemnly, in a great congregation of people, and divinely with great glory and majesty. Again renewed before Peter, James, and John, at Christ's transfiguration, Mat. xvii. 5, upon which Peter pleadeth the truth of the gospel covenant: 2 Peter i. 16, 17, 'For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' That God approved Christ and the work he was going about, the Word gave testimony to this, not by naked affirmations, but in his doctrine and miracles, 'that he that believeth on him shall be saved.' He hath expressed his Father's mind to the world, and his own office in fulfilling it, that there should be no doubt of it. The Holy Ghost witnessed also at his baptism, resurrection, ascension, at the effusion or descent upon the apostles, that still the world hath fuller confirmation: Acts v. 32, 'And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.'

[2.] The witnesses on earth. The Spirit, the water, and the blood, these agree in one; they are not one as the former were, 1 John v. 8. This is internal, ver. 10. The work of regeneration of the soul by the power of the Word and Spirit is signified by water. The work of justification of guilty souls by the blood of Jesus Christ, and the testimony of the Spirit bearing witness to our spirits, is an assured testimony that Jesus Christ, whom we believe, is the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The changing, pacifying, converting, and comforting of souls crieth aloud that Jesus Christ, in whom we believe, is the true and living God, whom to know and believe is eternal life. The great work of applying all the privileges of the saints, and making them actual partakers of the blessings of Christ's death, is committed to the Holy Ghost. All agree in this, that Jesus Christ is a sure refuge for sinners; that that was without us is now within us, transcribed by the Spirit of grace upon our hearts.

Secondly, We are not only to consider a testament, but a new

testament. For the understanding of this, note that Christ made his testament two ways—

1. One in typical promises under the law, before he came in the flesh; and so in types and figures he died as it were, and was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, Rev. xiii. 8.

2. The other after his incarnation, in plain and clear terms, when he fulfilled the types, actually laid down his life; then it was as a closed, sealed will, now it is an open one. In short, these two testaments differ in three things—in excellency, clearness, and efficacy.

[1.] In excellency. We have better promises and better ordinances. Better promises: Heb. viii. 6, 'But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises.' Though in effect they were the same, yet now more spiritual. The first testament had a greater mixture of temporal promises; and in the importance of it, it more concerned this life. Their hell was Egypt, their heaven was Canaan, their eternity was long life, their salvation was temporal deliverance, their gladness was the affluence of worldly comforts and blessings. The promises then were clogged with more conditions. And also better ordinances. The first testament was a dispensation full of dark and painful and chargeable rites; all the services tended rather to stir up brokenness of heart than faith, and signified the death of the sinner more clearly than the death of a saviour and redeemer; and as much as they presignified a redeemer, they typed out his person rather than our benefit. None but the priest could enter within the vail; the way to the holy place was not yet open. The priest could only eat of the sin-offering, Lev. vi. 26. The priest was only to eat what is offered for the people's sins: eating implieth union, to show the death of the sacrifice should become the death of the priest himself. The priest became one with the beast slain; but now sinners eat the sin-offering, feed upon the sacrifice. It is notable that neither priest nor people could eat of the sin-offering for the whole congregation. This social communion was reserved for the gospel. God and they would not eat at one table, lest they should think their communion full and perfect without us, Lev. xvii. 11, 12. Blood was forbidden upon this very ground, because given upon the altar for the remission of sins. Now this is the reason why we are bidden to drink of it: Mat. xxvi. 27, 'Drink ye all of it; for this is the blood of the new testament, which is given for the remission of sins.' It is not the blood of the old testament, but the new. In short, so much as the blood of Christ doth excel the blood of the sacrifices, and as far as heaven is above the earthly sanctuary, and men's souls above the vessels thereof, so far doth our covenant exceed. We have better promises, more comfortable ordinances; the new covenant is set forth with new signs; there needeth nothing to complete it but new hearts.

[2.] In clearness. All was dark and obscure then; there was the blood of lambs, and goats, and other sacrifices. Christ's death was then exhibited but in types and figures. The promise of laying down his life was then accepted in the old testament; the actual performance is in the new. He was then slain in figure. The doctrine of the Trinity was not clearly known, nor the incarnation, death, and resur-

rection of Christ, union with Christ, and the recompense of reward, and the saints' resting-place. God did not so familiarly reveal himself as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'But now we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

[3.] In efficacy. Grace was not amply and largely given forth; the promise of the Spirit was the benefit of gospel times, Acts ii. Grace was but sparingly given out, as it were upon trust; now there is a fuller gospel grace.

Thirdly, This new covenant is founded upon Christ's blood. God would have this satisfaction before he would give out grace, that justice might be satisfied as well as mercy glorified. The blood of Christ is the ransom of our souls, the price of our pardon and peace, the foundation of all that grace we expect from God. This expiatheth sin, merits the gospel covenant and the Spirit to apply it, or grace to enable men to receive the inheritance. In short, the death of Christ is the foundation, life, and soul of the new covenant, which we come to remember in this sacrament.

Fourthly, The respect which the cup or the Lord's supper hath to the new testament.

1. It doth more particularly excite and bind us to look after the blessed legacies of this new testament. In the word the offer of grace is more general, God speaks promiscuously to all; but in the sacraments it is personally applied; every one cometh, man by man, to take hold of God's covenant. The object revealed in the word is like the brazen serpent that was exposed to the eyes of all without difference and distinction, that whosoever had need, and looked upon it, should be healed; but the object propounded in the sacrament is like the sprinkling of the door-posts with blood to assure that house of safety. Those things that are propounded generally should affect all, for none is excluded; but those things that concern us more expressly do more excite us, for we are not only not excluded, but warned to look after them. In the word there is an invitation, but in the sacrament a closer touch and application: Acts ii. 38, 'Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'

2. Here is a crucified Christ represented to us as in a glass, Gal. iii. 1. Bread and wine are appointed to this use. Now, his death is the life of our souls, and his sufferings are the feast of our souls, they being the price of our peace and reconciliation with God. The same flesh which was given to God for sacrifice is given to us for food; the blood given to God for atonement, and to us for refreshment: Job vi. 51, 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.'

3. We profess a union between us and Christ; for as these things are turned into our substance, become one with us, so doth Christ with our souls; John vi. 56, 'He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him.' The penitent, hungry, and

believing soul feedeth upon him, and receiveth strength and life from him.

4. By this ordinance the grant of remission of sins and life eternal is confirmed and sealed to us. As there are certain formalities of law which make any deed or conveyance of law authentic, so by this solemn way do we enter into possession of Christ and his benefits. The promise is sealed by these visible rites, which imply that as really as our bodies receive the bread and wine which represents, so do we receive, Christ and all his benefits.

5. It is an ordinance that is accompanied with the special presence of the Spirit. All gospel ordinances are the ministration of the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 18. We cannot but expect a blessing upon the use of God's instituted means. It is the great intent of this duty: 1 Cor. xii. 13, 'We have been all made to drink into one Spirit,' *ἐποτίσθημεν εἰς ἓν πνεῦμα*. He cometh especially to apply to our souls the benefits of redemption, and to excite faith and love in us, and to fill our hearts with life and comfort.

Use. You have heard of a confirmed, sealed testament; and this a new testament, where the ordinances are accommodated to a more spiritual help; and this founded in the blood of your Redeemer, who by his death hath merited your reconciliation with God; and all this represented, sealed, and exhibited to you in this duty. Oh! then, mind your work, and go about it advisedly.

1. As it is a testament.

[1.] Have you entered yourselves as heirs to Christ's testament? You may be children of the kingdom, and yet cast out; pray, preach; Mat. vii. 23: eat and drink in his presence: Luke xiii. 26, 'Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets; but he shall say, I know you not whence you are,' &c. O the cursed estate of them that are out of Christ, that have no part and portion in this testament! The only evidence is, if we have received Christ as offered in the gospel: 1 John v. 12, 'He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life;' and John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' We first receive him in the promise before we receive him in the sacrament. Do you so receive him as to be willing to give up yourselves to God by him? Many have had an offer of Christ, but never yet had a heart to receive him. The offer hath been fruitless through their negligence and disesteem of heavenly things: Mat. xxii. 5, 'They made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.' Others there are that give a rash consent. *consensus temerarius*; they do not consider what it is to receive Christ; they are willing in generals, unwilling in particulars. Or else there is *consensus de futuro*, hereafter; they are willing to mind their soul's health when sick, or when they come to die. There is *consensus involuntarius*, such a consent as a person would not yield unto if he were in an estate of liberty; when frightened and forced into a little religiousness, when in distress, then they would have Christ by all means; or else there is a partial consent to the benefits of Christ without subjection to him, or a feeble consent which is easily controlled. You

must consent without exceptions and reserves; you must entirely resign yourselves to him with a full, hearty, entire consent; there must be an accepting of Christ as offered to us in the gospel with his benefits, or a consenting that he be ours and we his. This is true willingness, all things considered, when you have considered his strict laws, and made allowance for incident temptations and difficulties.

[2.] Challenge your right, lay claim to the blessings of the covenant, as children do to their estates left them in a testament sealed. Bring forth and produce the written testament of your dying Mediator before the court of God's justice, and by faith plead the benefit of the inheritance, sue out the legacies. Let not the testament of Christ lie by as useless; say, Lord, I am a guilty sinner that deserveth to be sealed up under a curse; but, Lord, thou hast sent thy Son to save poor sinners; he died and gave his life a ransom for many, offereth grace in the gospel, and now hath condescended to my weakness so far as to give me visible security.

[3.] Bind yourselves to the Lord anew. When you renew a covenant, you must not only lay claim to privileges, but bind yourselves to the duties of it: Deut. xxvii. 9, 10, 'And Moses and the priests, the Levites, spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God; thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments and statutes, which I command thee this day;' and Deut. xxvi. 17, 18, 'Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes and his commandments and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice; and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments.' We are said to enter into the bond of the holy oath, Isa. lvi. 4. Then we take hold of his covenant when we choose the things that please him, and resolve upon that holy, spiritual, and heavenly life that he hath required of us; do not take them up upon some sudden motion, sinister respects, or base ends; but out of due consideration, and in judgments rightly informed, and out of affection and choice. Ps. xxv. 10, 'All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to such as keep his covenant and testimonies.' None but they that make conscience of obedience do partake of the benefits of his promises. The mercies of the Lord remembered and challenged should invite us to this, Rom. xii. 1, and 1 Cor. v. 16. This duty bindeth us. David complained that his familiar friend, that ate at his table, did lift up his heel against him. God admits us to his table to show that he and we are agreed; after offences will be aggravated by this. When God in the gospel bids you take Jesus Christ, and be reconciled to him, if you answer, Lord, I am willing, I will accept of Christ, and be thankful, the match is made, when the will is effectually inclined to Christ, and to God the Father by him.

2. As it is a new covenant, God expecteth you should be more holy, and that there should be a more free spirit, more holy. Things that grow in the shadow cannot be so kindly as those that grow under the sunshine. We read of great graces in the saints; then

let us be ashamed that we are no better, much more that we are worse than the people of God that lived under the first testament. We should serve God in newness of the Spirit, Rom. vii. 6. Our worship should be more serious and delightful, our obedience more spiritual, our hopes more lively and strong, our joy more overflowing. Secondly, Our filial freedom should be greater, as we have more of the gospel spirit: Rom. viii. 15, 'For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.' God expecteth greater liberty of spirit; we have the spirit of adoption more plentifully poured out. All things under the first covenant did press to servile fear and bondage of spirit; now we are acted more by a spirit of love. Our experience of the efficacy of the gospel should be larger, our fixed notedness greater in all, to have something like the better testament.
