

things, he were not God; something would be done in the world exempted from his providence. But it is not so: 1 Chron. xxviii. 9, 'The Lord searcheth all hearts.'

[2.] His omnipresence. God is in all things, and through all things, and above all things: Eph. iv. 6, 'Who is above all, and through all, and in you all;' Acts xvii. 28, 'In him we live, and move, and have our being.'

[3.] He is our judge. How shall God judge what he knoweth not?

2. The various ways he hath to discover secret sins.

[1.] The ministry of angels: Ecces. v. 6, 'Neither say thou before the angel, It was an error;' 1 Tim. v. 21, 'I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things;' 1 Cor. xi. 10, 'For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels.'

[2.] Sharp afflictions: Gen. xlii. 21, 'And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother;' 1 Kings viii. 47, 'If they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned.'

[3.] Breaking out of sin: Ps. xxxvi. 2, 'Till his iniquity be found hateful;' 2 Tim. iii. 9, 'Their folly shall be manifest unto all men.'

[4.] Sometimes terrors of conscience: Mat. xxvii. 4, 'I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood.' We vomit up our own shame.

## SERMON XV.

*But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.—Eph. v. 13.*

In this verse the apostle opposeth the light of christianity to those deeds of darkness which were committed among the heathen. *Ἀντικείμενα παραλληλούμενα μάλιστα φαίνονται*—Opposites do illustrate one another. How secretly soever the things were done by them, yet the light that shineth from the word of God and the lives of christians doth condemn them, and dart conviction into the consciences of them that commit them, and also discover to others that God's people are in a better way. Christianity discovereth heathen practices not only to be mean and low, but filthy and base; as light is the direct means to discover what the darkness hath hid: 'But all things that are reprov'd,' &c.

In the text we have—

1. An assertion, 'But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light.'

2. The proof of it, 'For whatsoever doth make manifest is light.'

1. An assertion or proposition, where two things are to be considered—

[1.] Something supposed; that the doctrine of christianity is the

true light or test by which things are to be judged. The way of heathenism being compared with it, showeth this is light: Ps. cxix. 105, 'Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.' So Prov. vi. 23, 'For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life;' Prov. xv. 31, 'The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.' All these places show that God's word is the true light. Now God's word may be considered either as known and believed, or as obeyed and practised; consider it either way, it is still light. As known and believed, it is a light to direct our own way and steps, our general choice or particular actions; as obeyed and practised, it doth direct others, as it shineth forth from us to them; as God's word is a light, so holiness is the shining forth of this light.

[2.] That which is asserted is, that all things which are reprov'd and disallow'd are made manifest by the light; '*verum est index sui et obliqui*. The light discovereth itself, and all things that differ from it; that which discovereth truth doth also discover error and falsehood; that which manifests what is right doth also manifest what is wrong. A holy doctrine doth discover truth and error, and a holy life doth discover good and evil, right and wrong. The word is a directive light to show us our duty, and a corrective and convincive light to awaken a due sense of sin. There is a twofold property of light; it may be considered either as *lux exhilarans*, as comfortable: Eccles. xi. 7, 'Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing is it for the eyes to behold the sun;' or as *lux redarguens*, as a reprov'ing light. So the gospel hath not only a refreshing light to comfort penitent believers, but a reprov'ing and discovering light to awaken the secure and careless: John iii. 20, 'He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.' The light of the gospel cheereth as it discovereth the grace of God, or reproveth as it discovereth the sins of the world.

2. The proof is taken from the common nature of all light, natural and sensible, or spiritual and intellectual: 'Whatever doth make manifest is light.' Natural light maketh manifest things proper to it; so doth spiritual light things that belong to its sphere, things morally good or evil.

*Doct.* That the light of christianity, shining forth in the word of God and the lives and actions of christians, is a great means of reprov'ing and convincing the world.

In this point—

1. I suppose that christians have a heavenly light communicated to them; for the apostle speaketh to such as 'were sometimes darkness, but now are light in the Lord,' ver. 8; and elsewhere Christ's disciples are said to be 'the light of the world;' Mat. v. 14, 'Ye are the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.' The disciples then spoken to are not considered under the notion of apostles and ministers; for the disciples Christ speaketh unto are the same to whom other parts of the sermon are directed and referred, and they contain general duties, which are the common concernment of all christians; and as yet none of Christ's disciples were invested with a peculiar office or ministry; afterwards some of them were empowered

and sent abroad with a special commission to preach. Therefore all christians are said to be 'the salt of the earth,' and 'the light of the world;' not only 'light in the Lord,' but 'the light of the world.' Jesus Christ is originally so: John viii. 12, 'I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness.' But ministerially and subserviently all christians are so. Light is to shine to others, not to itself. A christian hath not his knowledge for himself alone, nor his grace for himself only; he is to reprove, and direct, and guide others in the way of life: Phil. ii. 15, 'That ye may be blameless and harmless as the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.' The stars are the shining part of the heavens, so they are the luminous part of the world, both for brightness of knowledge and purity of conversation. There is a night of ignorance and sin upon others, but they are to guide and direct others into the way of life by their wisdom and holiness: 1 Thes. v. 5, 'Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness;' that is, such to whom God hath granted the means of knowledge and sanctification, and made them effectual to these ends, that they may be both illuminated and sanctified.

2. I suppose that they are true to their profession, that they walk as children of the light, that they behave themselves as a people into whose hearts the gospel, which is the true light, hath shined; for otherwise there are not such perverters of the world as false christians, who, professing christianity, live wickedly, or no better than other men; these rob Christ of his glory, they are 'worse than infidels,' 1 Tim. v. 8, while they profess the faith, and yet contradict the ends of it. Christ came not only to redeem the world, but to renew the world; but they debauch it by their sensual lives, even they, though they profess to be entered into the renewed estate. They usurp the name of christians, to the apparent disgrace of Christ, and making void his office. And when they should propagate the faith, by their ill way of living they confute it; and instead of confirming the weak, offend the strong; and besides that self-condemnation they bring upon themselves, they harden the world, and so betray the religion they do profess. Christ is not answerable for these, for they are his enemies, though seeming friends, while they live contrary to his laws.

3. That this light shineth forth both in their words and deeds. Both are of great use to convince the world, both the doctrine which they profess, and their holy conversations, and both must go together. So it was with Christ: John vii. 7, 'The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.' Christ's testimony was both by life and doctrine. And of Noah it is said, Heb. xi. 7, 'He condemned the world.' He was a preacher of righteousness, and he prepared an ark at the command of God, with vast expense and charge; he exhorted them to repent, and his preparing an ark was a real warning to the impenitent world that a flood was coming. So all christians shine as lights, holding forth the word of life both in profession and practice: Phil. ii. 15, 16, 'Among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.' Either of them are an accommodate or proper means to convince the world.

[1.] The doctrine which they profess, hold fast, and adhere to. There is a light in God's word which doth not only show the right way to everlasting life and true happiness, but disproves any contrary course. To come to our journey's end we need a way, and light to see it and find it out. Our end is eternal life, and the way is stated in the gospel, without which direction we soon wander and lose ourselves in a maze of perplexities, not knowing whither we go, 'putting darkness for light, and light for darkness,' Isa. v. 20. But it is not direction, but conviction we are now upon. This light is mighty, forcible and powerful: Heb. iv. 12, 'The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' The word of God is, like himself, living and active, piercing into the depths and secrets of men. The priest in dissecting the sacrifices is not more accurate in separating and observing those things which are secret and closely joined together, than it is in discovering the thoughts and imaginations and most cunning contrivances of the heart. If any be obnoxious to the sentence of this word, it findeth them out, and discovereth their hypocrisy. The priest's sharp knife cannot enter so far into the secret part of the sacrifice as this word will enter into the secrets of the heart. They searched diligently if there were any blemish in the sacrifice. Heathens have felt this virtue: Acts xxiv. 25, 'And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.' The prisoner maketh his judge to tremble, and the judge was an infidel, none of the tenderest-hearted; the evidence of his reasoning he was not able to resist. He came out of curiosity to hear Paul, his conscience boggles within him, and he is in an agony. Yea, natural men have such a sense of this shining and piercing light which is in the word, that they fear it before they feel it: John iii. 20, 'They will not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd.' It is in itself a discovering light, but evil-doers hate it, lest it should convince and discover them to themselves, and therefore stand aloof from it, and shun all means of knowing themselves, which showeth a secret jealousy of this searching power which is in the word.

[2.] Holiness of life. Not only is the light of God's word considered here, but the holy life of the christian, which is also an awful and convincing thing, because it hath light in it, and shines to us. It is not words prevail so much as deeds. Light hath its power as it is held forth in our words, but much more as it shineth in our lives for the illumination and conviction of the world: Mat. v. 16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' The most convincing splendour is in the works of christians; when they do not only speak, but do great things, then the world seeth and acknowledgeth that you have a spirit and a wisdom that they have not: Mark vi. 20, 'For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.'

4. This then is that which we are to make conscience of, that our light may be a reprov'ing light to the wicked and carnal world; and that for these reasons—(1.) Because of our many and great

obligations; (2.) Because of the many benefits which come thereby.

First, Because of our great obligations, both to God and man.

[1.] Our obligations to God, whose creatures we are, and whose glory we are bound to promote. But here I shall not consider you as men, but as renewed men; and I will prove—

(1.) That God is glorified when the light of religion shineth forth in a holy conversation and godliness. God the Father is glorified, for holiness and goodness is the image and resplendency of God; he is discovered to the world to be what he is, a holy and good God. As we are not to betray the honour of God wherewith we are intrusted, so we are to do great things for him; and a greater we cannot do than aright to represent him to the world, and to keep up his remembrance in the hearts of men, that from us and by us they may know what a God he is; for we glorify God, not by adding to him, but representing what he is: 1 Peter i. 15, 'But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.' The world is greatly ignorant of causes, and therefore looketh much to effects; they observe what the people of God are, and thereby judge of God himself. Therefore it concerneth us greatly that we do not leaven men with ill thoughts of God; the more pure and holy we are, the more do we beget this thought in the minds of others, What a holy God do they serve! 1 John i. 5, 6, 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.' God is perfect purity; if we favour ourselves in any degree of licentiousness and impiety, we bespatter God with our lies, and put a great dishonour upon him in the eyes of the world: 'I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen,' Ezek. xx. 9. But if we walk in purity and holiness, we show that we have communion with God, who is all pure and holy, and so beget a good character of him in the minds of men; for by this means the light we have received from him shineth forth to others. Christ is glorified as the head of the renewed estate, by whose laws we live, and whose people we are. We show to the world what is the proper influence of his doctrine: 2 Cor. iii. 3, 'Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, manifested by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.' Those that hold forth his doctrine in word or deed are said to glorify him; for this account he giveth of his disciples to his Father, John xvii. 10, 'I am glorified in them,' that is, by their faith and doctrine. God is glorified in deed (and this is that we are upon) when the doctrine of the gospel is imprinted on their hearts, and shineth forth in their lives; it sendeth us with letters of recommendation to the world. You may know his mind, and what his gospel is, by what is stamped upon your hearts; and by the fashioning and moulding your lives you declare plainly to others what a holy doctrine Christ is the author of. So the Spirit is glorified as his operations are perfected in us: 1 Peter iv. 14, 'If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.' The Spirit is glorified as a sanctifier and as a comforter. As a sanctifier he mastereth those

fleshly lusts by which the rest of the world are captivated; and as a comforter he supporteth us in the greatest trials and afflictions. So that all the persons in the Trinity receive due honour from us. We add nothing to God, but we are to tell the world what he is.

(2.) I will prove that this was God's end in enlightening us, and calling us with a holy calling: 1 Peter ii. 9, 'But ye are a chosen generation, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' We should illustrate and make his glory more conspicuous, who hath wrought such a gracious and powerful change in us. First, we wonder at the light ourselves, and then cause others to wonder at it. That which is God's end in bestowing all these privileges should be our great end and the business of our lives, namely, to show forth his perfections in the world. Our being called out of darkness into light is a favour, an honour, and a trust. It is a favour, considering our wretched estate; before we were in darkness, and saw no light, neither knew our misery nor remedy. It is an honour, considering the grace and happiness we are called unto, to be sons of God, and heirs of glory, translated to a state of light, life, and liberty. And it is a trust, for this light is a talent that must be improved for God; every one is to be accountable for what he hath received. Being made objects of his special grace, we are bound also to be eminent instruments of his glory in the world, and therefore not suffer this work to die upon our hands.

[2.] Our obligations to men; there is a debt of duty which we owe to them. Surely it becometh every one that is graced and favoured by God to be a singular benefactor to the world, and being himself drawn into the light, he should promote the kingdom of light, life, and love to others: Luke xxii. 32, 'And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.' Besides, as creatures which are of a bastard production never procreate and bring forth after their kind, so mongrel christians mind not this work. But true grace filleth us with compassion and love to souls; and them that are possessed with it, as fire turneth all about it into fire, so they endeavour to make others like themselves; a good man is a common good. Certainly it is every man's duty in some considerable degree to do good to the world, and to be mutually and signally active for the true and real interest thereof. Now the more we seek to draw them out of that evil way and state they are in, the more do we show our zeal for the public good; and the more corrupt the world is, the more should it stir up our pity, and the more intent should we be, upon all occasions, to represent the evil of their ways by a contrary conversation. Nothing but the light of holiness will invite them to regard religion, and embrace its ways, and submit to its power; when it is commended in the sight of men, not only by words, but by deeds, it is set forth with greater advantage. If we honour our religion in words only, we are but as a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. But the light that shines forth in deeds pierceth the heart and wounds the conscience to the quick, and the better may we expect to reclaim them from the way of perdition wherein they walk.

Secondly, The benefits that come thereby.

[1.] If it rests only in conviction, it is a great safety to religion, a

blessing Christ prayed for : John xvii. 21, 'That the world may believe that thou hast sent me ;' and ver. 23, 'That the world may know that thou hast sent me.' The bare conviction of the world is a great blessing : John xvi. 8, 'And when he is come, he will reprove (or convince) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.' It is promised the Spirit shall convince the world ; not convert, but convince ; and not only the unregenerated and unconverted world, but the reprobate lost world, who finally persist in their impenitency and disobedience. It conduceth much to the advancement of Christ's kingdom. As, for instance, is it not a mighty advantage that the careless and serious read the same bible, own the same baptism, and have the same creed, though they do not both attain salvation by it ? Many speak highly of God that do not own him and choose him for their God : Dan. ii. 47, as the great king Nebuchadnezzar answered Daniel, 'Of a truth it is, that your God is a God, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret ;' Acts v. 13, 'And of the rest durst no man join himself to them, but the people magnified them.' Some have an honourable esteem of the people of God. Besides, it cleareth God's process at the last day : Mat. xxii. 12, 'How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment ? and he was speechless.' He came in thither though he had not a wedding-garment. Again, their conviction conduceth to other men's conversion. As the Samaritans believed when their great leader, 'to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest,' Acts viii. 10, professed the faith and was baptized, ver. 13, though he still remained 'in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity,' ver. 23. It is no small benefit that christianity hath gotten such esteem as to be made the public profession of nations. It is for the safety of the church. These convictions, though they do not change their enemies' hearts, yet they break their fierceness, that they are not such bitter enemies. Pliny, moved by the piety of christians, obtained a mitigation of persecution. Hatred is restrained by fear. A carnal christian hateth a godly man, and feareth him. Once more, conviction may bring on profession and a temporary faith, and so the church hath benefit by their gifts or by their protection. If men of power, they serve as a hedge of thorns about a garden of roses ; if men of parts, they may be of use to defend the common christianity, and may serve, as the Gibeonites, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water ; or as they that built Noah's ark, who perished themselves in the flood : as a living tree may be supported by a dead post. The church hath great benefit by carnal men's gifts.

[2.] This conviction and disproof of their practices often tendeth to and endeth in conversion : 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25, 'But if all prophesy, and there cometh in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest ; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.' Thus may you probably work upon their hearts. They may come scornors and go away worshippers, proclaiming that God is really among you ; and this by the word preached and the scripture interpreted. So also by the light of the word breaking out in your actions ; when once they come to a sight of their sins, they may be the better induced to leave and forsake them.

This light pierceth also into the conscience. They see their former way of living is so vile and abhorred, and those noble and holy principles you live by are to be embraced: 1 Peter iii. 1, 'That if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;' that is, they may be induced to receive the gospel. The ministry of the word is usually the ordinary and principal means of conversion to God; yet sometimes he blesseth the conversations of his people; without this the best discourses may harden men in their prejudices, rather than reclaim them from their sinful ways. Carnal men do accurately pry into the secret practice of those that are religious, that they may find occasion to shake off the awe of truth; therefore we should be the more circumspect. They are called our observers: Ps. xxvii. 11, 'Lead me in the way of truth, because of mine enemies;' in the Hebrew, 'those that observe me.' God may make use of this contrary to their intention, that their very observers may be a means of much good to their souls.

[3.] Thereby your profession is justified and vindicated. There lie many prejudices in the heart of man against the gospel; these are better confuted by a real than a verbal apology, by showing the true and genuine force of religion, and what power it hath to change the heart and life: 1 Peter ii. 12, 'Having your conversation honest among the gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.' The world is apt to represent strict christians as a pack of dissemblers, and their religion as a peevish obstinacy or fond superstition. Now your miscarriages justify them in those misapprehensions; but a holy conversation stoppeth their mouths, and silenceth all their slanders. So the 15th verse, 'For so is the will of God, that with well-doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.' A holy christian carriage doth bind up their mouths, when never so much enraged, as they muzzle up the mouths of wild beasts. Now then it lieth upon your choice, whether you will convince the world or justify the world; as Israel is said to justify Sodom, Ezek. xvi. 52. If you by your lives declare that you have worse, or no better principles than the carnal world, you justify them; but if you live at another rate, upon higher principles and for nobler ends, you convince the world and please God.

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

1. That though by the light of nature we have some sense of the turpitude of sin, yet we have not a perfect knowledge of it; the light of christianity giveth us that. Some sense they had, some knowledge of sin, and the shame that was in it, therefore they did run into secret with it; yet he speaketh here of a further discovery and manifestation of it by the light that is by the gospel: 'But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light.' Many things, through the benefit of the light of nature, are written by the philosophers concerning virtues and vices, yet there is infinitely much more manifested in the word of God than in all their writings; so that we need a divine revelation even in moral duties.

[1.] Because our duty is not so clearly stated by man's reason as by God's authority. When it is found out by nature, it is left more to the



uncertainty of dispute. Bare nature is a hard book to study in, and the lessons of it not easily found out. While the wise men of the world were debating, practical godliness died on their hands, and men strove to be witty rather than to be good.

[2.] It is so coldly delivered, and not with that life and power as appeareth in this higher light of God's word. And that is the reason why natural light hath been so unsuccessful in the world for the reclaiming and reducing of mankind. A cold doctrine, that hath little evidence by real holiness, will not cure a dark diseased mind and heart. Moonlight hath no vital heat in it, therefore nothing groweth by it, *Lunæ radiis non maturescit botrus.*

[3.] Because it is so defective.

(1.) Nature discovereth only some gross sins: Rom. ii. 15, 'Which show *ἔργον νόμου*, the work of the law written in their hearts,' &c. Heathens only condemned vices that appeared in external actions, as if virtue were not to regulate the purposes and intentions of the heart as well as the works of external deportment; whereas outward actions are good and bad so far as they take their tincture from the heart. If some of them have thought the will and purpose to do evil faulty and culpable, they are few, and have confined it only to settled purposes and deliberate counsels, and so not touched our corruption to the quick; and this is but one of a thousand, and that by chance; so that nature doth but twinkle here, not break forth with a full and powerful light.

(2.) The light of nature reacheth mostly to the lower hemisphere of duties, those of the second table; there it is most pregnant; it cannot lead us higher, and conduct us to God and heaven. When they sat abroad upon religion, what a goodly chimera was hatched! Rom. i. 21, 22, 'Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.'

(3.) In second-table duties it is defective; in humility and obedience.

(1st.) As to humility, we find little of that principle among them. Nature loveth to pride itself in its own plumes. Self-love is the principal pride in the soul, and vainglory the end of their religion; to excel others was all their aim.

(2d.) As to obedience to magistrates and superiors, which can never be so firmly bound upon us as by the bond of conscience; not by the fear of wrath and vengeance, not by the love of civil quiet and public good. They obey best that obey not for fear of wrath, but for conscience' sake: Rom. xiii. 5, 'Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake.'

2. It informeth us that some general sense of the shamefulness of sin will not break the power and force of it. The heathens in some measure knew what was sin, and that it was a shameful thing, not of any great use to them; they committed it still, though in secret; but the light of christianity doth so reprove it as to cause us to hate it; it doth or may give us such an awakening sight and sense of it as to show what an odious thing it is. By the light of christianity we see it in its proper colours.

[1.] The nature and malignity and evil of sin, what it is, not a natural disorder, but a breach of the law; that it is *ἀνομία*, 1 John iii. 4, 'A transgression of the law,' written by the finger of God on man's heart.

[2.] The rise and beginning of it, together with the manner of its propagation: Rom. v. 12, 'Whereas by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' Whence this apostasy of mankind cometh, that it is the work of the devil that Christ came to destroy: 1 John iii. 8, 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil;' without knowing which, the justice of God's providence, and the holiness of his nature can never well be understood.

[3.] The several kinds and branches and degrees of sin: Rom. i. 18, 'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;' with its aggravations, whereby it cometh to be exceeding sinful to us, which giveth a more intimate sense of it: Rom. vii. 9, *ἐλθούσης ἐντολῆς*, 'When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died;' ver. 13, 'That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.'

[4.] The effects and consequences of it. Loss of God's favour: Isa. lix. 2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.' It interrupted that near and intimate communion we had with God; it made us abominable in his sight, not fit to appear before him with comfort. And eternal wrath: Mat. xxv. 41, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'

[5.] Its remedy and cure: Rom. viii. 3, 'God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.' This work of the devil was only to be destroyed by the Son of God. We cannot wash away the filthiness, nor expiate the guilt of it, by any sacrifice and laver that we can use; nothing else can free us from the wrath of God but the blood of his Son, nor cleanse our souls from this venom and poison which is gotten, not only into the will and affections, but into the very mind and heart, but the light and power of his Spirit.

3. It informeth us why Satan and his wicked instruments do so hate the light, and oppose and hinder its propagation in the world, either by the preaching of the word or the lives of christians, because the works of darkness are manifested by the light. The devil maligneth the success of the gospel: 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon them.' The gospel layeth open the policies and impostures of Satan, by which he beguileth and circumvents souls. It is an enemy to the devil's kingdom: Eph. vi. 12, 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.' So for his instruments: 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;' 1 Peter iv. 3, 4, 'For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries. Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.' A spiritual slumber is fallen on the carnal world, and they are loath to be disturbed; as Jonah, when the sun groweth hot, and beateth upon his head, falleth a chafing. The devil is a prince of darkness, and delighteth in darkness, and envieth to the world this blessed light and the benefit of it.

*Use 2.* Is exhortation, to persuade us to get light. It is a shame to be ignorant of our necessary duty. If a man be asked whether he can paint or carve? he may answer without shame, I am ignorant; that skill is not necessary; but if he be ignorant how to love and please and serve God, then he is brutish, like the horse or mule, that hath no understanding.

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## SERMON XVI.

*Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.—EPH. v. 14.*

THE apostle confirmeth what he had said, that christianity is light, by a testimony. All that are converted by God, and brought into a state of light, the doctrine they profess is light, and they are to put to shame the deeds of darkness by the light that shineth from them into the consciences of others: 'Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' As if he had said, The drift of the word of God is to call us to a timely conversion, or to awaken us from the sleep and death of sin, that he may enlighten us with the light of the gospel, and we may walk accordingly, and so have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

In the words we have two things—(1.) A preface; (2.) The testimony produced.

1. The preface, 'Wherefore he saith.' Who saith? God in the scriptures. But where doth he say it, since we read not this sentence anywhere in so many formal and direct words?

*Ans.* [1.] It may be it was some sentence of Christ then in recent memory, as that, Acts xx. 35, 'And to remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

[2.] It may be this is said to be the voice of God, because it is the drift of the whole scripture; for all tendeth to this sum, that those who are asleep, and dead in sin, be stirred up to repentance, and coming to Christ by faith, that he may give them light; that is, that they may be enlightened by his grace, and so fitted for eternal glory: Titus ii. 11-13, 'The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath