

Our rose may prove a nettle with him, our gold mere brass, and our spices very dung when God looks upon us.

3. Consider that self is an incompetent judge in its own case; and therefore you, that are to endure God's judgment, should not stand merely to the judgment of self. If your own heart acquit you, you cannot rest upon that; you can find no evil in the action, but God can: 1 Cor. iv. 4, 'For I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord.' Alas! though your heart cannot charge you with anything, yet God can; and if your hearts condemn you, God may much more, for he knows us better than ourselves: 1 John iii. 20, 'For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.'

SERMON V.

Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.—MARK x. 21.

IN this verse is contained the fourth and last part of the conference between our Saviour and this young man. Observe here—

1. The gesture and carriage of our Lord Christ towards him, 'Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him.'

2. The answer he gives him; in which there is—

[1.] An admonition of his defect, 'One thing thou lackest.'

[2.] A precept and injunction, which is twofold—particular and general.

(1.) Particular, for the trial of this young man, where is the duty, 'Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.' And the motive or promise, 'And thou shalt have treasure in heaven.' The precept is particular, but backed with a general promise.

(2.) General, 'Come, take up the cross, and follow me.' These are the parts; let us insist upon them as they offer themselves.

Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him.—This clause hath troubled many interpreters, how Jesus could love this young man, who seemed to be so full of pride, and self-conceit, and whose heart was so addicted to worldly riches, that when he knew Christ's mind, he went away from him sad: but there need not so great ado about the matter. To open it, two things will be necessary to show you the cause of this love, and the kind of it, why, and how he loved him.

1. Why he loved him. Surely it was not for his outward feature, or external compliment. Christ's love was never set upon these things; but his goodness of disposition, moral integrity, and ingenuity, that was the reason why he loved him.

2. Now for the kind of this love. Christ, you know, had two natures in him, and accordingly we may distinguish of his love and affection;

there is the divine love and the human love of Christ, as he was God, and as he was man.

[1.] If you interpret it of his divine love, the difficulty will not be great; for there is a general and common love, and a special love. With the first, God loves all his creatures, especially mankind, and amongst them those that have any strictures of his image in them more than others. But then there is a special love, and so all those are saved whom God thus loveth. So God loveth his own people, either with a love of good-will when they are uncalled: Jer. xxxi. 3, 'Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love;' or else with a love of complacency, when called and converted: Zeph. iii. 17, 'He will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love.' Now this will easily salve the matter; there was a general love, or a liking and approbation of those moral virtues and good things which he saw in him, but not that special love which brings grace and salvation along with it. But—

[2.] Let us consider Christ as man, and so speak of his human love. Jesus Christ, as he took our nature, so he had the same affections and aversations that we have; and therefore as man he loved his parents, his kindred, his nation, his friends and acquaintance in their several relations. Some there were with whom he contracted a more special friendship; as Lazarus: John xi. 3, 'Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick.' He loved Lazarus in a special manner, as a singular good man. So also his two sisters: ver. 5, 'And Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.' And John is called the 'disciple whom Jesus loved,' chap. xiii. 23. Christ in his own practice would sanctify holy friendship, and therefore it pleased him as man to have a special human love to some above others. Once more, there were others whom he loved with a larger love, as they had more or less of good in them, as this young man for his good nature and blameless life: 'Jesus, beholding him, loved him;' that is, showed some signs of inclination towards him.

Now this was either a love of courtesy or a love of pity.

(1.) A love of courtesy and respect. Origen interprets it, he kissed him, or showed him some outward sign of favour. Indeed if the word had been *ἐφίλησεν*, it might have been interpreted so; but the word is *ἡγάπησεν*. Others, more generally, he treated him kindly. So this word sometimes is taken for courteous speech, as Grotius and other great critics in the Greek tongue observe. He loved him, that is, spoke friendly and kindly to him. So in Homer, *χαίρε, ξένη, παρ' ἄμμι-φιλῆς*—Welcome guest, you shall be loved by us; that is, friendly entreated or received. And so again, he excuseth himself that he did not love him as soon as he saw him at first, that is, did not treat him so kindly; so Jesus loved him, that is, treated him with kindness.

(2.) A love of pity, pitying him who had done so much to so little purpose, who lost the benefit of all he did by a vain opinion of his own righteousness. As we pity moderate papists, sober Turks, or infidels, so Jesus Christ might love him with a love of pity. Well, then, it was a love of human affection, as one man loves another for his good qualities; not a love of familiarity and friendship, but either a love of courtesy or pity, seeing a man so young, so rich, so powerful,

and in so great corruption of manners had kept himself so blameless; this was that for which Jesus loved him.

I observe two points of doctrine from hence—

Doct. 1. There may be some amiable and good qualities in unregenerate men.

Here was a young man without saving grace, yet of a moral conversation, and as touching the externals of the law blameless.

Now, that there may be such good qualities in them, appears thus—

1. All are created with some inclination to good, though not to good spiritual, yet to good natural and moral. In our decayed condition there are some remainders of right reason, some impressions of equity, some principles of common honesty still left and preserved in us, though as to spiritual endowments, 'We are altogether become filthy and abominable,' Ps. xiv. 2; yet some moral inclinations are left, to show what human nature once was; as in a rifled palace, though the rich furniture be gone, the plate and the jewels, and though the fashion of it be much spoiled, yet some of the fabric is left still standing, to show what a magnificent structure it once was. Nature teacheth to deal justly with all, and startles and looks ghastly at some kind of abominations. The dictates of morality and common right are very legible in our conscience: 'The gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law,' Rom. ii. 14. As Job's messengers said, every one of them, 'I alone am escaped to tell thee,' so there are some principles of conscience that are left, and escaped out of the ruins of the fall, to warn us of our duty, and to make us give back at monstrous and gross impieties, and to leave us without excuse. Though men be born in sin, and are dead to all spiritual good, yet some restraints are left still upon nature, lest man should not show himself to be man.

2. For the good of mankind. God is the patron of human society, and delights in the welfare and preservation of it. He created not man, as he did the angels, to live several and independent from one another. We are all multiplied and propagated from one original root, that we might live in mutual society, and converse with one another. It is observed that ravenous and noxious creatures live single and apart, but the useful in herds and flocks; so man was made by nature a sociable creature. Now, there would be no such thing as human society if there were not some sweetness of nature and moral dispositions yet left in us. The world would be but one great forest of wild beasts if God had not left some authority in conscience to keep men within the bounds of honesty. And therefore, to uphold order in the world, there must be some amiable qualities; even in the unregenerate or corrupt state, some are more innocent and unblamable than others. I will set it forth by this similitude: As Nebuchadnezzar, when he carried the princes and chief men into captivity out of the land of Judea, he left some of the people behind him to till the land, lest it became a wilderness, so, that the world might not become a forest of wild beasts, there are some that observe the common dictates of nature, that men might be commodious and useful one to another; for did not these impressions bear sway, the world could not subsist, nor justice and honesty be maintained.

3. There are other things besides renewing grace that might cause these amiable qualities.

[1.] Bodily temper may incline men to some good. We see some are of a rougher temper, and others of a sweeter disposition. Some are soft, smooth, and docile, others stiff and stubborn. The scripture takes notice of the different dispositions of Esau and Jacob : Gen. xxv. 27, 'Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents.' Look, as blades, though all are made of the same metal, yet they differ much in goodness by reason of the temper, so there is a great deal of difference between men and men by reason of the temper of their bodies; some are ingenuous and shamefaced, and not so easily drawn to outrage and sin, but others are of a baser alloy. The complexion of the soul doth very much follow the constitution of the body, and therefore some are better natured and tempered than others, so that there may be amiable qualities in them, and yet without grace.

[2.] The increase of one sin may cause others to decrease, as a wen that grows big and monstrous defrauds other parts of their nourishment. Though all sin be kindly to a natural heart, yet some sins are more apt to take the throne, and other lusts are starved to feed that. As for instance, he that is covetous, by the force of his covetousness and parsimony is made an enemy to prodigality and a friend to frugality; as Judas, that loved the bag, was against profuseness and wastefulness, John xii. 5, 6. A prodigal man is not covetous, and so more prone to be liberal and free-hearted. A profane man is an enemy of superstition, and loves to be moderate and indifferent in religion. A superstitious man hates profaneness, and lays out his zeal upon every little trifle that can lay claim to religion, and so he may seem to be a greater friend to zeal. A voluptuary hates despair and morosity, and is more sociable and friendly in converse. Thus, as weeds destroy one another, so do many vices; so many vices occasion something that is amiable. Ambition makes men diligent, sober, and vigilant to improve their opportunities.

[3.] It may be occasioned partly by discipline and strict education, or else the miseries and calamities of the present life; for these things, though they do not mortify sin, yet they may much weaken and hinder the discovery of it. Solomon often tells us of the force of education, and that the rod of correction gets a great deal of folly out of the heart of children: Prov. xxii. 15, 'Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction driveth it far from him;' and as they grow up in years, God takes them into his own discipline. Pharaoh is devout under his plagues, and Ahab under a severe threatening walks softly. God's correction may work some commendable qualities in them.

[4.] By politic government, and laws which keep men within the bounds of their duty, so that they are orderly by constraint, and for fear of penalty, which, if they should follow their pleasure in sinning, they would be exposed to. Austin saith, *Leges humane munditoria instrumenta sunt*. He compares laws to brooms, which though they cannot make corn of weeds or of chaff, yet they serve to sweep in the corn, and keep it within the floor. Laws may make men good subjects,

though not good men. As Seneca tells us, the heathens observed many things; they may do many things, *Non tanquam diis grata sed tanquam legibus jussa, magis ad morem quam ad rem*; not as pleasing God, but as required by the law; not for the thing, but for the fashion; they may be very harmless, put on a face of goodness, but it is not out of conscience; the magistrate makes them so, who is 'the minister of God for good,' Rom. xiii. 4.

[5.] Unregenerate men may be translated from the grammar school of nature to the university of grace; and though they never commence there, and took the degree of true sanctification, yet they may come very near it by common grace, and may not be far from the kingdom of God. This may be by the efficacy of the word, which is very persuasive and pressing. Take it as it works only in a moral way; as Herod heard John Baptist, 'and did many things, and heard him gladly,' Mark vi. 20. Or else they may have this common grace by experience of the providence of God over the church or themselves; when they see God's interest stands out against all assaults: Ps. cxxix. 1, 2, 'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, now may Israel say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, yet have they not prevailed against me.' When they observe that all those that dash against the corner-stone are broken in pieces, that many good men, though molested and troubled, yet visibly have a blessing and a providence that attends them, and that the profane are overtaken in their sins by pursuing judgments, that it is never better with them than when they own that which is good, this cannot but move them to something that is amiable to some sense of religion, and siding with the better party. Or they may have the common gifts of the Spirit, Heb. vi. 4, 5; they may be enlightened, may have gifts of prayer and preaching; some vanishing tastes of the goodness and sweetness of evangelical doctrine, some motions and impulsions, and excitations to good. These are the reasons.

Use 1. It shows us how inexcusable they are in the sight of God, and how just their condemnation will be, that have nothing lovely in them. Certainly they might have had something or other lovely in them, even while they were natural, if they would give their heart to it; either wisdom or valour, meekness or zeal, humility or charity. Every temper yieldeth some way and means of glorifying God; and it is their own fault if they have not some endowment or other. I speak this not as to spiritual grace only, which they do not only neglect, but reject the means whereby to get it; they put away the word of God from them, shut the door upon themselves: Acts xiii. 46, 'Ye put the word from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life;' and esteem spiritual grace nothing worth, yea, it is folly to them: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Yea, they think it as dishonourable and prejudicial to them. But also in respect of moral endowments, I say certainly some crown or other they might have, if they did not uncrown themselves by sin. Natural men may have brave wits, but they besot themselves, and quench them in luxury and riot, and pervert those moral inclinations, those seeds of God that were in their nature, while they

drink, whore, and play away their consciences. There are none but have a conscience till they get the victory of it, and smother it, and outgrow the feelings and checks of it, and lose all sense : Eph. iv. 19, 'Who being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.' They might have lived virtuously and morally, till they brought upon themselves the tyranny of evil custom, and then no wonder if they are wholly given up to sensual lusts, and to walk in a sinful way. They have lost all former advantages, they have spoiled their natural temper, they have lost the benefit of their education, despised instruction, and the discipline of parents, lived in defiance of laws, 'received the grace of God in vain,' 2 Cor. vi. 1. In a word, they have slighted God's judgments, quenched their gifts, checked the motions of God's Spirit. Therefore certainly they are altogether without excuse that out-sin these helps. Natural conscience, temper, education, laws, ordinances, providences, and the Spirit's motions, they are all helps, and God forsakes men in none of these till they first forsake him, and by some notable sin provoke him to withdraw such helps ; and therefore what will you say for yourselves that have not any of these amiable qualities and moral endowments ? Will you say you would fain be better, but cannot ? That cannot be, for many of these amiable qualities are found in natural men, and you have had many helps and advantages either to get or increase them in your souls. If many moral heathens go to hell that had not half those helps, and yet were exemplary in so many amiable qualities, what will become of you, if you refuse all the helps which God hath vouchsafed to you in his providence, and yet run into enormous evils ?

Use 2. If there may be amiable qualities in unregenerate men, then do not rest in these things : Mat. v. 46, 'If you love them that love you, what reward have you ? do not even the publicans the same ?' and ver. 47, *τί περισσόν*, 'What do you more than others ?' What over and above ? A natural man may have all these. You may live orderly, and yet if you have not faith you cannot please God : Heb. xi. 6, 'For without faith it is impossible to please God.' You may be blameless, yet if you be not born again, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven : John iii. 3, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Therefore do not rest in this, that you have some good qualities which are amiable and praiseworthy before God and men, but labour for the sanctifying virtue of God's Spirit, and the power of godliness, that you may be 'partakers of the divine nature,' 2 Peter i. 4 ; for if thy heart be not yet truly changed, thy person may be odious to God. It is not mine, but the advice of Jesus Christ, 'Make the tree good, and his fruit good,' Mat. xii. 33. A man may carry the fruits of Canaan, as the spies did, upon a dry staff ; but learn to bear them from a living root. To be harmless, meek, chaste, just, temperate, all this is good ; but it is much better when they flow from a renewed heart ; then they are gracious evidences to you. A good nature without grace makes a fair show with the world, but it is of little respect with God as to your salvation. All this may be from temper and awe of men. How may a man mistake a still nature for meekness, fervency and height of spirit for zeal, want of affection to holy things for discretion, stupidity for patience, obstinacy for constancy !

But God knows how to distinguish. Will complexion and temper ever pass for grace in God's account? And usually if a natural man hath one good quality, he hath another bad one to match it. It is observed in history of Alexander, that he was an enemy to uncleanness, but extremely given to drunkenness. Julius Cæsar was not given to drunkenness, but exceedingly addicted to uncleanness. Natural men, if they have their amiable qualities, they have some domineering bad quality to match them. Nay, a good nature once corrupted doth prove the worst of all others, as the sweetest wine makes the tartest vinegar. Augustus¹ at first was of a good merciful nature. Suetonius observes of him that he was at first loath to consent to the persecution, but when he was once in, he was more inexorable and merciless than the rest of his companions. None have done more vile things against God and the interest of God than men accounted of a good nature, when once the temptation hath prevailed upon them. Herod Agrippa was a sweet-natured popular man, but he slew James, and would have slain Peter also, Acts xii. 1, 2, and all out of easiess and facility, to please the people. Usually none fall sooner into the snare of persecution and hatred of the saints of God than they; and the reason is, counsel is of great advantage upon those that are of a pliant and pleasing disposition, and all their parts and excellences are but like a sword in a cutler's shop, as ready for the thief as the true man to purchase. He is easily made a prey to Satan and turned against God; therefore do not rest in these things.

Doct. 2. That in some respect Christ loves those that are orderly and civil, and do but outwardly carry themselves according to God's commands.

I shall give the reasons, and then apply it.

1. The thing is good in itself, though the resting in it makes it useless as to the salvation of the person that goes no further: Micah vi. 8, 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' These things are agreeable to the reasonable nature, and the perfection of it lies in them. Now all good is the object of love; therefore, if it be good Christ loves it.

2. Because our Lord Christ is willing and ready to own the least good in us, that he might draw us on to more. Here was a towardly young man, and Christ would not discourage him; though he was not gracious, it is said he looked upon him and loved him: Mat. xii. 20, 'A bruised reed will he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench;' that is, not despise and reject weaklings. When a reed is broken we cast it away, it is good for nothing but to be trampled under feet; and we are discouraged from blowing while we see no flame, but smoke. But Christ is of another disposition, he will not cast away the bruised reed nor despise the smoking flax; so far as there is anything of goodness in a creature, though it be but smoke, Christ will own it.

3. Because these things tend to the profit of mankind, and Jesus Christ's heart is much set upon the good of mankind. His rejoicing was in the habitable parts of the earth, before there was hill or mountain: Prov. viii. 31, 'Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.' And his apostle doth press

this, 'that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works, these are good and profitable to men,' Titus iii. 8. Christ is a great friend and patron of human society, therefore will show his liking of it, and how pleasing all things are to him that tend to maintain it, as justice, equity, temperance, prudence, moderation, fidelity. Christ would put some mark of his favour on those that excel in these things. When he instructeth the young man in the commandments of the second table, and he said, 'All these have I kept from my youth,' Jesus loved him.

Use. Now let us see what use we may make of this.

1. Negatively. To show what use is not to be made of this passage; for men may be apt to abuse and make an ill use of Jesus' love of these moral virtues.

[1.] We cannot make this use of it, as if Christ did love moral virtues as meritorious of grace; they are not such things upon which God hath bound himself necessarily to give the grace of conversion. The Pelagians had this axiom, *Facienti homini quod in se est, tenetur Deus dare ulteriorem gratiam*—That let a man do what in him lies, God is necessarily bound by that to give him further grace. And the papists build upon the same ground their doctrine of *meritum ex congruo*, merit of congruity. As they hold merit of condignity in the works of renewed men, so they hold merit of congruity in the works of unrenewed men; as if God in right and equity were bound to recompense them with the reward of conversion. But the scripture puts conversion upon another bottom, and shows that it is not given according to the good works we have done, but merely of the Lord's grace and mercy: Titus iii. 4, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' The apostle speaks there of converting grace, wherein we have a negative and an affirmative cause. He could have said simply 'Of his mercy he saved us,' and no more; but he would disprove works, therefore he doth express it negatively, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done;' or at least he might have said this, 'Not only by works of righteousness which we have done, but also of his mercy he hath saved us;' and so might have allowed it as a con-cause, as having some influence, something in it to bind God. Oh, no! he excludes works altogether, 'Not by works of righteousness.' Or at least, if the apostle would express it negatively and positively, he might have said thus, 'Not by works which we have done, but of his mercy he saved us.' No; but he says, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done.' He describes the works which he rejects as being a cause of saving grace. All our moral righteousness, the best of our works, they have no influence upon God to give us grace, but merely 'of his grace he hath saved us;' therefore do not think that God by a certain infallible law is bound to give grace.

[2.] We must not so take this as that he doth love good qualities so as to make them equal with christian virtues or the graces of the Spirit. Morality is good, but we must not lift it up beyond its place. There is something better, and that is grace, 'those things which do accompany salvation,' Heb. vi. 9. I observe this, because there are many

secret atheists, that will cry up moral righteousness beyond its worth, and the virtues and honesty of the heathens, to debase the esteem of christian religion, which the world now is grown weary of. They think there was more honesty by the natural institutions of the heathens than by the law of Christ, and cry up moral honesty to the great detriment and prejudice of the true religion. I do confess, if we compare some honest heathens with many christians in name, that have defiled themselves with monstrous impieties, it is not hard to determine which are the better men. Loose professors dishonour their religion, but the sound grapes in the cluster must not be judged of by the rotten ones, nor is the beauty of a street to be measured by the filthiness of the sink and kennel. Those that are the sink and disgrace of christianity are unfit to show forth the virtue of it. I confess we are fallen into days wherein moral men may justify themselves, *Non quod boni sunt, sed quod mediocriter mali*, as Augustine saith—Not that they are perfectly good men, but they are tolerably good in comparison of many sinful christians. Compare those that have felt the power of religion with heathens, and then you may see the power of christian graces is far greater than of moral virtues. Compare the continency of Alexander and Scipio with the continency of Joseph; they forbore to defile Darius' wife out of gallantry, but Joseph he forbears to commit such wickedness that he might not 'sin against God,' Gen. xxxix. 9. They were not solicited by their captives, but he yielded not when solicited by his mistress, that was able to prefer him on the one side, or undo him on the other. What once was said of Alexander in a time of drought, when a soldier brought him a helmet full of water, he poured it out, saying, 'I will not drink; the hearts of these men would faint,' pointing to his companions, because they had not the like. Compare this with David's action: 2 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17, 'He would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord, and said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this; is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it.' So that if you compare these things, their morality is but like a field flower to a garden flower, or wild fruits to orchard fruits; it is a wild thing in comparison of grace, and not any way comes up to the height of it.

[3.] We must not from hence make this use, that we should think ourselves to be in a good condition because of moral qualifications. Men may be viceless, but yet if they be Christless, and graceless, and never brought to brokenness of heart (for certainly that is necessary to prepare men for faith, and for pardon of sin), they may perish for evermore. Without faith and gospel conditions and qualifications, you can never have any acceptance with God; though they may be profitable to others, yet they are not acceptable to God. *Sine Christo omnis virtus in vitio est*, saith Jerome; in point of salvation they fail and fall short, though in a civil and human respect they are useful and commendable; these moral virtues do not give us a title to eternal life. Jesus loved the young man, as approving the matter of his obedience, but not his state and condition. He tells him, 'One thing thou lackest.' Oh! when you have all your moralities, something is lacking still. This moral righteousness proves a snare to you when it keeps you from evan-

gelical righteousness and seeking reconciliation with God. If we rest in it, and are conceited of it, 'Publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before us,' Mat. xxi. 31, and so we might have been better if we had been worse.

2. Positively. What use may we make of this, that Jesus loved this young man?

[1.] If Christ did love civility, much more will he love true grace in any of his, though mingled with much weakness. Certainly he that delights in the obscure shadow of his image will much more delight in the lively picture and impression of it upon the souls of his people, though we have our weaknesses. John xi. 5, it is said, 'Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.' Martha is mentioned, and in the gospel story we find her twice tripping. She was busy about the house, and neglected the one thing necessary, Luke x. 39, 40. At another time we find her questioning Christ's power: John xi. 39, 'Lord, by this time he stinketh;' yet Jesus loved Martha. There is much difference of growth in God's children, and some have their blemishes more than others, yet Christ loves true grace how weak soever it is. It is notable to observe what a veil and cover the scripture puts upon the imperfections of the saints: Heb. xi. 31, 'By faith the harlot Rahab perished not, when she had received the spies with peace.' Alas! there was dissembling in the case, and weakness, but the faith is mentioned and the lie covered. So James v. 11, 'You have heard of the patience of Job;' Ay! and of his impatience too, and murmuring, when he cursed the day of his birth; but the Holy Ghost puts a finger upon the scar, and covers the failing. So 1 Peter iii. 6, 'As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.' Mark, the scripture that is alluded to in that place is Gen. xviii. 12, 'Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?' The whole speech savoured of unbelief; there is but one good word in it, 'lord,' expressing her reverence to her husband, and the Holy Ghost takes notice of that, picks a jewel out of a dunghill. The Lord takes notice of the least act of sincere obedience to his commands, when it is mixed with many sinful failings.

[2.] We learn by Christ's example to honour others for their common gifts. Some respect is due to them that have any good in them. We are bidden, 1 Peter ii. 17, 'To honour all men.' How so? All are partakers of some excellency from God. How vile soever they be in other respects, they have something of the image of God, James iii. 9; some gift received from God, for which they deserve respect and honour; therefore we ought to give them some signs of respect, that we may be in a better capacity of doing good to their souls. The gifts of God we ought to esteem wherever we find them.

[3.] Thus we may learn, children, young men, and others, all may know how to get Christ's love if they be tractable. If you are free from all intemperance and disobedience, and of honest conversation, then you are such as this young man whom Christ loved; and though more be required of you, yet these things are pleasing to Christ, and want not their reward (what reward they have I will show by and by). Solomon tells us, Prov. xxx. 29, 'Many seek the favour of the ruler.' Jesus Christ is the King of kings, the great ruler of the world; is he

only unworthy, that you should not seek his grace and favour? He loves moral qualifications, therefore abound in these. On the other side, he hates those that are dissolute, intemperate, gluttons, drunkards, liars, wantons, and all those that are profane and wicked from their youth. By the rule of contraries, if he loves conformity to the law of God in externals, he hates those that walk contrary to his law; and he will show his hatred by public acts of vengeance, though it be upon children. If children do not reverence their superiors, he hath judgments for them; as the two she-bears out of the wood tore in pieces forty-two children, 2 Kings ii. 24. And then for grown men, God will have judgments for them. It is a sad time, and it calls for much weeping, lamentation, and grief, that we live in an age wherein moral wickedness abounds, drinking, whoring, swearing, murdering, stealing, and such like abominations. Take this observation; God doth not usually punish in this world for unbelief and want of love to Christ; he leaves it to the world to come; but for breaches of the moral law he doth: Rom. i. 18, 'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.' When the two tables are violated by ungodliness and unrighteousness, then the wrath of God breaks out by some notable judgment. So Heb. ii. 2, 'Every transgression and disobedience' (of Moses) 'received a just recompense of reward;' and Hosea iv. 1, 2, 'The Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; by swearing and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.' There are sins against the moral law reckoned up, which provokes the Lord's anger. As in temporal favours God expresseth love to those that are morally righteous, so in temporal judgments he hath expressed his hatred against immoralities. I confess, some gospel provocations God doth punish in this world, as, for instance, when men persecute the profession of the gospel, or when they grow weary of the gospel after they have long had it, then it concerns God as governor of the world to punish such, the good of the world being very much concerned. But chiefly his judgments are for sins against the moral law of God; when these are broken in our streets, there ought to be much weeping and lamenting before the Lord in a sense of these things.

[4.] It condemns those that will pretend to the peculiar love of Christ, when they are not moral, but froward, undutiful in their relations, unconscionable in their dealing, and have not learned to be sober, to possess their vessels in sanctification and honour. What! do you talk of being christians when you are not so good as heathens? Never think of the higher mysteries of religion, of believing in Christ, and communion with God, when you live so contrary to the light of nature; as the apostle speaks of the 'natural branches,' and the 'branches contrary to nature,' Rom. xi. 24. It is in vain to think of grafting things that are contrary to nature, if the natural branches be not grafted in. There are certain who are doubly dear, 'both in the flesh, and in the Lord;' not only 'in the Lord,' upon the account of religion, but 'in the flesh,' upon the account of nature, as Onesimus was dear to Philemon when converted, Philem. 16. There were many

moral heathens of a sweet nature, that had great command over their passion. Many civil carnal men will rise up in judgment against high-flown christians, that pretend to great heights of faith and love to Christ, but are defective in morals. As it was said of the men of Nineveh and the queen of Sheba, that 'they shall rise up in judgment against this generation, and condemn it,' Mat. xii. 41, 42, so will these heathens, men morally just, exact, punctual in their dealings, rise up in judgment against many that pretend to believe in Christ. *Si non præstat fides, quid præstitit infidelitas?* How should this put you to shame, when those that are graceless cannot be taken tardy in those things wherewith you are charged? I say, if their moral principles and civil institutions bind them to the peace and good behaviour, and will not suffer them to do wrong, and all the laws of Christ will not confine you within your duty, how great will your condemnation be! See that you be not exceeded by them. I may represent it thus, when a schoolboy knows more and better of arts and sciences than a university man, is not this a great shame to him? I remember it is said of Sarah, Gen. xx. 16, 'Abimelech said, Behold I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver; behold he is to thee a covering of thine eyes unto all that are with thee, and to all other; thus was she reproved.' Here is no word of reproof; how was she reproved? Why here a pagan king dismisseth her untouched, with gifts to her husband; he provides for her safety, and this was a reproof of Sarah's dissembling; his morality was a reproof to her that was acquainted with the true God, and a professor of the true faith, and yet was found tardy. You are shamed, and Christ is put to shame in you.

[5.] It invites us to go so far, for Jesus loved this young man; *est aliquid prodire tenus*. What was in this young man? Here is his care to seek after eternal life, his reverent esteem of Christ's person, his outward conformity to the laws of God, his abstaining from all gross sins from his youth. Oh! these are amiable properties and qualities, and those that are endowed with them, Christ loveth them.

Object. But here is an objection. How is this a motive? Christ was courteous and respectful to this young man; but now he is in heaven, what love doth Christ show now upon earth to those that are moral?

(1.) Moral virtues will at least procure a temporal reward. Christ loves virtue so that he rewardeth the show of it; it keeps off many temporal judgments, and procures many temporal benefits; as the Ninevites' repentance, though not real, kept off the judgment, Jonah iii. 10, and Ahab's humiliation kept off the judgment in his days: 1 Kings xxi. 29, 'Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.' It encourageth us to seek him, since he rewardeth a temporal repentance with temporal favours. Oh! what will the hearty humiliation of a true penitent do, when a counterfeit one is thus far accepted with God? And so that kind of zeal that was in Jehu was not without its reward: 2 Kings x. 30, 'Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth

generation shall sit on the throne of Israel,' though he did it with an imperfect heart. The Egyptian midwives, when they saved the children of the Israelites, though it were by a lie, the Lord multiplied them and blessed them: Exod. i. 20, 'Therefore God dealt well with the midwives;' and ver. 21, 'It came to pass, that because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.' So Austin observes that the Romans, as long as they did excel in justice and temperance, were rewarded by God with victory and prosperity; as long as that empire kept honest in civil virtues, it had eminent success, and their commonwealth prevailed and overtopped the nations; but when they degenerated into beasts for impiety, all went to ruin.

(2.) There will be some serenity of mind resulting from the rectitude of your actions. Look, as the heathens, when 'they did by nature the things contained in the law,' they had the approbation of their consciences, 'Thoughts excusing,' Rom. ii. 15.

(3.) It is some advantage to grace; it is like the priming the post, that maketh it receptive of better colours. At least they do not aggravate their condemnation, nor increase their weakness, nor draw upon themselves penal blindness and hardness of heart and utter despair. However, it is like the embalming a carcase; though it do not restore life, yet it keeps the body from stinking. As long as they are at work, they are not given over to a reprobate sense: 'They are not far from the kingdom of God,' Mark xii. 34. An humble man, that hath some thoughts of God and of eternal life, certainly is sooner converted than an outrageous wretch that doth swagger and out-brave the ordinances of God; whereas men that are strangers to all goodness, and of an inveterate wickedness and falsehood, 'that are estranged from the womb, and go astray so soon as they be born, speaking lies,' as the prophet expresseth it, Ps. lviii. 3, are more hardly cured.

(4.) As to their eternal state, it will be more tolerable for such than for others. Though they fall short of heaven, yet *mitius punientur*, at least they have a cooler hell; their account is more easy; as the scripture speaks of *περισσότερον κρίμα*, of 'a greater damnation;' Mat. xi. 22, 'It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you.' Cato suffers less than Catiline, Socrates than Nero; and certainly it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for those that despised the gospel; therefore a heathen could say, No such feast as to do our duty which God requires.

SERMON VI.

One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.—
MARK X. 21.

Now we come to Christ's answer, and there take notice—

First, Of the admonition of his defect, 'Jesus said unto him, One thing thou lackest.' By the evangelist Matthew it appears that this

part of the answer was given to a question proposed: Mat. xix. 20, 'All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?' He saith confidently, 'All these things have I kept;' and Christ saith, 'One thing thou lackest.' Indeed, take the commandments in their full latitude and breadth of interpretation, he wanted all things; how is it then that our Saviour saith only, 'One thing thou lackest?'

1. Because it would have been tedious to convince him of all his defects, and therefore Christ would take the more compendious way, and insist but upon one thing, which was enough to show that he was not perfect, as he vainly dreamed. If a man brag that he is able to pay a hundred pounds, you convince him of his penury when you press him to pay one penny, and he cannot.

2. This one thing was sure, and would strike home; for our Lord knew his heart, and therefore was resolved to touch his privy sore, and doth propose such a precept as would cross his darling sin; and therefore he would only come with one thing, which would try him to the purpose. Men that esteem too highly of themselves, and yet have a secret idol in their hearts, they shall be put upon some special trial that will discover their weakness to the full.

3. That one thing which he lacked was the main thing, the principal thing of the law, which was loving God above all things; the sum of the law is, to love God above all, and our neighbours as ourselves. Now our Lord (who had power to try his love by any way he thought fit), by this particular injunction trieth him in his love to God and his neighbour. Chiefly he would convince him of want of love to God, or spiritual idolatry, making wealth his *summum bonum*, his chiefest good; this was the main thing in which he failed, and the cause of his other failings: and yet Christ doth it in such a way as to take in the other part of the precept, the love of our neighbour: 'Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.'

4. Because the young man erred out of ignorance, Christ would not deal roughly with him, or by way of sharp reproof; he doth not rate him, and call him proud hypocrite, for saying, 'All these have I kept;' but he gently minds him of his defect, 'One thing thou lackest;' words of a mild condescension to one that was tractable. And while men are facile and teachable, we should not use roughness, but convince them of their errors by using all mildness and all condescension, as we ourselves would be dealt withal, if we lay under the power of prejudice and a dark understanding. Let this suffice from that clause: only learn from Christ's practice here, when we have to deal with such kind of men, two or three things—

[1.] That proud sinners must not be soothed up in their self-conceit, but convinced of their defects: 'One thing thou lackest.' To flatter men in their presumption is very dangerous: Luke xvi. 15, 'Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.'

[2.] That the way to convince them is by representing their principal and chief faults, some one sin; so Christ dealt with this young man, and so he deals with the woman of Samaria, conviucing her of her sin, that though she had spent her time in marriage with five husbands,

yet after all this commits adultery : John iv. 18, 'Thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.' We are not to shoot at rovers, but convince those we have to do with of those sins they are most guilty of.

[3.] The more our failings strike deep upon the main articles of our obedience to God, the greater our conviction, and the more sense we should have of our condition before God. To love God above all is a fundamental article of the covenant. Now, when we are convinced that we fail in this, and want love, trust, and faith in God, we are nothing ; therefore such kind of defects should make us look after our estate better.

Secondly, We come to Christ's precept, command, and injunction ; and there—

First, Something of particular concernment, 'Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.' Where observe—(1.) The duty ; (2.) The motive.

I. The duty, 'Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.' The precept you see is very strict, and falls upon the heart of this young man, who was addicted to the world. 'Go,' without delay ; 'sell,' not a part, but all, 'whatsoever thou hast ;' and 'give,' not to thy friends that may relieve thee when thou art in straits, not to the rich that may recompense thee, but 'to the poor,' from whom thou canst look for nothing again : 'Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor.' This advice of Christ I will—(1.) Explicate ; (2.) Vindicate ; (3.) Improve to some practical use.

1. Explain how far this is a duty ; for the misunderstanding of this sentence hath filled monasteries with monks, and deserts with anchorites. The great difficulty is, whether this be a precept or an evangelical counsel. The papists fancy some things to be evangelical counsels, that is, necessary to an higher and more perfect sort of living, which are not absolutely necessary in themselves, but counsels that he that can receive it, let him receive it, counsels of perfection, and not necessary precepts. I shall not deal with the thing in general, but only so far as it concerns this place, which, among others, is brought for this doctrine, but vainly ; for the words here run in the manner of a flat and absolute precept, and not of counsel and arbitrary advice. Christ enjoins him to 'go and sell whatsoever he had ;' and they are spoken in answer to his question, 'What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ?' And in prosecution of the debate between Christ and him, when he asked, 'What shall I do ?' Christ referred him to his own covenant, or the tenor of the law : *q.d.*, thou expectest eternal life according to the covenant of works, which covenant requires thus and thus : 'Thou knowest the commandments.' To this the young man replies 'All these things have I kept, what lack I yet ?' Then says Christ, 'Go sell whatsoever thou hast,' &c. Our Saviour would not contradict his own course of referring him to the covenant of works ; nor would he else have spoken to the purpose, for the young man did not demand how he should attain an extraordinary state of perfection, but what he should do to be saved, or to obtain eternal life ; therefore Christ would not only give him an evangelical counsel, or instruct him about an extraordinary state of perfection, but a necessary duty. Well,

then, a precept, it is not a general precept, binding all christians, for then it could not be omitted or neglected by us without sin, or without a great contempt of Christ's authority. Yea, many would sin if they should sell all, neglect their families, and cast themselves upon snares and temptations. There is no command given by Christ to all to do so, and this command obligeth none but those to whom it was given. There are some things that are due to God, *ex officio generali*, by virtue of the general duty we owe to him; some things, *ex vocatione speciali*, by special call are to be done, such was this command of our Lord, and the lawgiver had power to try this young man in anything he saw fitting. It was a personal command for trial, such as that was to Abraham, who was no more to dispute against it, but to offer Isaac, Gen. xxii. 1, 2; so this was a special command given to this young man to discover his hypocrisy, and make him sensible of his disease. The law doth not bid us sell all, but the law commands us to be ready to do the whole will of God, whatever it cost us, and condemns those evil affections and inordinate respects to temporal things which would hinder us from so doing.

2. Let me vindicate it; for it may seem in the thoughts of some as if our Lord had dealt hardly with this young man, in putting him upon so severe a trial. A young rich man comes to him with such affection, and yet for Christ to bid him sell all! But consider—

[1.] Such words and thoughts must not be heard against our sovereign Lord and lawgiver; and Christ speaks here as a *νομοθέτης*, a lawgiver, which the Ebionites could not endure, for they owned him only as a naked interpreter of the law, and therefore foisted in some passages to corrupt this part of the gospel (see Grotius). Christ hath absolute power to command. If he bid Abraham to offer up Isaac, he must do it; and the Israelites to spoil the Egyptians, it was lawful. Certainly then he that was the Lord of all might with very good reason bid this young man sell all.

[2.] Christ, who is the Wisdom of the Father, knew the best way of discovering this young man to himself, and therefore toucheth his privy sore, that, being sensible of his defect, he might know that his conceit of being perfect was but a vain dream, and it was in mercy to him to put him out of his dream.

[3.] The precept was not so hard, considering three things—

(1.) What was required of all those that were in a special manner called to be Christ's disciples, or trained up for the ministry in Christ's company, and by special converse with him. When he called any to be of his family, and to be as it were, his menial servants and constant attendants, they left all and followed him: Mat. iv. 19, 20, 'He saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men: and they straightway left their nets, and followed him;' their nets, that is, their whole estates; they had less to lose indeed than this rich man, but they could but lose their all. They that were to be trained up for the service of the gospel, were to walk up and down with Christ, and to live in an itinerary ambulatory manner, without any settled abode, and afterwards to go abroad and preach the gospel in all countries throughout the world. The possession and administration of earthly things was not consistent with their office, therefore he would have them to

leave all, and trust his providence, which, without their care and solicitude, would provide them necessities for the present life. And if Christ would call this young ruler to the like employment, it was but convenient he should bid him sell all.

(2.) Consider, it bindeth all christians, *quoad animi affectum*, in vow, purpose, and preparation of the heart, though not actually, to leave all and follow Christ. These are not hard terms, if you consider what is required of every one that will be saved. Christ doth not hide his terms from any; for what is here 'sell all, and give to the poor, and take up the cross and follow Christ,' is expressed by self-denial: Mat. xvi. 24, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.' Self-denial in effect implies as much. We should all in the preparation of our hearts follow Christ naked, destitute, and deprived of all things, and be contented so to do if he should see fit.

(3.) The precept will not seem so hard if you consider the state of that country, which was near destruction; and that was one reason why the believers in that age sold what they had, and cast all into a common bank: Acts iv. 32, 'The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, for they had all things common;' and the reason of the command Christ gives, Luke xii. 33, 'Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.' It was a prudent course, when there was such a general destruction to come upon them.

Doct. That we ought upon God's call to be ready to forsake all that we have in the world.

Here I shall—(1.) Consider when God calls us to forsake all; (2.) Why we ought to do so.

First, When God calls us to forsake all that we have; such a particular precept or command we cannot now expect. Now Christ is ascended into the heavens, and governs us not by oracle but by his word; not by his personal presence, but by his Spirit. But yet still in some cases we are to forsake all; they may be referred unto two heads—

1. When God by his providence reduceth us to a poor condition.

2. When we cannot obey any particular precept of God without danger of being undone by it.

[1.] When God by his providence reduceth us to a poor condition, either for our chastisement or our trial, then we are willingly and cheerfully to forsake all. This is no strange thing, to hear of those that have flowed in wealth, and yet by the mere providence of God (though not by their own misgovernment or default) have been reduced to great necessity. Our estates in the world are liable to many hazards, by which this may be brought about, as by fire, inundation, or hostile depredations; by state injury, false witness of others, or negligence of servants, or suretyship for friends, or oversight of reckoning, or trusting of customers, or unfaithfulness of factors, or piracy by sea; by these and many other such-like means may our estates be wasted and come to nothing, and we brought to great poverty. Job, the richest man in

the East, was brought to sit upon the dunghill. Belisarius, that great captain that had twice relieved Rome and vanquished so many enemies, was brought to beg for a halfpenny to sustain his life, *Date obolum Belisario*. Now we ought to have a ready mind, prepared for all providences; and this is the true voluntary poverty of christians, not monkish vows, but this willingness to be at God's disposing. It ought not to be sought for, but we must not be over-sorrowful if it happens, but humbly acquiesce in the will of God, and bear poverty, if laid upon us, with a constant patient mind: Job i. 21, 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'

[2.] God still calls us to forsake all when we cannot obey any particular precept of God without danger of being undone by it. When God by his providence maketh it impossible for us to preserve our fidelity to him, or obedience to any known command of his, without sacrificing our interests, and parting with all that we have in the world, we must impartially perform it, and do our duty, though it be with the loss of estate and life itself: Rev. xii. 11, 'They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of his testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death;' Rev. ii. 10, 'Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be ye faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' And Moses, when all the pleasures and treasures he enjoyed in Pharaoh's court came once to be the pleasures of sin, and he could continue there no longer without sin, he left all: Heb. xi. 24-26, 'By faith Moses, when he came to years refused to be call the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.' In these two cases we are to sell all.

Secondly, For the reasons why we must do so.

1. God hath an absolute right to all that we have by his own eminence and prerogative. He is called 'the possessor of heaven and earth,' Gen. xiv. 19, not only the maker, but the possessor. We are not lords, but only stewards: Luke xvi. 2, 'Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.' A steward must be ready to give up the estate when the supreme Lord calls for it. We have not *dominium*, the dominion and sovereignty, only *dispensationem*, a dispensation and trust; and when the supreme Lord calls for all we have, we must willingly resign all into his hands: 'I will take away my corn, my wine and my wool, and my flax, saith God,' Hosea ii. 9. Every one is allowed to do with his own as it pleaseth him. God cannot injure his creature, for when he takes these things from us, he doth but dispose of his own. The Lord of his bounty communicates many good things to us, but still he retains the dominion of them in his own hands, that he may dispose of them according to his own pleasure. If God saith, Keep, you may keep it; but if he saith, *Vade, vende omnia*, Go, sell all, who art thou, O man! that repliest upon God? We are not absolute and perpetual owners, and must part with it when the

Lord shall require it. We are not possessors, but stewards or tenants at will. God allows us to dispense and use these things for a time for his glory, and for the supply of ourselves and ours, and to do good to others; and then we are to resign and give up all again when he calls for it, or shall be pleased to take it from us by his own immediate hand, or by other means. He giveth us wealth with this condition.

2. Because it is impossible we should be christians, if we come not to Christ with this mind and resolution to forsake all for our duty to him; all hath been ratified by our own consent; see Luke xiv. 33, 'Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.' How forsake all? Not actually, but so as to be ready to forsake all if Christ please. Christians, whoever comes to Christ, he lays himself and all he hath at Christ's feet, his life, goods, and lands, to be used and disposed of as Christ shall direct, and not to take them up again but as Christ will permit; and so he forsaketh all things, though not actually, till God calls him to it, yet *preparatione animi*, in a full resolution to run all hazards and extremities that his duty to Christ shall expose him to. *Esse christianum grande, non videri*; it is a costly thing to be a christian indeed, though it seem the cheapest matter in the world. But whoever is a christian indeed makes a full and absolute resignation of himself and all he hath: 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me,' Mark x. 37. He that loveth anything more than Christ can never hold out in heaven's way. When the profession of religion grows cheap and is low, God sends some trouble or other to raise the price, that those that will go to the cost may be known what they are.

Use 1. For reproof unto two sorts—

1. Those that are so unwilling to part with a little portion of their goods, when the Lord hath need of some supply from them for his servants and their poor fellow-christians. They are so far from being content to part with all for the glory of God and good of their brethren, that they are backward, and will part with nothing for the maintenance of God's worship and relief of the poor; it must be drawn and wrung from them, as if all were lost. Men act as if their goods were at their own dispose. Oh! how dwelleth the love of God in them! 1 John iii. 17: 'Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?'

2. It reproveth those that shift and wriggle, and dispute themselves out of their duty, and all to shake of the cross and avoid suffering; whereas they should with a ready mind take it up: Gal. vi. 12, 'As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised, only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ;' that is, they did Judaize to avoid trouble from the Jews. Though they were not guilty of a total apostasy, yet, to take off the edge of the Jews, they disputed themselves into such evil compliance. It is true to escape suffering by lawful means is commanded: Mat. x. 23, 'When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.' To remove ourselves when a storm comes, this is commanded: Prov. xxii. 3, 'A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself, but the sim-

ple pass on, and are punished.' But to do anything to prejudice the truth, to shift and turn, and all to shake off the cross, this is sinful and forbidden.

3. It reproveth those that do with such impatience suffer the loss of any outward thing, either by God's immediate providence, or by the violence of men for the profession of the truth. Oh ! this should not be, but you should cheerfully and willingly yield it up to God : Lev. x. 3, 'And Aaron held his peace;' Heb. x. 34, 'Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods;' 1 Cor. vii. 30, 'We should mourn as if we mourned not.' In all worldly losses we are to show that we expect better things, and that our hearts are not here, and that we have such an esteem for Christ, that he is so worthy, and so necessary for us, that we should be glad to follow him naked.

Use 2. To press us to be of such a spirit to be willing to part with all, when Christ will have us, and when the sense of our duty and his honour requires it of us. This seems to be a hard lesson, but, to help us to learn it, something must be avoided and something considered.

1. Something must be avoided. As—

[1.] Love of the world and addictedness to the creature. We must hang loose to outward things, or we shall never be ready to forego them for Christ's sake. If there be any secret idol in your heart, God will bring it forth, and put it to the trial, whether you love him or your idol most. Now the world is a great idol to keep us from God : 1 John v. 3-5, 'This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous. For whosoever is born of God, overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?' The connection between these verses is thus : Whoever will keep the commandment must overcome the world, which is a great let thereto ; therefore we have need of a heart to look after better things, and loosen the heart from the world, which is that faith that overcometh the world. This precept is hard, but it is only to those that are wedded to present things, therefore contempt of the world and of the possessions and riches of it is necessary for all that will not make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and render themselves incapable of the duties of their holy calling.

[2.] Distrust of God's all-sufficiency, and trust in the means, is that which makes this precept difficult. He that durst not trust in God will certainly be unfaithful to him. Here is our danger, resting in the means, as if there could be no supply but from creatures : 1 Tim. vi. 17, 'Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches.' There is the great bane of men, we cannot see how we can be well without friends, wealth, liberty, favour, preferment, and such and such revenues by the year. We would fain be on the surest side and on the gathering hand, and that is the reason it is so hard to forsake all, and trust ourselves alone with God's all-sufficiency ; and therefore, if you would bring your heart hereunto, you must strengthen faith in the providence of God, and bring thy heart to lean upon that, and not inferior means, and trust him upon his word, then it will be easy. It is no unreasonable thing that I require of you, it is but that which is due to any honest man ; especially if you have

had trial of him, you will trust him upon his word, even without a pawn ; so you should trust God, though you can see nothing but nakedness, and poverty, and all manner of inconvenience. In time past God hath not been wanting to you, he hath given you better things, and will he deny thee daily bread ?

2. Some things are to be considered, if you would thus forsake all for the discharge of a good conscience. There is God's right and our own complete resignation when we first took Christ (I suppose you have done so, or certainly you are not christians) ; our hopes in the world to come ; heaven is worth something. But I shall pitch only upon two things—

[1.] Others have quitted wealth upon far meaner, lower, and more inconsiderable respects than you are called to do it, therefore certainly you should quit it for conscience of your duty to God. Anacreon restored five talents to Polycrates, because he was so troubled with cares about keeping of them, saying, *οὐ τιμou̐θαι ἀντὰ τῆς ἐπὶ ἀντῆς φρόντιδος*, those things were not worth the care laid out about keeping of them. Another cast his wealth into the sea, saying, *Pereas ne me perdas*—Let it perish, that it might not hinder me from the study of philosophy. Nay, men will do more for their lust. How many do sell all, and for what ? To serve their vanity and lust, to keep up gaming, to please the flesh, that they may supply their riotous excess, and living beyond their compass. And shall poor base lusts, which are unreasonable, and for which God will condemn them, do more with them than the love of God with us ?

[2.] Consider what you were, and within a little while what you shall be. When you came into the world, you were contented with a cradle, and when you go out of the world, you must be contented with a grave : Job i. 21, 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither ;' 1 Tim. vi. 7, 'For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.' What were we ? We came into the world shiftless and helpless, but God made provision for us, and hath kept us hitherto. Though you have been born of noble and rich parents and to great estates, this provision was made ready for you by God without any care of yours, and therefore if God hath taken anything away from you, *Accepit sed dedit*—He gave it at first, and God is where he was at first. Well, and what shall we be ? That hath a great influence. Surely we must be naked again ; death will strip us of all our comforts, therefore we do but part with that which we cannot keep, and it were better to do so than to venture your souls that must live for ever. Therefore it is not unreasonable and hard, when Christ bids us to forsake all.

I come to the second part of Christ's advice, 'Go sell all ;' but he doth not stay there, 'and give to the poor.' To throw away riches as Crates did, who threw his goods and money into the sea, is no virtue, but a vain ambition ; better to distribute to others what is superfluous to ourselves. Our Lord, in this injunction to the young man, doth not only require selling, but distribution, or liberality to the poor. The note is—

Doct. One special end and use unto which rich men should employ their wealth should be the help and relief of the poor.

1. In general, it is not, Give to the rich, but to the poor. Christ speaks of feasting and entertaining one another, which may have its place and time : ' When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind : and thou shalt be blessed ; for they cannot recompense thee, but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just,' Luke xiv. 12-14. And therefore one great thing in our feasting should be to consider the poor. The sweetest influences should fall upon the lower ground. There are many that even truck with their kindnesses, but it is not charity so much as merchandise when men show respect to those that can respect them again. Oh ! but do it to the poor that can make you no recompense.

2. Of the poor there are three sorts. There are *pauperes diaboli*, the devil's poor, such as have riotously spent their patrimony, and have reduced themselves to rags and beggary by their own misgovernment. These are not wholly to be excluded from our charity, when their necessity is extreme ; we ought to give something to the man, though not to the sin. It may work upon them, especially when we join spiritual alms with temporal, and mind them of their sin, by which they have reduced themselves to such necessity. Again, there are *pauperes mundi*, such as come of poor parents, and live in poor estate in the world ; these are to be relieved, whether they be gracious or ungracious, good or bad ; for we must have ' brotherly kindness,' that is, to our fellow-saints, and ' charity ;' 2 Peter i. 7, ' Add to brotherly kindness, charity.' There is a common bond of nature between them and us, they are our own flesh : Isa. lviii. 7, ' That thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh.' Then there are *pauperes Christi*, such as have suffered loss of goods for Christ's sake, or, being otherwise poor, do profess the gospel : Rom. xii. 13, ' Distributing to the necessity of saints ;' and Gal. vi. 10, ' As we have therefore opportunity let us do good to all, but especially to the household of faith.' There is an order which God hath instituted ; first we are to take care of our own family, children, parents, or kindred : 1 Tim. v. 8, ' If any provide not for his own, and especially for them of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.' Then God hath made us stewards for strangers and foreigners. Now among strangers, those that profess the same faith with us are first to be regarded, and there especially those that best evidence the reality of their faith by a holy life ; then after these we are to extend our charity to all men as occasion is offered.

Reasons of this—

[1.] Christ hath commended them to us as his proxies and deputies. He himself can receive nothing from us, being exalted into the heavens ; but now, that we may not deceive ourselves with a cheap love to Christ, he hath devolved his right upon the poor as his deputies : Mat. xxvi. 11, ' Ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always.' He hath left them always with us that we may exercise our bounty towards them. We pretend very much love to Christ ; if Christ were sick in bed, you would visit him ; if in prison or in want, you would relieve him ; what is done to one of these is done to him : Mat. xxv.

40, 'Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

[2.] It is a great honour put upon us to be instruments of divine providence and preservation to others. God hath substituted the poor to receive, and you to give, so that you are in the place of God to relieve and comfort them. The Lord could supply them without you, but he would put the honour of the work upon you, it is the greatest resemblance of God. Our Lord hath told us, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' Acts xx. 35. More blessed, that is, more like the blessed God. Oh! it is a very great mercy to be able and to be willing to give. *Nihil habet fortuna magna majus quam ut possit, et natura bona melius quam ut velit.* It is the greatest thing in a great estate, that you are able to distribute to the necessities of others; and it is the best thing in a good-natured man, that he is willing to give. As the true advantage of wealth is in relieving others, so nothing showeth our conformity to God more: Luke vi. 36, 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' It is Chrysostom's observation, Christ doth not say, If you fast, or if you pray, or if you prophesy, or if you be learned, you shall be like your heavenly Father; but if you be loving, if you be merciful, and distribute to the necessities of others, then you are like him, you hold the place of God, and are as it were a God to him.

[3.] Consider the profit of it. It seems to be a loss, but it is the most gainful trade in the world. Alas! to distribute to the poor, to scatter our substance, it is like scattering our bread upon the waters: Eccles. xi. 1, 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.' There is so much profit in it, that it is the best way to keep what we have, to increase what we have, and to make it comfortable.

(1.) To keep what you have. Your goods are best secured when deposited in God's hands; you provide bags that wax not old. Many an estate in the world is blasted for want of charity, and given to the fury, depredation, and spoil of men: James v. 2, 3, 'Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your silver and gold is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.'

(2.) To increase it. It is compared to seed: 2 Cor. ix. 6, 'He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully.' The husbandman gets nothing by keeping his seed-corn by him. When thou givest to thy poor brother, it is said, 'The Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thy hand to,' Deut. xv. 10. All your works of liberality and mercy shall be abundantly repaid: Luke vi. 38, 'Give and it shall be given to you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto you.' See how it is expressed in many words, the more to strike upon our senses, to awaken our stupid heart. But above all, Prov. xix. 17, 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again.' Saith Austin, *Si vis esse mercator optimus, fenerator egregius, &c.*—Would you put out your money to the best advantage, and be true usurers indeed, lend it to the Lord; the interest shall be infinitely

greater than the principal. Never was there such usury heard of; and what better security than God's? God is a sure paymaster, and will pay you to the full, a hundred for one, which is an usury not yet heard of in the world. You can expect nothing from the poor, for they have nothing to give you; but God is their surety, he who is the great possessor of heaven and earth, that never broke his word. You have his hand and seal to show for it, his bond in the scripture, and his seal in the sacraments. You will say these are but words, but venture a little and try: Mal. iii. 10, 'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.' The widow's oil, the more it ran the more it increased, and the loaves multiplied by distributing; whereas, on the contrary, if you forbear to give, God will forbear to bless.

(3.) You will enjoy the remainder more comfortably. Wells are the sweeter for draining, so the oftener you are distributing and dispersing to the necessities of others, the more sweetness and the more comfort you will have in your estates. There are terrible passages in scripture against rich men, how hard it is for a rich man to be saved. It is a difficult thing for a man of an estate to get to heaven, and there is no way to free ourselves from the snare but to give alms: Luke xi. 41, 'Rather give alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean to you.' Then you may possess an estate with a good conscience, otherwise it will certainly prove a snare. Nay, this is the way to have the comfort of it for ever: 'Thou shalt have treasure in heaven;' whatever shift you make, be not backward in this, rather sell than not have to give. Your riches in the world leave you on this side the grave; however all your gold and silver, how much soever you have, the use of it will cease when you are laid in the grave; but here is treasure that we may have in heaven. What is that? The comfort of those estates we have charitably spent in this world: Luke xvi. 9, 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations;' 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19, 'That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life.'

[4.] The necessity of it in order to your account. It is not an arbitrary thing, whether you will do this or no. God will reckon with us; one day he will ask you, What have you done with your estates? whether you 'have sowed to the flesh or to the Spirit?' Gal. vi. 8. All the world will be divided into these two ranks. Alas! what sorry accounts will they make, when so much is spent in pomp, so much in pleasure, in vain fashions, in bravery of apparel, so much in feasting, in riotous banquets and luxury, so much in plays, in cockpits, in sports, and other such kind of things, and so little or nothing on the poor! Many will spend liberally on their lusts, but hardly a penny for the relief of others; they will feed their dogs, and starve their children. Conscience will call you to an account now, much more when you shall appear before the great God at the last day. When a man is to be tried and exa-

mined for his life, it would be a great advantage to know the questions that shall be asked him beforehand. Christ hath told us beforehand the questions that shall be put to us : Mat. xxv., Have you fed, have ye visited, have ye clothed ? are there none in prison to be visited ? none hungry to be fed ? none naked to be clothed ? It is not, Have you heard ? have you prophesied ? have you eaten and drunk in my presence ? No ; but works of mercy are produced, that your faith might be found to praise and honour.

[5.] The equity of it in regard of God's mercies to us.

(1.) We have all from God : 'He giveth us richly all things to enjoy,' 1 Tim. vi. 17. Now God doth require his rent, and some acknowledgment to himself as the great landlord of the whole earth, of whom we have received, and from whom we hold all we have. Now the rent that God requires is that something should be given and distributed to the uses of the poor. When the children of Israel brought their first-fruits, wherewith the poor and widows were relieved, they were to make their acknowledgment : Deut. xxvi. 9, 10, 'The Lord hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey ; and now behold I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given.' So David, 1 Chron. xxix. 12-14, 'Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might ; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, O God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name : but who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort ? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee ;' and ver. 16, 'O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thy holy name, cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.' Sure we received not all for ourselves, as the stomach receiveth not meat for itself, and the liver receiveth not blood for itself, but to disperse it to the rest of the body ; so we are but stewards and dispensers of what we have, not proprietors.

(2.) God had pity on the lost world. Indigent creatures have not so much need of temporal relief as we had of God's sending his Son. Among all the treasures of heaven nothing is more excellent : 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.' They are a part of our thank-offering : Heb. xiii. 15, 16, 'By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name ; but to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.' When he had proved Christ to be a sin-offering, he tells us that there is a thank-offering required of us. What is that ? Praise and thanksgiving is one, and alms are another ; these are things pleasing in the sight of God.

All this is spoken because there are so few true christians in the world, whatever feigned respects they pretend to Christ. Alas ! many that have great estates, hundreds by the year, yet have not a heart to be helpful to their poor brethren and neighbours, but are very backward, full of grudging and repining when they give anything. How many are there that are liberal to their lusts, that can spend whole farms and

lordships upon gaming, drinking, riot, luxury, lawsuits, costly apparel, and bestow so little upon the poor members of Christ Jesus. Do these men believe there will be a day of judgment, and a heaven and a hell? Oh! rouse up yourselves; give, but give upon a right principle; it is not a sin-offering, but a thank-offering; and give not for self-esteem, and to be well spoken of by men: Mat. vi. 1, 'Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them;' but give in obedience to God. And for the *quantum*, how much you should give, that is not defined, but do not sow sparingly; God trusts love in the time of the gospel, therefore give not grudgingly. Draw out thy soul to the hungry: 2 Cor. ix. 7, 'Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, nor of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver.' Live honey is best, that which flows of its own accord; so myrrh that sweats out of the tree of its own accord, that is most precious. Oh! give readily to the poor, that you may have the Lord's blessing and treasure in heaven.

II. The motive, 'And thou shalt have treasure in heaven.' Thou shalt not part with thy goods, so much as change them for those that are incomparably better.

1. There is a reward for those that are faithful to the laws of Christ, and willing to lay out their estates for him; it is not cast away, but well bestowed; they sow their seed here, they shall have their harvest hereafter. The poor cannot recompense thee, and therefore God will: Luke xiv. 14, 'Thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee, but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.' A cup of cold water is a small thing, yet it shall not want its reward: Mat. x. 42, 'And whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.'

2. This reward is propounded to encourage us. Christ not only instructs us by commands, but allures us by promises. There is a dispute whether we may look to the reward. I say not only we may, but we must; the oftener we look to heaven, the better we shall forego present things.

3. Our reward in heaven is called 'treasure,' something that is not only answerable to what we quit for Christ, but it far exceeds it. It is called, Eph. i 18, 'The riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' We shall have true riches instead of transitory, which we cannot long keep, and eternal riches that will ever last. Our treasure in heaven is more precious and more certain: Mat. vi. 19, 20, 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.'

4. This reward is not only in this life, but in the life to come. The worldling is 'rich in this world,' 1 Tim. vi. 17. The believer hath treasure in heaven. Let gentiles seek earthly things, that have not a right to heavenly. Bracelets of copper, glass beads, and little bells, and such like trifles are valued by rude barbarians, that are contemptible with us. The use and valuation of earthly things in the world to come ceaseth, it only holdeth on this side the grave; and therefore the great

business of christians should be to make over their estates into heaven, that they might receive it by exchange there ; for though the use of it ceaseth on the other side of the grave, yet we may have the comfort of it for everlasting.

SERMON VII.

And come, take up the cross, and follow me.—MARK X. 21.

SECONDLY, Having done with the particular precept, I come to the general precept given to this young man, ‘Come, take up the cross, and follow me.’ The duty that is enjoined is double—the one an help to the other, and the one necessarily follows the other, ‘Take up the cross, and follow me.’ Whoever follows Christ must prepare his shoulders for the cross, for without taking up the cross we shall never follow Christ to any purpose. ‘Take up the cross ;’ it is an allusion to the punishments that were in use when Christ lived in the world ; the malefactors bore their own cross to the place of execution, and then they were nailed to it alive ; so let him reckon upon that, he must bear his cross. ‘And follow me ;’ there is a twofold following of Christ—special and general.

1. Special, as those disciples that were his menial servants, of his own family, trained up for the ministry ; these did follow Christ up and down, because they were chosen witnesses, and were to be conscious and privy unto all his actions, that they might better give an account of them to the world : Acts i. 21, 22, ‘Wherefore, of those which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.’ And so ‘follow me’ is, Come, take lot and share with me, abide with me, be my disciple.

2. The phrase bears a more general sense : John xii. 26, ‘If any man serve me, let him follow me ;’ and so to follow Christ is either to take his direction or imitate his example.

[1.] When we take his direction. We are said to follow Christ when we take him for our Lord and master, and live according to his holy doctrine. As they that have such a one for their master in any sect of philosophy are said to follow him, so they that take Christ for their teacher, as the great prophet of the church, herein they follow him : Mat. xvii. 5, ‘Hear ye him.’

[2.] We are said to follow Christ when we imitate his example ; as 1 Cor. xi. 1, ‘Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ.’

From the words thus explained, three points of doctrine may be gathered—

(1.) In order to eternal life, it is required that a man should not only sell all and give to the poor, but that he should follow Christ, or enter himself as one of his disciples.

(2.) Whosoever entereth himself as one of his disciples, and gives up his name to Christ, must follow him or imitate his example.

(3.) All those that would follow Christ must prepare their shoulders for the cross.

Doct. 1. In order to eternal life it is required, not only that a man should sell all and give to the poor, but that he should follow Christ, or enter himself as one of his disciples.

Here I shall inquire what it is, and why it is necessary.

First, What it is to enter ourselves as one of Christ's disciples? I shall lay no other duty upon you than what you are engaged unto by your baptism; therefore I shall only explain what your baptism binds you to, which is a bond upon you to enter yourselves as Christ's disciples. It is a renouncing all other lords and masters, a choosing Christ, and believing in him alone for salvation, and a resigning up ourselves to do his will.

1. A renouncing all other lords and masters which are opposite to Christ, viz., the devil, the world, and the flesh. The devil: Col. i. 13, 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.' Before there is any entrance into the kingdom of Christ there is a translating from the power of darkness; that I take to be the power of the devil. The world: Gal. vi. 14, 'The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.' Then for the flesh: Rom. viii. 12, 'We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.' In our natural state we are under the power of all these three, as it is set forth: Eph. ii. 2, 3, 'Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom we had all our conversation in time past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind.' There are all the three enemies of our salvation that must be renounced mentioned. There is the custom and corrupt course of the world. Alas! the generality of the world live a sensual, flesh-pleasing life, that was their rule; and the prince of the power of the air, that was their guide; and the flesh, or the bent of corrupt nature, that was their principle. While we are in our corrupt state, the devil hath power to rule us, and the example and common customs of the world doth encourage us, and corrupt nature within doth strongly urge us to sin against God. And therefore, when we do indeed enter ourselves the disciples of Christ, these enemies of his and ours must be renounced, that we may have another rule, another lord, and another principle. Another rule, which is the law of God; another Lord, which is Jesus Christ; another principle, which is the Spirit of Christ dwelling and working in us. There must be first an emptying of heart before it can be filled with grace. There must be a dispossessing of those strong and cursed inmates that have such hand and power over us, that Christ alone may rule and govern us.

2. There must be a believing in Christ, or a resting upon him alone for salvation. When the eunuch offered himself to be baptized, Philip tells him, 'If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest; and he answered, and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,' Acts viii. 37. Faith in the Son of God is the great qualification necessary

to Christ's disciples, that as they forsake the devil, the pomps and vanities of the world, and the inclinations of the flesh, so they may cleave to him alone as Lord and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins to his people: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.'

3. It is required that we resign up ourselves to do his will, and walk according to his directions, if we would be Christ's disciples; for otherwise we do but give him an empty title, and we may as much mock him as the Roman soldiers did, that put a robe upon him, and cried, 'Hail, king of the Jews.' When we cry him up as our Lord and Saviour, and do not resign up ourselves to his use and service, we mock him as they did. Take three scriptures to prove this: Luke vi. 46, 'Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?' *Cui res nomini subjecta negatur, is nomine illuditur*—Tertullian. It is a mockage to give Christ a title, and deny him the duty which belongs to it. The greatest part of the christian world live in a bare outward profession of Christ's name, without any care and conscience to walk answerably; they seem to have renounced the devil, the world, and the flesh, but their hearts are in a secret league with them still; they call Christ Lord and Saviour, but do not rest upon him for salvation, nor obey him, therefore this will be of no use to them as to eternal life. So Mat. vii. 21, 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven.' Though we profess christianity, and seem to have a great respect to Christ's memory, yet without the practice of faith and obedience, we shall have no benefit by Christ, and shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven. Only those who, being condemned by the law, fly to Christ by faith, and study to bring forth the fruits of newness of life, shall be saved by him. Again, John viii. 31, 'If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.' There are disciples in name, and there are Christ's disciples indeed, such as are so in truth, life, and practice. Whatever privileges men may have by their outward profession and show, yet they have no ground of solid comfort till they persevere to walk according to Christ's direction, and continue in his word. Thus when we renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and cleave to Christ as prince and saviour, and resign up ourselves to his use, when this is done in reality, then do we enter ourselves indeed to be his disciples. This is implied in our baptism, as in the primitive times, when they did *ἀναθεματίζειν ἑαυτοὺς τῷ Θεῷ* (as Justin Martyr phraseth it), they did solemnly renounce Christ's enemies, and profess to choose him for their Lord and master, and yielded up themselves to be guided by him in his own way to heaven. And the apostle telleth us, 1 Peter iii. 21, 'Baptism saveth us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God;' that is, an hearty acceptance of God's offers, and an engagement in his strength to do his commandments.

Secondly, Why this is necessary beyond alms and all other amiable qualities?

1. Because heathens and men of a false religion may excel in charity and other moralities, and yet without true grace they are

nothing. The apostle tells us, 'The gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law,' Rom. ii. 14; and that they excelled in charity as well as other things, appears by Titus iii. 14, 'Let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses.' Who are they that he calls 'ours also?' Compare it with ver. 8, 'That they which have believed in God be careful to maintain good works;' that is, those of our religion, as well as the Jews and pagans. The gentiles were much given to charity. Paul saith, Acts xxviii. 2, 'The barbarous people showed us no little kindness.' Mercy had an altar in every city of Greece. The Alkoran of the Turks says, that if men knew what a pleasant thing it was to give alms, rather than want somewhat to give, they would slice out their own flesh. So that the gentiles, and men not under the institution of Christ, those that are without the covenant and promise and grace, may be addicted to alms. But now all this is nothing without true grace: 1 Cor. xiii. 3, 'Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.' A man would think there were a contradiction in the apostle's speech; for how can one bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and yet want charity? If this be not charity, what is? I would not interpret it, If I bestow all my goods upon the poor hypocritically, for it is a hard thing to conceive hypocrisy should go to such a length; but there is the grace of charity, and the natural amiable quality of charity. If a man have not a renewed heart, if it be a mere natural motion, without spiritual grace (and that cannot be till they enter themselves disciples to Christ in the way spoken of), it is nothing. The apostle commends the Macedonians, that were a poor people, yet did exceedingly stretch themselves to contribute to the poor saints at Jerusalem: 2 Cor. viii. 5, 'And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.' And here was the true method, before they gave their goods, they offered their hearts to God, they gave up themselves to the Lord Christ to be his disciples, they entered themselves into his service. This is the true fountain of charity, and then it comes to something.

2. There is need of faith in Christ in order to our acceptance with God, and reconciliation with him; and therefore all the good works we do will not profit us till we become disciples of Christ. Why? Till we believe, his atonement and reconciliation is not reckoned to us, for the gifts of enemies are giftless and unacceptable. Since the fall there is no way of acceptance with God till we change our copy and come to claim by a new covenant. Nothing will render us acceptable to God but complete innocence, or else repentance and faith in Christ. While we stand upon our own bottom, alas! the least failing is damnable, and spoils all the good we do; for 'without faith it is impossible to please God,' Heb. xi. 6; Rom. viii. 8, 'They that are in the flesh cannot please God.'

Use. To show the necessity of becoming the disciples of Christ, that you may not satisfy yourselves with anything you do without it or beneath it, till you have taken Christ for your Saviour.

But you will say, What need this ado? We are christians; are not we dedicated to his service, baptized in his name? I answer three things—

1. There is the more need of entering yourselves disciples of Christ because you are baptized, that you may fill up your baptism with answerable duty. The apostle Paul presseth to put on Christ: Rom. xiii. 14, 'But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;' and that because they had put on Christ: Col. iii. 10, 'Seeing ye have put on the new man.' We are more engaged by our profession and covenant sealed in baptism; if we have put on Christ sacramentally, we must put him on really: Rom. vi. 11, 'Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' And indeed this is so far from being an objection, that it binds us the more strongly. However God may deal with infidels, to be sure it will not fare well with you if you mock God with an empty formality, and put him off with a baptismal regeneration, without a real regeneration, if ye put on Christ in profession, and do not really put him on, and know his grace in truth. All are engaged the more strongly that live in the church, not only by the common necessity that is upon all mankind of running to a redeemer, but because of their profession: Rom. vi. 3-5, 'Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death: therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life; for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.'

2. In baptism you were entered by others, therefore in grown years you must enter yourselves by your own consent disciples of Christ. There is a personal act required of all that come to age, that they may stand to the covenant, and own what their parents promised for them. As the parents of the blind man said, John ix. 21, 'He is of age, ask him, he shall speak for himself.' You did by your parents, according to God's institution, covenant to renounce the pomps and vanities of the world, and accept of Christ, but now you are of age, you must speak for yourselves; then every one must come with his own hand, and enter themselves into God's muster-roll: Isa. xlv. 3-5, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring, &c. One shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.' As they grow up they shall engage themselves unto the Lord. Therefore christianity is called a confession, and Jesus Christ is called 'the apostle and high priest of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1; and every christian is a confessor: Rom. x. 9, 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth,' &c.; one that must openly own Christ, and personally profess his subjection to the gospel of Christ: 2 Cor. ix. 13, 'They glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ.' Our renunciation of Christ's enemies, and profession of our faith and resignation to God, should be made with our own mouths when we are able.

3. This personal consent must not only be outwardly professed, but the heart must be renewed, and the bent of it set towards God; for we have not only to do with men, but with God; therefore, Rom. vi.

13, 'Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.' All this is spoken to show the vanity of those that say that there is no conversion in the church, no regeneration but by baptism; these are pernicious errors, that strike at the root of holiness. As there is a conversion from paganism to profession, or confession of the name of Christ, so there is a conversion from confession to reality. We are all bound to enter ourselves as Christ's disciples.

Doct. 2. They that enter themselves disciples to Christ and give up themselves to him must follow him, that is to say, imitate his example.

Reasons.

1. In the general, because this is agreeable to the general sense of religion that is in the hearts of all men. *Ea demum vera est religio imitari quem colis*—This is true religion to imitate what we worship; otherwise men are not true to the religion they do profess. The heathens were so bad, because they were taught *Jovem colere potius quam Catonem*, to worship Jupiter rather than Cato. So christians are to be much better, because it is Christ whom they worship; therefore they are to be pure as he is pure: 1 John iii. 3, 'He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself as he is pure.' A man is not true to his religion if he doth not prize that, and follow after that which he conceits to be most excellent in his god. To despise holiness in men, and pretend to love it in God, is gross hypocrisy. Reason will tell us that the first cause should be the highest rule, that the divine essence and being, as it is the beginning of all beings, so it should be the rule of all perfections.

2. There are many special reasons why Christ should be propounded to us as our pattern and example whom we should follow and imitate.

[1.] Because he is a pattern of holiness set up in our nature. It would discourage us to consider of the deep ocean of the deity; rather we are taught to coast it in our passage to heaven by the banks of Christ's example. He came down from God not only to restore us to God's favour, but to set us an example: 1 Peter ii. 21, 'Leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.' The life of Christ is a living rule, religion exemplified, a visible commentary on God's law. The angels obey God, and we are referred to their example in the Lord's prayer, 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven;' but this could not be so encouraging as when it is done by one in our nature.

[2.] Because there are many advantages by this pattern in our nature; as—

(1.) Our pattern is more complete than if God had been our pattern. There are some graces wherein we cannot be said to resemble God, and therefore we must look for a pattern elsewhere, as humility, faith, fear, hope, reverence, obedience; none of these things are in God, for he hath no superior, and these things imply inferiority and subjection. There are some parts of holiness which stand in a conformity to God, others which stand in a subjection to God, such as man oweth to God as his superior, which hath no resemblance to anything in God's nature, for God is not subject to any; but knowledge, wisdom, justice, mercy, love, purity, we have them in a lower degree, some shadow of them. Now in all these Christ is our pattern: Mat. xi. 29, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart;' in all things that have respect to

suffering and subjection, in patience and self-denial. Our rule was perfect at first, but not our pattern.

(2.) It is an engaging pattern. We are engaged by the rule of our obedience, but much more by Christ's example. The practice of Christ maketh every duty lovely to us, for the disciple is not above his Lord. Masters many times, to shame their servants, will take the work in hand which they grudge at: John xiii. 14, 'If I then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet.' Shall we forbear to follow such a leader?

(3.) It is an encouraging pattern, partly as there is an efficacy in this pattern; as with the gospel or law of Christ there goeth along the ministration of the Spirit, so also with the consideration of his example. It is not a bare moral inducement, but it is accompanied with a real influence of the Spirit. Christ doth not only bless to us his doctrine, but his example; he hath purchased grace that we may do as he hath done before us; he hath divided his Spirit, and shed it abroad among his disciples. Every duty is sanctified by his subjection to it; all his paths drop fatness, and the way to heaven is made more easy because he hath walked in it before us. Partly as it assurcth us of his sympathising with us in our hard service; he knoweth the weaknesses of human nature, and its reluctancies to the law of God. Christ 'learned obedience by the things that he suffered,' Heb. v. 8; and having experienced the hardships of suffering, his heart is entended towards those that are in the like case: Heb. ii. 18, 'For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' Partly because of the perfection of his obedience to cover our infirmities. God hath had full obedience from Christ, and therefore where a poor soul doth its utmost, it can rely on God for acceptance, which is a great encouragement in our work: Rom. v. 19, 'By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'

Use. To persuade us to follow Christ.

1. Our general profession of being christians doth oblige us to be like him; head and members should be all of a piece. If we take the name of Christ upon us, we had need express him to the life: 1 Peter ii. 9, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' If a man should put your name to the picture of a swine, you would account it a disgrace. Oh! what an affront is it to Christ to put his name to the picture and image of the devil! We do but express him in scorn and contempt. When we are wrathful, unclean, covetous, unchaste, sensual, proud, unholy, and say we are christians, what a dishonour, scorn, and contempt do we put upon Christ! What did the heathens say heretofore? *Estimari a cultoribus potest ipse qui colitur*—You may know what one he is whom they worship by them that worship him. We profess to bear the image of Christ, yet are vain, turbulent, carnal, unthankful, unholy. Oh! what is this but to carry the name of Christ in disgrace up and down the world?

2. We shall never be like him in glory unless we be like him in grace also: Rom. viii. 29, 'For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.' Here the

foundation is laid. If you would appear before God with confidence, and not be ashamed at the great day, be like to him, then you shall have boldness: 1 John iv. 17, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in the world.' Otherwise how can we look him in the face? Therefore let us follow him, *assequi nunquam possumus, sequi tamen nunquam desinamus*. Though we cannot follow him as Asahel did Abner, close at the heels, yet let us follow him however, though it be but as Peter followed Christ, afar off, to the high priest's hall.

But wherein should we follow Christ? I answer—

[1.] In his self-denial. This is the first lesson in christianity, and one of the hardest. Christ came from heaven to teach us this lesson; and his birth, life, and death was a continual lecture of self-denial. His birth, it was a great step from God's bosom to the virgin's lap. None can deny themselves as Christ, who, when 'he was rich,' viz., in all the fulness and glory of the Godhead, 'yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich,' 2 Cor. viii. 9. None was so rich as Christ, and therefore none can deny themselves as Christ did. We may talk of flocks and herds, and lands and lordships, and the ornaments of the present life, but he had the possession of a perfect and unbounded happiness and glory, and yet he was born of a woman, he had a poor mother, in a poor place, and was wrapt up in cheap swaddling clothes. He that was God's fellow, the heir of all things, the Lord of angels, was thrust among the beasts of the stable. Certainly Christ came into the world with such a slender provision that we might not stand upon greatness and bravery. His whole life after he was born was exercised with labours and sorrows: Rom. xv. 3, 'Even as Christ pleased not himself;' that is, he did not study the interest of that life which he assumed. Certainly if any had cause to love life, Christ had; his soul dwelt with God in a personal union, in such a near fellowship as we are not capable of, and yet he pleased not himself, but gave up himself for our sins. It is ridiculous to profess him to be our master and not to follow his example. We have no reason to stand upon our points as we do, to be delicate and tender of our interests, when Jesus Christ pleased not himself. We murmur if we have but a little bad entertainment in the world for his sake, and yet we cannot be worse used than Christ was: Mat. x. 24, 25, 'The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord.' We have no cause to complain if we be reduced to coarse apparel, when we remember the swaddling clothes of Christ; or to complain of a hard bed and prison when Christ, was laid in a manger. Christ would teach us hereby that an innocent poverty is better than all the pomp of the world. And for his sufferings, from the cratch to the cross, still he was a pattern of self-denial; therefore they that indulge themselves in all the delights of the flesh seem not to believe in Christ, who was a man of sorrows. We are in a base condition, but two or three degrees distant from dust or nothing, yet how are we for pleasing and satisfying ourselves, even to the dishonour of God, and wrong of conscience!

[2.] In his humility. Christ did not this out of necessity, but choice: Mat. xx. 28, 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to

minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' He came not in the pomp and equipage of princes, but in the form of a servant. How should this check aspiring after and affecting domination, especially in the church. They that love pre-eminence, and would be great and high, seem to affect another Jesus. They that rend and tear all to pieces, either to uphold their greatness or grow greater, have not the same mind that was in Jesus. You should be humble and lowly, and condescending to the meanest offices. It is worth your observation, that in the gospel we are so often told that, after the Lord Jesus had performed some eminent miracle, he withdrew himself, and retired from the multitude, that so he might not be mixed with their praises. Thus when he received that glorious testimony from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God: Mat. iii. 17, 'And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;' he retired into the wilderness. So when he had raised his fame by curing diseases, he ascended up into a mountain, or retired into a ship, and leaves the multitude; and when they would have crowned him king, he refused it: all these were arguments and instances of his humility. Hear and wonder at what you read: John. xiii. 3, 'Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God.' A magnificent preface! Now one would have thought that some rare act of empire, sovereignty, and dominion should have followed. No; ver. 4, 5, he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. The disciples did not wash the feet of their Lord, but the Lord washed the disciples' feet; and what was the meaning of this? See ver. 15, 'For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.'

[3.] In love to the saints: John xiii. 34, 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another;' and John xv. 12, 'This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.' Oh! how express are these injunctions. There is nothing in which Christ was more eminent than in his love; no rancour of spirit, no boiling up of envy, but all love. The apostle propounds it to husbands: Eph. ii. 25, 'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church.' Now how did Christ love his church? With a great love, so as to die for his church. The love of Christ was sincere, not for by-ends; he loved saints as saints, because of his interest in them. So should we love those in whom we see most of the image of God. It was not a blaze, but a constant abiding love; whom he loves he loves unto the end; so must we love the saints. It is true Jesus loved some above others: 'John was the beloved disciple,' John xxi. 20. There was *ἐκλέκτων ἐκλεκτότεροι*, the flower of the disciples, whom he loved most, but he loved them all. We should love not in word, but in deed and in truth. Oh! be filled with love to God and love to the saints, who have his image stamped upon them. You that are believers have cause to love one another. Have we not all the same Father? Are we not children begotten of the same holy seed, the word? Do we not all suck at the same

breasts of the promises? Do we not all sit at the same table, at the Lord's supper? Are we not all clothed with the same robe of Christ's righteousness? and do we not all expect the same glory?

[4.] In his usefulness and profitableness, and of this the whole gospel is a narrative and history. Therefore when the apostle would sum up the life of Christ, he tells us this, Acts x. 38, 'He went about doing good, giving eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, speech to the dumb, healing every sickness, and every disease among the people,' Mat. ix. 35. Full of compassion to the souls of men, Jesus Christ was nothing else but charity covered over with flesh and blood; he was always either giving of blessings or forgiving of sins. All his miracles were not actions of pomp, but of relief and succour, unless it were blasting the fig-tree and sending the herd of swine into the sea, and the fig-tree was barren and the swine was of little use in the Jewish countries. All the miracles of Christ were salutary and healing. We never read he destroyed one man by his miracles, but saved many: Eph. v. 1, 2, 'Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us.' Oh! that we could learn this! None is born for himself, but for the community, and it is better to give than to receive.

[5.] In his piety towards God. If you consider the history of Christ, you will find him much in acts of devotion; he was frequent, and fervent, and reverent in prayer. Frequent: Mark i. 35, 'And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed;' and Luke vi. 12, 'He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.' Alas! we are weary in our ordinary stinted offices of the day. How soon do we grow weary of calling upon God! but Christ spends whole nights in prayer. He was fervent: Luke xxii. 44, 'And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly.' And he was reverent; when he was in the garden, 'he kneeled down and prayed,' Luke xxii. 41; 'And he fell on his face, and prayed,' Mat. xxvi. 39. He was a most diligent observer of the sabbath: Luke iv. 16, 'As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day;' he was diligent in frequenting the public assemblies. Oh! how doth this confute those that, out of height of spirit and a proud conceit of themselves, are above ordinances, and say they were appointed only for christians of the lower form. He praised God for mean and coarse fare, when he had but five barley loaves and two fishes: 'He took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples,' John vi. 11. Alas! when our tables are full furnished we have scarce any serious thoughts of God, that giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

[6.] In his spirituality and heavenly-mindedness. Christ came from heaven, and he lived in heaven all the while he was upon the earth. When he was at the well of Samaria, conferring with the woman there, he discoursed of the well that springs up to everlasting life: John iv. 14, 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.' He drew her from a discourse of ordinary water to a discourse of the water of life. When he was at supper at the pharisee's house, he discoursed of eating bread in God's

kingdom : Luke xiv. 15, 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.' When he had wrought the miracle of the loaves, he discoursed of the bread of life and the manna that came down from heaven : John vi. 27, 'Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you.' When he was at the feast of tabernacles, where they were wont to pour out water, and so to make a pool near the temple, he discoursed of rivers of water and of the flowings of the Spirit : John vii. 38, 39, 'He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.' A rare pattern for us to follow. We should labour as to see all things in God, so to see God in all things, and to be heavenly-minded in all our enjoyments.

[7.] In his obedience to his mean earthly parents. Do you think this is a slight matter ? Christ was God blessed for evermore, yet he submitted to his poor parents. It is said, Luke ii. 51, 'He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.' Though his parents were mean and despicable, yet he was subject to them, and (as it is most probable) he wrought in their mean trade ; for the Jews said, Mark vi. 3, 'Is not this the carpenter ?' Not only the carpenter's son, but the carpenter ; and Justin Martyr says, he was employed in making of yokes and ploughs. The great God becoming man, was subject to his parents. What a lesson hath Christ set to children ! Whatever you be, you can be no greater than Christ, and your parents can hardly be meaner than Joseph, and will you be stubborn and disobedient, and rather govern than be subject.

[8.] In the sweetness and beauty of his conversation, and yet in a strict and winning way. Many men's troubles come from themselves ; they are rough and sour, and do not walk amiably. There is a great deal of wisdom required of christians, that they should walk so strictly, and yet so pleasingly, that they may both represent and endear their religion to others. As it is said of Athanasius, that he was *magnes et adamas* ; he was a loadstone to draw the hearts of the people, and an adamant in the resistance of sin. But what do I speak of Athanasius, when a greater than Athanasius is here ? Jesus Christ did so sweetly dispose himself in all kind of conversation, that he grew up into favour both with God and man : Luke ii. 52, 'And Jesus increased in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour with God and man.' The meaning of which is this, the Lord Jesus was always perfect, and full of holiness, and not capable to receive more than he had ; but he growing from a child to a man, he grew more in wisdom and favour with God and man. As for example, suppose the sun in the firmament were a vegetative and growing creature, it would be full of light the first moment of its creation, yet growing bigger, its light would increase, though it were always full ; so Christ was always full of knowledge and full of grace, yet according to his receptivity and capacity, so was grace conveyed to him. How many are there that decline, and pass from zeal to lukewarmness, from exactness in the ways of God to liberty and licentiousness ! This is to be a falling star, and to imitate the apostate angels, who fell from the state of purity and blessedness in which they were to a state of sin and misery. But Christ increased

in grace, and in favour with God and men; it was a high point of wisdom in Christ so to carry all things that he might gain upon all that he conversed with.

[9.] In the holiness and purity of his life. Though he lived in the midst of enemies that hated him, and were watchful and malicious to spy out all occasions against him, yet saith he, John viii. 46, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' The devils themselves acknowledge his holiness: Mark i. 24, 'I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.' The apostle telleth us, Heb. iv. 15, 'He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;' and 1 John iii. 5, 'In him is no sin;' and 1 Peter ii. 22, 'Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.' He took upon him our natural, but not our sinful infirmities. Christ took the nature without the sin of the nature; the sun of righteousness was like the beams of the sun, that shines all over a sinful world without being tainted with its pollution: Heb. vii. 26, 'Such an high priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.' Christ suffered the torments of hell, at least equivalently, to free us from hell; yet he would not, nor could, commit the least sin, though it had been to free all men that ever had been in the world. Now, 'as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation,' 1 Peter i. 15. Imitate Christ in his holiness, which was a part of his glory, and will be of yours: Mat. v. 8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' Here we should be walking pictures of Christ, that others may see the face of Christ in us. Tread in his steps. Live so holily, that if the bible should be lost, it may be found again in our holy lives.

[10.] In his wonderful patience and meekness. Never any suffered so much, and never any suffered so patiently. How much wrong do others do, but will suffer none! and how much wrong did Christ suffer, but did none! 1 Peter ii. 23, 'Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously;' Isa. liii. 7, 'He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth;' and Isa. l. 6, 'I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.' Job, though a pattern of patience, yet in the extremity of his afflictions fell into impatience, and cursed the day of his birth; but there was no iniquity in Christ, no guile found in his mouth, not one impatient word fell from him; he was made up all of patience. Now in this should the saints imitate Christ: Rom. xii. 12, 'Be patient in tribulation.' The example of Christ's meekness should be the great allay to us when we are transported with the gusts of passion. What an unconformity is there between Christ and us, when there are such mists raised in the soul that the light of reason cannot be seen! Men drunk with passion, how unconformable are they to the meekness of our Saviour! Christ rendered sweet language for bitter, blessings for curses. Did Christ do so? so should christians.

[11.] In love to his enemies. Take that eminent example of Christ, who died for enemies: Rom. v. 10, 'When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.' As for those enemies which

were the instruments of his death, which shed his blood, yet when he was upon the cross, he breathed forth his soul in prayer for them: Luke xxiii. 34, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' He would give his enemies the morning-market of the gospel. He gave his disciples charge to go abroad into the world, 'that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,' Luke xxiv. 47; there where his blood was shed, there would he have the virtue and comfort of it preached. And the apostle presseth this same duty upon us from this example of Christ: Col. iii. 13, 'Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.' We are of touchy, spiteful, revengeful spirits, and cannot pass by the least wrong, and think it a disgrace so to do; we think a man is a dolt, and hath no mettle in him, if he be not presently heated into a distemper; but Solomon says, Prov. xix. 11, 'The discretion of a man defers his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.' This was the temper of Christ, to exercise love and tender affection to his enemies. Now, if we imitate Christ in these things, then are we christians and disciples indeed.

END OF VOLUME XVI.

SERMONS UPON MARK X. 17-27.

SERMON VIII.

And take up the cross.—MARK X. 21.

DOCT. 3. All those that follow Christ should prepare their shoulders for the cross.

Here I shall show—(1.) What it is to take up the cross; (2.) The reasons why they must so do.

I. What it is to take up the cross.

1. Negatively.

[1.] Not to devise a voluntary affliction to ourselves; as Baal's priests gashed themselves: 1 Kings xviii. 28, 'They cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances, till their blood gushed out upon them;' and the pharisees had their self-disciplines. Christ is a lover of human nature, and he hath put no such severe penance upon us. This is to make the cross, not to take it up. Origen, that was too allegorical in plain texts, was too literal when he castrated himself upon that text, Mat. xix. 12, 'There be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake.' Christ only intended power over our natural affections.

[2.] Not to draw sufferings upon ourselves by our own rashness and folly: James i. 2, 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.' He saith, when ye 'fall into them,' not when ye draw them upon yourself. It was Tertullian's error to say that afflictions are to be sought and desired. Man is never satisfied with his present condition; sometimes we question God's love when we have no afflictions, and anon when we have nothing but afflictions. In all these things we must refer ourselves to God's pleasure, not desire troubles, but bear them and improve them when he layeth them on us. Christ hath taught us to pray, 'Lead us not into temptation;' it is but a fond presumption to cast ourselves upon it. Philastrius and Theodoret speak of some that would compel men to kill them out of an affectation of martyrdom; this was a mad ambition, not a true zeal. And no less fond are they that seek out crosses and troubles rather than wait for them, or by their own violence and miscarriage draw a just hatred upon themselves. Christ would not that for his sake we should run head-

long into dangers, and without necessity ; there is a medium between faintness and rashness. Christ himself did not take up the cross till it was laid upon him. If a man set fire to his own house, he is liable to the law ; if it be fired by accident he is pitied and relieved. Therefore we are not to seek the cross, or make it, but bear it, and take it up ; not to fill the cup ourselves, but to drink it off when God puts it into our hands to take it up ; when we cannot avoid it without sin, or a breach upon our consciences, we are not to shift then, or avoid it by unlawful means.

2. Positively. To bear it patiently and willingly when we cannot avoid it without sin. When we are brought into a necessity of either suffering or sinning, in such cases there must be a cheerful, free, voluntary submission of ourselves to suffer the whole will of God. To take up the cross implieth—(1.) Faithfulness and integrity without shifting ; (2.) Patience and submission without murmuring ; (3.) Joy and cheerfulness without fainting.

[1.] Faithfulness and integrity without shifting. Many distinguish themselves out of their duty, and when God calleth them to suffering put a fallacy upon their souls : Gal. vi. 12, ‘ As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised, only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.’ They cannot live without honour, and ease, and plenty, and therefore turn and wind themselves to shift the cross. Our Lord Jesus offered himself : Ps. xl. 7, 8, ‘ Then said I, Lo, I come ; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart.’ So should we resign ourselves when the will of God is so, and give up the comforts of our lives when we can hold them no longer, and be glad we have something of value to esteem as nothing for Christ. The apostle speaks of some ‘ who are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose god is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things,’ Phil. iii. 18, 19. *Multum interest inter theologum gloriæ et theologum crucis.* Men that have no love to God, but only serve their fleshly appetites, and look no higher than riches, and honours, and pleasures, and applause, will never be faithful to Christ. There are a sort of men that study to save themselves, not from sin, but from danger, and accordingly accommodate themselves to every interest. As the men of Keilah dealt with David, they entertained him for a while, but when Saul pursued him, they resolved to betray him, they would come into no danger and trouble for him ; so they deal with religion.

[2.] Patience and submission without murmuring. We show our obedience to God in suffering his will, as well as doing his will. He is sovereign in his acts of providence as well as in his laws. And this we must do without murmuring or repining against God, as if he did us wrong, or did deal hardly with us : Isa. xxx. 15, ‘ In quietness and confidence shall be your strength ;’ that is, in faith and patience, humbly submitting to God’s will, and depending on his favour and gracious protection. There must be a submissive attendance upon God : Ps. lxii. 1, ‘ Truly my soul waiteth upon God ; from him cometh my salvation ;’ Ps. xxxix. 9, ‘ I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it ;’ not uttering impatient words ; God’s will silenceth all.

[3.] Cheerful behaviour under the cross : Rom. v. 3, 'And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also ;' James i. 2, 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.' Afflictions to God's people do not only minister occasion of patience, but great joy : 2 Cor. vii. 4, 'I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation,' *υπερπερι σσενομαι τῇ χαρᾷ* ; I overflow with joy. A dejected spirit doth not behave itself answerably to its principles, privileges, and hopes. Are you at peace with God, and have you communion with him at every turn ? And have you hopes of glory, and are you so troubled when you are a little cut short in your temporal comforts ? A christian should be at an indifferency, to rejoice as if he rejoiced not, and mourn as if he mourned not. Dejection of spirit argueth too great addictedness to worldly comforts, and love of ease and flesh-pleasing, and ingratitude for all the spiritual good we have received. Shall God lay in such great comforts, and after such great receivings do you take it ill to be put to a little expense ? Job xv. 11, 'Are the consolations of God small with thee ?' If you had a due sense of the world to come, you would be glad to keep your conscience, though you lose your coat : Heb. x. 34, 'Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance,' Rom. viii. 18, 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.' Do you look for a glory to be revealed in you ? Then look upon all the sufferings of this life as a feather put into the scales against a talent. We are to have a sense of our condition, yet in regard of the honour done to us to bear a part of Christ's cross, and in regard of the comfort and happiness provided for us we should be cheerful, that it may not be known to be an unwilling patience, and extorted by force. There is one expression more : Luke ix. 23, 'Let him take up his cross daily.' How daily ? There are fair days as well as foul days, and the face of heaven doth not always look sad and lowering. How then are we to take up the cross daily ? I answer—

(1.) It notes a daily expectation of it ; the first day that we begin to be christians, we must reckon on the cross : Mat. xvi. 24, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.' These words are the christian's indenture, and every one must seal to this before he can call Christ master. As porters stand in a street waiting for a burden for them to carry, so must a christian be ready and prepared to meet with any hardship which God may lay out for him in his christian course ; or as the Israelites ate the first pass-over 'with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand,' Exod. xii. 11, as ready for a journey, so should a christian be ready to go forth at God's call : Acts xxi. 13, *ἐτοίμως, ἔχω*, 'I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' Evils familiarised are less burdensome ; by renewing our daily resolution the evil is the less when it cometh.

(2.) The frequency of our conflicts, as if every day there were some exercise for our faith and patience. We are not to prescribe to God how long or how much affliction he shall exercise us with. No ; though it were all the days of our lives, we must be content ; it is but a moment to eternity. We must take up our cross as often as it lieth in

our way, and we cannot baulk it without sin: Gen. xlvii. 9, 'Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.' Man is born to trouble. The world is a valley of tears, not the mount of the Lord, where is fulness of joy, If there were no cross, we should not be in tune and consort with the rest of the world, for here all the creatures are a-groaning.

(3.) The word 'daily' sheweth that private and personal calamities are a part of the cross, as well as the afflictions of the gospel, and for the profession of the name of Christ. Afflictions are either for God or from God. Sickness and death of friends and loss of estate by an immediate providence are a part of our cross. There is an enduring persecution for the name of Christ, and an enduring affliction at the will of Christ. Ordinary crosses do not exclude the comforts of christianity; these occasion experience of God and trial of grace, and are a part of God's discipline for the mortifying of sin, and are happy opportunities to discover more of God and of grace to us. Yea, there is more reason for submission in these, because God taketh us into his own hands. A man that stormeth when a bucket of water is cast upon him, is patient when he is wet with the rain that cometh from heaven.

II. The reasons why those that follow Christ should prepare their shoulders for the cross.

1. That we may be conformed to our head. He had a bitter cup tempered for him by his Father's hand: John xviii. 11, 'The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' and we must pledge, him. Jesus Christ was 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,' Isa. liii. 3, and there would be a strange disproportion between head and members if we should altogether live in delicacy, ease, and pleasures. The bitter cup goeth by course and round, first to Christ, then to his apostles, and it goeth from hand to hand ever since. The apostle speaks of *ὑπερήματα τῶν θλίψεων χειστοῦ*, Col. i. 24, 'that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.' There is Christ personal and Christ mystical. Christ personal, as he is complete in himself, so his sufferings are complete; but the sufferings of Christ mystical are not perfect until every member have their own allotted share and portion. Indeed our sufferings are but the drops upon the brim of the cup; he drank up the dregs. The great wave of affliction did first beat upon him, and being thereby broken, some small sprinklings of it do light upon us; we bear the hinder part of the cross of Christ. It is but reason that those that will partake with Christ in his kingdom should be partakers with him in his sorrows, and that the soldiers should follow 'the captain of their salvation,' Heb. ii. 10, and fare as he fared: John xv. 20, 'Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than the Lord; if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.' We cannot in reason expect better entertainment than he found in the world. If you had an high esteem of Christ, and a low esteem of yourselves, you would easily consent to submit to the will of God herein. It is an unseemly daintiness to be nice and tender of carrying the cross after Jesus Christ, as if we were better than he. Many christians will seem to express much devotion to a crucifix, or those chips of wood which importers cry up for pieces

of the cross of Christ; but here is true respect to the cross of Christ, to be willing for Christ's sake to bear afflictions with patience and humble submission. The apostle counted all things but dross and dung: Phil. iii. 10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death.' There is a great deal of sweetness and spiritual comfort in suffering after, for, and with Christ; we should count all things dung and dross to gain this experience. This should be comfort enough to a gracious heart, that thereby he is made more like his Lord and master.

2. Because of the world's hatred: John xv. 19, 'If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.' A thorough christian will be sure to meet with opposition. We are told, 2 Tim. iii. 12, 'Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' If a man will be lukewarm, not caring how things go, he may find friendship with the world; but he that hath any zeal and conscience, and would be faithful, the world will hate him as an object reviving guilt: 1 John iii. 12, 'Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother; and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.' 'The spiritual and carnal seed cannot agree; Gal. iv. 29, 'For as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, so it is now.'

3. It is needful, in order to our following Christ, that our pride and carnal affections should be broken by the cross: 1 Peter i. 6, 'Now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.' There is a need of the cross to reclaim us from our wanderings, to cut off the provisions and fuel of our lusts, to make us mindful of heavenly things, and that we may retreat to our great privileges, and to humble us for sin, to stir us up to prayer, and to wean us from the world. *Tribulatio tam nobis necessaria est quam ipsa vita, immo magis necessaria, et multo utilior quam totius mundi opes et dignitates*—Affliction is as necessary to us as life itself, yea, more necessary and profitable than all the wealth and honours of the world; and therefore, being so necessary and profitable for us, we should be willing to take up the cross.

Use 1. Is of information. It informeth us—

1. With what thoughts we should take up the stricter profession of christianity, namely, with expectations of the cross. We cannot but expect great inconveniences and troubles in Christ's service, therefore let us not flatter ourselves. Many think they may be good christians, and yet live a life of ease and peace, free from troubles and afflictions; this is all one as if a soldier, going to the wars, should promise himself peace and continual truce with the enemy, or as if a mariner, committing himself to the sea for a long voyage, should promise himself nothing but fair weather and a calm season, without waves and storms; so irrational it is for a christian to promise himself a life of ease and rest here upon earth.

2. That a christian had need be a mortified and resolute man.

[1.] A mortified weaned man: 'That which is lame is soon turned

out of the way,' Heb. xii. 13. If we have any weak part in our souls, there the assault will be most strong and fierce. A garrison that looketh to be besieged takes care to fortify the weak places, and where there is any suspicion of entrance; so should a christian mortify every corrupt inclination lest it betray him, be it love of honour, pleasure, or profit.

[2.] He had need be a resolved man: 'His feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,' Eph. vi. 15; or else in hard ways he will soon founder and halt. That *ἐτοιμασία*, that preparation is a resolved mind to go through thick and thin, and to follow Christ in all conditions. Well, then, it is no easy matter to be a christian indeed. Nature in the general is against bearing the cross. Christ himself, his human nature recoiled and shunned it without sin; and to us it is more grievous to suffer: Heb. xii. 11, 'No affliction for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.' And besides, lusts, if they be not purged out, will tempt us to stumble, and we need to be armed with great resolution, or else after we have launched out into the deep with Christ, we shall be ready to run ashore again. Now most christians are not mortified, and so they trip up their own heels. Most christians are not resolute, and do but take up religion as a walk for recreation, not as a journey, so as to be prepared for all weathers.

[3.] What fools they are that take up religion upon a carnal design of ease and plenty in the world: they quite mistake it. There are inconveniences that attend religion in peaceable times, but the profession will afterwards engage us in the greater troubles; and therefore men do but make way for the shame of a change, and other inconveniences to themselves, that hope for temporal commodity by the profession of the gospel. The great drift of the gospel is to draw us off from the comfort of this world to the concerns of a better, and to bring us to follow a naked Christ upon unseen encouragements; therefore they that have temporal things in their eye quite change the nature of the gospel, and make Christ another Christ.

[4.] That the course which Christ taketh to draw in proselytes is quite different from that of Satan and the world. Satan sheweth us the bait and hideth the hook, but Christ telleth us the worst at first. The world useth to invite followers with promises of honours and riches, and Christ telleth us not of the crown, but the cross. Why so? Partly to discourage hypocrites, who will come and cheapen and taste, but will not buy. Christ will not deceive them, but have them count the charges. Partly to forearm his people, that they account afflictions will come, and prepare accordingly. We entered upon the ways of godliness on these terms, to be willing to suffer afflictions when the Lord seeth fit, and therefore we should arm ourselves with a mind to endure them, whether they come or no. God never intended Isaac should be sacrificed, yet he will have Abraham lay the knife to his throat. Partly because sorrows foreseen leave not so sad an impression upon the spirit, the evil is more familiarised before it cometh: Job iii. 25, 'For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.' When we suffer our fears to prophesy, and do expect evils, they smart less; *præcogitati mali mollis ictus*; but when they come unlooked-for, it is the more burdensome.

He saith his lesson best that often conned it over. Partly because it allayeth the offence when we see nothing befalling us but what we were warned of beforehand: John xvi. 1, 'These things have I spoken to you, that you should not be offended;' and ver. 4, 'But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.' The scripture speaketh nothing at random; we pretend to believe them when they are read, and yet we complain when they are fulfilled. For all these reasons it is necessary that those that will be Christ's disciples must be forewarned in peaceable times of approaching troubles, and the rather because we are so apt still to promise great things to ourselves.

Use 2. Is of reproof of several sorts.

1. Of those that suffer per force, by compulsion and constraint, not willingly. It is not enough to bear the cross, but we must take it. It is said of the three children, that 'they yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God,' Dan. iii. 28; that is, they cheerfully suffered themselves to be cast into the furnace, rather than worship any but the true God. Many suffer, but it is unwillingly and against stomach, with repining and impatience under the hand of God, like refractory oxen, that draw back, and are loath to submit their necks to the yoke, especially such as have not been acquainted with sufferings. Patience per force is no true patience, little better than the patience of the devils and damned in hell, who suffer misery and torment against their wills, being forced to it. Rebellion and want of subjection is the very curse of crosses; it maketh the burden heavier than otherwise it would be, and causeth God to redouble his strokes, as a stubborn child under the rod hath the more blows.

2. Those that murmur not against the cross in general, but such a cross; if it were any other they could bear it. Christ saith, 'Take up the cross,' indefinitely, whatever God is pleased to lay on us; we must not be our own carvers, but stand to God's allowance. The patient is not to choose his own physic; God knows what is best for us. Men under their troubles wish that God would afflict them in another kind, lay any trouble upon them rather than that which is laid, and think they could bear it better. The poor man wishes any other cross but poverty, the sick man he could bear poverty better than the pain of sickness. He that hath a long and lingering sickness wisheth for a sharp fit so it might be short; and, on the contrary, another feeling a sharp and violent sickness, could wish for a longer, so it were less painful. Thus we are apt to dislike our cross, which God layeth on us for the present. But this is disobedience to God and folly too, for if God should leave us to ourselves to choose our own crosses, we should choose worse for ourselves than the Lord doth, that affliction which is hurtful and dangerous for us. The Lord knows what is best for us and in what vein to strike us.

3. Those that desert their duty and their station, as being discouraged by the cross; these are more culpable than the former: Ps. cxxv. 5, 'As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.' He had been speaking of 'the rod of the wicked resting on the lot of the righteous,' ver. 3; and therefore by them 'that turn aside' he meaneth such as dare not trust

God, nor adhere to the comfort of the promises; these are in the same rank with open enemies: Rev. xxi. 8, 'The fearful and unbelieving' are joined together.

4. Those that seek to make their worldly advantage and the profession of the gospel agree further than they ever will; and when they cannot frame the world and their conveniences to the gospel, they will fashion a gospel to the world and their carnal courses in it. It is a pity such had not been of the Lord's counsel, when he first contrived and preached the gospel, that they might have helped him to some discreet and mild course, that would have served the turn for heaven and earth; but do what ye can, 'the way is narrow that leadeth to life,' Mat. vii. 14; 'Take my yoke upon you, &c., and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' Mat. xi. 29.

5. Those that suffer, but it is for their evil-doing; these take not up the cross of Christ, but the cross of the thieves. Or if a man put himself upon needless danger, he taketh not up Christ's cross, but his own, and so hath his amends in his own hands. Afflictions so coming may be sanctified by repentance, good in their use, though not in their cause. When we suffer for our faults, we ought to bear it patiently, but we cannot suffer so cheerfully: 1 Peter iv. 15, 'But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters.'

Use 3. To press us to take up the cross, and to take heed of grudging and heartless discouragement. Now, that you may so take up the cross, see the hand and counsel of God in it. So it was as to Christ's cross: Acts ii. 23, 'Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;' John xviii. 11, 'The cup which my Father hath given me,' &c.; and so as to the christian's cross: 1 Thes. iii. 3, 'That no man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.' All things must obey God's appointment, and every one must yield up himself to the disposal of God. And we have Christ's example, who took up his cross for us, and doth not call us but to walk in such ways as he hath trodden before us: 1 Peter ii. 21, 'For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.' He hath paved the way with the blessing of his example, whatever the cross be. Are we banished our country? Our Lord Jesus was a stranger upon earth, and when he was in the cradle he was carried into Egypt. Are you poor? You cannot be poorer than Christ, who had not where to rest his head. Are you constrained to hard fare? He thought a draught of water a courtesy: John iv. 7, 'Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink;' and on the cross they gave him vinegar to drink when he was athirst. Christ preached in a boat in the midst of the waves. Do but read the history of Christ's life, and the hardship he endured, and will you be scandalised at a little suffering? Are you reproached? Christ himself was called a devil, accused of blasphemy and sedition, and you must not think to be better used than he was. *Quum Christus ipse crucem et supplicia passus sit tantum illis pretii accessit, ut nemo istis dignus sit,* saith Luther—Since Christ hath endured the cross, there hath such a value and honour accrued to it thereby, that no man

is worthy to have this honour put upon him. We bear it together with Christ: Rom. viii. 26, 'The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities,' *συναντιλαμβάνεται*; 1 Cor. x. 13, 'He will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' Such a master may well expect cheerful servants. He will give us peace and comfort in all our sufferings: John xvi. 33, 'These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;' 2 Cor. i. 5, 'For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.' Jacob, when he slept, and had a heap of stones for his pillow, had then the visions of God; and usually when we are taken off from the comforts of the world, then we have the clearest manifestations of the love of God: Rom. v. 5, 'The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.' It is an honour for us to suffer with Christ and for Christ: Phil. i. 29, 'For unto you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.' And all this, how bitter soever it be for the present, will end well: Acts xiv. 22, 'We must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God.' After this howling wilderness there will be a Canaan. We have had our times of good, and is it nothing to pass over so much of our time in peace and comfort? Job ii. 10, 'Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?'

Use 4. If all that enter themselves disciples of Christ must prepare for the cross, then are we indeed prepared for it? You will think all this needeth not in times of peace, when religion is under the covert and protection of the laws, and we are not called to the afflictions of the gospel, yet certainly such questions as these are not to be entertained coldly and carelessly. Have you prepared your shoulders for the cross of Christ? It is necessary to put it to you—

1. Because of private crosses, which are incident to all, such as loss of goods and relations, pains of body, sickness, reproach, contempt, and the like. There is none get out of the world without some exercises: 1 Peter v. 9, 'Knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world;' Heb. vi. 12, 'That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.' All the heirs of salvation have their conflicts before they come to enjoy their hopes. The earth is a middle place between heaven and hell, and partaker of both; it is only evil that is in hell and only good that is in heaven; but here our state is mixed, our afflictions are tempered with some comforts, and our comforts seasoned with some afflictions. Earth must be earth, and heaven must be heaven; here we must expect our trials: Job ii. 10, 'Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?' therefore we need to be provided; there is good that need to be tried, and bad that need to be purged out.

2. Because we should be always ready to encounter the greatest difficulties. Though we do not always lie under tribulations and persecutions, yet we should be always prepared, *præparatione animi*, as Joseph prepared for the years of scarcity in the years of plenty. The wise virgins had not only oil in their lamps, but oil in their vessels;

we should not only have grace for present use, but against future temptations. Now have you indeed this preparation of heart? And because a man may crack and vaunt it before the temptation cometh, let us consider who hath this preparation of heart, so as cheerfully, willingly, and patiently to bear the cross, and who hath it not.

[1.] He that is not strict and holy in a time of peace will not be cheerful in a time of trouble: Acts ix. 31, 'Then had the churches rest, &c.; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.' When we are not called to passive obedience and suffering, our active obedience should be more cheerfully performed. Now where is it so? Our fathers suffered more willingly for Christ than we speak for him; they were not ashamed to die for a crucified Jesus, they endured the fire better than we can a frown or scoff.

[2.] He that is not mortified to the world, but loveth a flesh-pleasing life, is but ripening himself for apostasy: James v. 5, 'Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.' A fond and delicate person, that hath a value for worldly contentments, will be grieved when he cometh to part with them; he that is corrupted with prosperity, will be dejected with adversity; but no man is prepared but he that is crucified to the world by the cross of Christ, that liveth in a holy weanedness in the midst of his present enjoyments: Gal. vi. 14, 'But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.'

[3.] He that is not abounding in charity, and willing to part with temporal things in a way of free distribution, will be loath to part with them by constraint, and by way of sacrifice and voluntary surrender to God, when he calls for them. I offer this, because the churches that were free from persecution are still charged with the duty of charity; and it is a general precept, Gal. vi. 10, 'As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith;' because he that will not part with his superfluities willingly to God, will never part with his substance and the main of his estate with rejoicing, when it is made a prey to the violence of men. It is irrational to think that he that grudgeth at a command that requires him to part only with a little of his temporal conveniences, will not storm at the violence when all is taken away: James v. 1, 'Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.' There are their howling times, when that wealth which they sat abroad upon is taken away in an instant.

[4.] He that cannot digest lighter afflictions, how will he bear greater? Jer. xii. 5, 'If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?' The prophet was all in a pet because the men of his town and neighbourhood had conspired against him, and were very troublesome to him. God tells him, If thou canst not bear this, how wilt thou do when thou art exposed to greater trials? There are private persecutions, therefore father and mother

are put into the catalogue of things to be renounced by us when we take to Christ : Luke xiv. 26, ' If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' If a frown and disgrace, and loss of preferment, be so much, how will you endure rapine, and torture, and all manner of violence and evil ?

[5.] He that begrudgeth a little pains for God, and counts it so tedious to converse with him a little while in duties of holiness, and reckons all labour too much, and is loath to ' strive to enter in at the strait gate,' Luke xiii. 24, how will he endure torments, and expose the body to all kind of sufferings ? *Necesse est, ut ei honestum vile sit, cui corpus carum est*—He that is so tender of his ease, so delicate that he cannot endure the labours of the gospel, how will he bear the afflictions of the gospel ? If it be irksome to put the body to a little trouble in prayer or meditating, or other holy duties, how will he rejoice in the midst of all tribulations that shall befall him for Christ's sake ? Thus you see how few are prepared for the cross.

SERMON IX.

And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions.—MARK X. 22.

WE have hitherto seen the young man at his best ; now we shall find him discovered and laid open in his own colours. It was well that he came to Christ with such reverence and seriousness about such a weighty question as ' What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life ? ' It was well if he could say truly, ' All these have I kept from my youth. But now, here is the event and issue of this interlocutory discourse between him and Christ ; when Christ bid him ' Sell all, and take up his cross, and follow him,' then ' he went away sad,' &c.

Here observe—

1. How he was affected with Christ's advice, ' He was sad at the saying, and went away grieved.

2. The reason of his sorrow, or why he was thus affected, ' For he had great possessions.'

In the first part we may observe—

[1.] The kind of the affection ; he was not angry, but sorry ; he doth not fret and fume, but goes away sorrowful.

[2.] Observe the degree of it ; it is expressed here by two things—a sad heart, and a heavy countenance. The sadness of his countenance I gather from the word *στυγνάσας ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ*, ' He was sad at that saying.' The word properly signifies he lowered at that saying ; the lowering of the heavens is expressed by that word, ' So the sky was red and lowering,' Mat. xvi. 3, *πυρρᾶξει γὰρ στυγνάζων ὁ οὐρανός*. Then the sadness of his heart, *ἀπῆλθη λυπούμενος*, ' He went away grieved.' In Luke xviii. 23, it is *περίλυπος ἐγένετο*, ' He was very sorrowful.' Note,