

and the great blessing which Christ intended to us ; therefore it should be more prized and sought after by us. When Christ was devising what he should do for his church to make it honourable and glorious, he took this course to make it holy.

[1.] This is that which maketh us amiable in God's sight : Ps. xi. 7, 'The righteous God loveth righteousness ; his countenance doth behold the upright.'

[2.] It is indispensably required by God : 1 Thes. iv. 3, 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification.'

[3.] It is a great part of our salvation by Christ : Titus iii. 5, 'According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.'

[4.] It is a means to the rest, especially eternal life : Acts xxvi. 18, 'That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me ;' Heb. xii. 14, 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.'

6. It shows who are partakers of the benefits and fruits of Christ's death. His kindred by incarnation is reckoned to them ; he is doubly akin to them, *respectu incarnationis sue et regenerationis nostræ*, both as he is born of a woman and as they are born of God : Heb. ii. 11, 'He that sanctifies and they that are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.' His sacrifice is reckoned to them : Heb. x. 14, 'By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' Our Lord regenerates, justifies, sanctifies all who shall have benefit by his death. But who are they ? There are two words used, 'sanctify' and 'cleans.' To be sanctified argues a dedication to God ; so there is a difference between you and others. To be cleansed implies a change of the state of your hearts ; so there is a difference between you and yourselves. They are a people set apart to live and act for God : Ps. iv. 3, 'The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.' They are not what they were before : 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'Such were some of you, but ye are washed, sanctified,' &c. And this change should be more sensible and visible every day.

SERMON XXXII.

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.—EPH. v. 27.

IN this verse we have the last end of our redemption by Christ, the perfection and consummation of our sanctification in the life to come. In setting forth of which take notice—

1. Of our nearness to Christ, 'That he might present it to himself ;' that is, assume or take us home to live with him, and abide always in his presence.

2. The effect of this union and nearness, which is—

[1.] Generally expressed, 'A glorious church.' It is an allusion to the spouse of a king, or a royal marriage: Ps. xlv. 13, 'The king's daughter is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold.' Her glory is now more internal than external and conspicuous, and also shall be eternal and without end.

[2.] Particularly explained, or wherein the glory of the church doth consist.

(1.) Negatively, 'Not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.' A spot is in the garments, a wrinkle is in the flesh; and then follow the general words, 'Or any such thing.' Neither with filthy garments, nor with shrivelled flesh, nor blind, nor lame. Metaphors are tender things, and must not be strained. Some say no spot of sin, or wrinkle of misery, when the flesh is dried up with age or sorrow. It is safer to say in general, No defect or deformity shall remain; no remnant or stain of Adam's sin left, whether it be sin or misery: Cant. iv. 7, 'Thou art fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.'

(2.) Positively, 'But that it should be holy, and without blemish,' perfectly pure, and exempt from either blemish or blame, for the word signifieth both; and the allusion is to a spouse that excelleth in beauty and comeliness.

Doct. That the final end of our redemption is that we may be presented at the last day glorious in purity and holiness.

I shall present this note or point of doctrine, as it lieth in the text, by going over the several branches of it, which will fully make it out. Give me leave to take notice of these things—

First, Of the final end of our redemption; and there—

1. Of his love, that Christ could not satisfy himself with doing us good here, but he would provide for our glorious estate hereafter. In the former verse he had spoken of what Christ would do for us in this life, whilst the ordinances of the word and baptism were in force, 'That he might sanctify and cleanse us by the washing of water through the word.' Now this did not content him, but he had a further end, and that is in the text, that he might bring us into a nearer familiarity and presence with himself, that we might not only be employed by God in some remote service, or at a distance from him, but minister before his throne. Here is a state consistent both with sin and misery; the church is not without her spots and infirmities, and also her wrinkles and troubles; but in the state of the life to come there is no such thing. Here we enjoy God upon earth, but there in heaven, a better paradise than that we lost by Adam. We have our blessedness in the heavenly places: Eph. i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;' where we converse with God, not as Adam in paradise among the beasts, but among the angels.

2. That our glory in heaven is the fruit of Christ's death, who procured this eternal inheritance for us. It is not merited by our holiness, but purchased by Christ. Take away his death, there can be no expiation of sin, therefore no inheritance, no covenant or promise of the inheritance; for it is said, Heb. ix. 15, 'That by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called may receive the promise of eternal

inheritance.' All the promises of eternal life are made for and in consideration of Christ's satisfying the justice of God, and meriting his favour for us; without that we can neither have right to nor possession of this blessed estate. It is good to consider what respect the death of Christ hath to our estate of glory, and what respect likewise holiness hath to it. The death of Christ hath a meritorious influence upon it, as it purchaseth the gift, and the promise, and the Spirit to enable a man to fulfil the conditions of the promise. But holiness doth qualify for this blessedness, partly as it is the condition without which we cannot obtain it: Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;' and partly as it denoteth the persons who by the gospel grant have alone a title thereunto: Mat. v. 8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;' and partly as it disposeth and fitteth us for this blessedness, for they are formed for this very thing: 2 Cor. v. 5, 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who hath given us the earnest of the Spirit;' and are made meet for it: Col. i. 12, 'Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'

3. It implieth that none but those who are purified by the blood and Spirit of Christ have interest in this privilege. All these have an interest, and none but these, for we must not disturb the order of Christ's benefits; for, first, he doth sanctify and cleanse the church by the washing of water through the word, from the guilt and filth of sin, and then present it to himself as a glorious church. They must be regenerated by the Spirit, and have their consciences purged from dead works by his blood, before they are capable. We must be children before we can be heirs; none are children but they that are born of the Spirit, and so justified and adopted into God's family; none can have the whole sum, but they that have the earnest and first-fruits, for that is God's method: 2 Cor. i. 22, 'Who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts;' Rom. viii. 23, 'And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.' We cannot expect the flower or fruit without the seed, nor the end without the beginning. Now holiness doth participate of glory, and heaven is virtually in the seed of grace.

Secondly, That we enter into this everlasting estate by being presented to Christ; for in the text it is said, 'That he may present it to himself,' that is, as the bride to the bridegroom, that the marriage may be consummated. It was the ancient custom that betrothing preceded marriage; as Deut. xx. 7, 'What man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in battle, and another man takes her.' Thus Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together, Mat. i. 18. So we are contracted to Christ now, but married hereafter; as Rev. xix. 7, 'Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.'

In the scripture there is a threefold presentation spoken of—

1. One made by believers themselves: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you

therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service ;' Rom. vi. 13, 'Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.' When we give up ourselves to God by Christ, and employ our time, and strength, and all our faculties for him.

2. It is ascribed to the apostles, or Christ's messengers, who have a charge ; and when they have done their work, present us to God as the fruit of their labour : 2 Cor. xi. 2, 'But I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy ; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.' It is the duty of the ministers of the gospel to prepare and fit Christ's people, that they may be a spouse to him ; and it is a blessed thing when we can produce them as the fruit and pledge of our faithfulness ; for in the great day of our accounts this will be our crown and our rejoicing, that we have converted any to God, or prepared and fitted them to be accepted by Christ.

3. This presentation is applied to Christ himself. Now two ways is Christ said to present us—(1.) To himself ; (2.) To God.

[1.] To himself ; that is spoken of in the text, which is nothing else but his assuming and taking us home to himself, according to the marriage covenant and contract. As when Esther was chosen to be wife to the great king Ahasuerus, she was first to be prepared, and to accomplish the months of her purification, Esther ii. ; so first Christ sanctifieth and cleanseth us by the word and ordinances, and then he presenteth us to himself, as a bride made ready for the solemn day of espousals.

[2.] To God ; so it is said, Col. i. 22, 'To present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprouvable in his sight ;' that is, of God the Father ; for the antecedent you find, ver. 19, 'It pleased the Father.' Now Christ's presenting us to God may be looked upon—

(1.) As an account of his charge, as having done the work for which he was sent into the world. Christ as mediator hath an office and trust committed to him, of which he must give an account ; for so he is God's, 1 Cor. iii. 23, and 1 Cor. xi. 3, 'The head of Christ is God,' and he must give an account to him. Now this account he giveth when he doth present himself and all his flock to God, saying, Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.' Blessed are they that shall appear in that company and congregation, when they shall be presented to God as a prey snatched out of the teeth of the lion.'

(2.) As an act of rejoicing in his own success ; as a minister taketh delight in those whom by grace he hath gained to God : 'What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming ?' 1 Thes. ii. 19. So our Lord himself rejoiceth to see the proof and virtue of his death, and that his blood was not shed in vain. This is recompense enough for all his sufferings : Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.' The words may be understood of foresight when it was designed, or of sight when it was accomplished. And some good inter-

preters understand, 'Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,' Heb. xii. 2; that he had in his eye as a reward of his sufferings his numerous seed, or the church of the saints, whom he should purify and set apart for God.

(3.) As an act of his love and recompense to the faithful, who have owned him in the world. Christ will own them before God, men, and angels, be they never so mean and despicable here upon earth: Luke xii. 8, 'Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall also the Son of man confess before the angels of God;' Rev. iii. 5, 'But I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.' Christ will solemnly and honourably own them as his, and given to him in the great day, when all the holy angels shall be present. Therefore we should often think of this solemn presentation, that we may not be ashamed of Christ in the world.

Thirdly, I observe in the text, that those who are presented to Christ, and by Christ to God, is his church, and is a glorious church: 'That he might present it to himself,' *ἐνδοξον τῇ ἐκκλησίαν*. This is often spoken of in scripture. I shall produce but two places; the first is Col. iii. 3, 4, 'Our life is hid with Christ in God; but when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory.' The life of a christian now is a glorious life, but it is a hidden life. The spiritual life is hidden under the natural: Gal. i. 22, 'And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ.' And hidden under the veil of infirmities and weaknesses: 2 Cor. xii. 10, 'Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities.' And the obscurity and meanness of their condition: Heb. xi. 36-38, 'And others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.' Reproaches: 1 Peter iv. 14, 'If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you;' 2 Cor. vi. 8, 'By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers, and yet true.' They are counted a company of dissemblers, and yet they are the faithful servants of the most high God. But the glory of our life is manifested when Christ is manifested and doth appear. God's children are owned before the world: Rom. viii. 19, 'For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.' And there is no weakness or infelicity to obscure our life; because of our relation to the Lord of glory, we are made glorious. The other place is 2 Thes. i. 10, 'When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.' Mark, first, the apostle doth not say, the saints shall be glorified, but Christ shall be glorified in them, that is, objectively, because of the glory he puts upon them. Again, he doth not say, Christ shall be glorified in himself; though that is true, for his glory shall be revealed also: 1 Peter iv. 13, 'That when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy;' but Christ shall be 'glorified in the saints;' there shall a glory result to Christ from the glory he bestoweth on

them. Christ is glorified in the saints two ways—actively, as he is lauded and praised by them, and objectively, or by the impression of glory upon them; though the saints should be silent, the work would speak for itself. But the other expression is, that Christ will be ‘admired in those that believe.’ We admire at things that exceed knowledge and expectation, or such things as were never seen before, nor could the heart of man conceive how these things should ever be brought to pass. Now this glory will exceed all our hope and expectation. But who shall thus admire? The good angels, that wonder now at the grace of the Redeemer: 1 Peter i. 12, ‘Which things the angels desire to look into.’ They shall wonder then at the final effect, the glory he puts upon his people; they stand by and admire what Christ meaneth to do with creatures that are but newly crept out of dust and rottenness. The wicked are amazed and astonished when they see them so much loved and honoured whose lives they counted madness and folly; they counted them the off-scouring of all things, and Christ maketh them to shine as the stars in the firmament. Lastly, the saints themselves are filled with wonder, finding their expectation so far exceeded.

But more distinctly, there is a threefold glory put upon the saints—(1.) Relative and adherent; (2.) Intrinsic and inherent; (3.) Circumstantial.

1. The relative glory of the saints standeth in three things—

[1.] In the free and full forgiveness of all our sins; and our absolution is pronounced by the judge’s own mouth sitting on the throne: Acts iii. 19, ‘Repent, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.’ Here we have a right to pardon by the grant of the new covenant; and it is in part executed, and put into act by the gift of the Spirit; but then the judge, *pro tribunali*, doth solemnly declare and determine our right, and absolve and accept us unto life in the sight of all the world; then is the sentence pronounced, and also executed and put in force; and ever after do all the effects and fruits of sin cease.

[2.] A participation of judicial power. At the last day the saints are not only judged, but judges: 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3, ‘Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?’ *Per modum suffragii*, as assessors with Christ on the bench, or assessors in judicature, however they are here reviled, slighted, and persecuted.

[3.] They shall be publicly owned before God and his angels by head and poll, when Christ shall present them to God, and lead them as the shepherd of the sheep into their everlasting fold, as having acquitted themselves to God, conquered temptations, and kept his charge, that Christ may own them without any impeachment of honour to himself: 1 Thes. iii. 13, ‘To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.’ The pure and holy are then acceptable to him, and shall be presented by him to God, as a full proof of the virtue of his death.

2. The glory inherent and internal: Rom. viii. 18, 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.' Now it is revealed to us, then in us, fully accomplished in our persons, souls, and bodies.

[1.] In our souls. This glorious estate lieth in the sight and fruition of God. The object is glorious: John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world.' The manner of sight or knowing is glorious: 1 Cor. xiii. 12, 'For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.' More intimately and more immediately: we shall have the knowledge of the mysteries of salvation, which now we are ignorant of, and know God as truly as God knoweth us.

[2.] In our bodies. There is a great deal of glory put upon the bodies of the saints: Phil. iii. 21, 'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' A glimpse was given to us in Christ's transfiguration: Mat. xvii. 2, 'And he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.' So when he appeared to Paul from heaven, his body was wonderfully glorious; he could not endure the light which shined to him from heaven round about, Acts ix. 3. When the saints shall appear with him in glory, 'the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father,' Mat. xiii. 43.

3. The circumstantial glory; there—

[1.] The place is glorious, the heavenly paradise: 2 Cor. xii. 4, 'He was caught into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.'

[2.] The company is glorious. All the glorified saints and angels: Heb. xii. 22, 23, 'But ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.'

[3.] Their daily work and exercise is glorious, even to give glory to God for ever and ever: Rev. vii. 9, 10, 'After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

Fourthly, I observe that the principal glory of the church lieth in its purity and holiness: Jude 24, 'Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory.' It must needs be so; for—

1. This is God's glory: Exod. xv. 11, 'Glorious in holiness.' There is nothing in God which is not God himself, and his unity forbids us to divide him; but yet the scripture teacheth us to distinguish his perfections, and comparing them one with another, give them the advantage, as conduceth more to his honour and our profit. Therefore thus we conceive of God, that moral perfections are to be preferred before

natural ; it is better to be wise than to be strong. Now among moral perfections, how shall we range them ? Justice, mercy, holiness : our interest leadeth us to prefer mercy before justice, being laden with sins and miseries ; that his mercy rendereth him more amiable to us, because of our miseries and necessities. But now we may give holiness the pre-eminence, because this conduceth most to the glory of God and the perfection and benefit of human nature, and doth most preserve the awe of the majesty of God in our hearts ; for holiness is a more awing thing than power. Power checketh and restraineth any violent attempts against sovereign majesty, but holiness daunteth the heart, and commandeth reverence, and representeth God as fit to be loved and feared. Now, then, to be like God is one of the highest perfections of the creature, and when the image of God is perfectly restored, they are in their most glorious estate.

2. Sin is the cause of all our misery ; and therefore when we are completely holy, our misery which we incurred by the fall of Adam is then at an end. It was sin which was the cause of separation from God : Isa. lix. 2, 'But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.' So holiness is the means of union with him. Then when we are perfectly holy, by necessary consequence we are perfectly happy : Ps. xvii. 15, 'But as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.' Well, then, might the apostle define this glory by purity and holiness ; nothing letteth and hindereth the happiness of the creature when sin is fully done away.

3. Then we are dispositively fitted for the full enjoyment of God. Our glory is begun by holiness, and is still increasing to a further glory : 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' All privileges depend upon holiness, our pardon on regeneration or change of nature, and heaven on change of life ; and therefore, when justification and sanctification are complete, our joy will be full.

Fifthly, This purity and holiness shall then be exactly complete. While we are in the world, neither is the whole church perfect, nor particular believers.

1. Not the whole church. The state of the church is quite different from what it will be hereafter ; that needeth not much proof, if we consider the disordered state of Christendom, as it is in its present posture. Alas ! how much is the glory of it now eclipsed by the lamentable imperfection of its members and corruption in worship, and rent and torn by divisions and sects, and scattered by persecutions of those that have power over it ! God's children are pilgrims to another world, and can hardly get leave to pass through this world, though they would pay for their bread and water, as Israel offered to Edom. How many enemies come forth to stop them in the very wilderness ! But most of the calamities in the church come from itself, its diseased members or foolish guides ; and no wonder that the ship in the hands of ill pilots dasheth so often against the rocks. It is spotted and stained by the calumnies and reproaches of adversaries, but chiefly by the

scandal of its own children. To speak nothing of the openly corrupt, who have turned the doctrine of Christ into vain janglings, corrupted his worship by the pageantry of empty and ridiculous ceremonies, and have turned its discipline and government into a temporal domination, alas ! it hath nearer wounds at home, by sidings and emulations, whilst every party is impaling and enclosing the common salvation, uncharitably excommunicating all others ; and the ball of contention is tossed to and fro ; and that party that can rustle down others that stand in their way think Christ only favours them. Though with all this disadvantage, it is ' better to dwell in the courts of the Lord than in the tents of wickedness ; ' yet how much is this short of that blessed state when all is glorious, pure, and holy, and the church is adorned as a bride fit for her husband, and that great council of souls, with perfect harmony, are lauding and praising God for evermore, and live sweetly together without any discord in this holy mount !

2. Nor particular believers : Phil. iii. 12, ' Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. ' Paul's confession will fit all our mouths. While we are in the world, we need that something should be purged and washed from us ; but then there is ' no spot, or wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing. '

But if the soul be thus presented to Christ, when shall it be ? Either we must acknowledge perfection in this life, or some purgatory after death. I answer—

[1.] The thing is clear, but we may be ignorant of the time and manner, and reserve it to experience.

[2.] It is most likely and probable that the same term that puts a period to our lives doth also to our sins. As the soul in the first conjunction with the body began to be defiled and infected with sin, so that a man, when he first beginneth to be a man, is a sinner, so in the separation of the soul from the body, it is perfectly sanctified, and presented to Christ without spot and blemish. The veil of the flesh is then rent, and they are admitted into the immediate sight of God.

[3.] Those that have sense to the very last do then most eminently desire and expect the glory of God ; as Stephen : Acts vii. 59, ' And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. '

[4.] If we say the soul, when it is separated from the body, be sanctified in its passage, there is no great inconvenience, for sanctification is a part of glorification : Rom. viii. 30, ' For whom he justified, he sanctified ; and whom he sanctified, he glorified ; ' and in a moment it may be perfected.

Use 1. To exhort you often to think of this estate. Oh, that our hearts were exercised more about these things ! Grace would not be so dead, and comfort so scanty ; it would enliven us and quicken us to duty ; and, in the apostle's phrase, ' make us abound in the work of the Lord ; ' that all will be glorious at Christ's coming. More especially our whole life should be spent in thankfulness to God, who sent his Son to redeem us to this end : 1 Peter i. 3, 4, ' Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that

fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you ;' Eph. i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.'

2. Let us improve it.

[1.] To glorify God and Christ, who intend so much glory to us. We would all be glorified in heaven, but few think of glorifying God upon earth. Our Lord teacheth us another lesson: John xvii. 4, 5, 'I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.' God at first placed us at the lower end of the world, that we may glorify him there, before he translateth us to the upper end of the world to praise him for ever. Here is our work, there we receive our reward; our work is on earth, where so few mind it, where there is so much opposition, so many difficulties and temptations to divert us, where it costs us shame, and pain, and trouble; here we glorify him self-denyingly, there triumphantly.

[2.] Let the foresight of this estate comfort us against our abasement in the world. We are now obscure, afflicted, poor, disgraced in the world; our names are cast forth as evil, or, as the prophet speaketh, 'Ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and become the infamy of the people,' Ezek. xxxvi. 3; but Christ will present us to God as glorious, without any spot or blemish. Therefore let us not avoid crosses, nor any abasement, scorn, and disgrace for Christ's sake; everything that relateth to Christ hath an honour put upon it for its relation to him: Heb. xi. 26, 'Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.' Besides, the final reward of eternal glory doth abundantly recompense all our disgraces. If the cross giveth us a title to the crown, we have no reason to grudge at it. Therefore let us patiently suffer present ignominy and contempt; count yourselves rather bound to praise God that you are thought worthy of the world's hatred. Alas! what is man's day to Christ's day? 1 Cor. iv. 3, 'But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment,' or man's day, *ἀπὸ ἀνθρωπίνης ἡμέρας*.

[3.] Improve it to holiness. See that this work be begun, for heaven is but the perfection of what is begun in this life; and when it is begun, never give over till you attain this perfect estate. The more eminency in holiness you get, the more glorious you are. And you have this encouragement, that Christ will prosecute his work till he hath brought it to this effect. Christ will make his people at last without spot or wrinkle; ere all be done it shall be so. We are not faultless, but Christ will not rest till we are faultless, if he see you use the means carefully.

[4.] Improve it to the love of God's people; a necessary lesson in these days, when they fly from others that are in trouble, as the rest of the herd from the wounded deer: Ps. xv. 4, 'In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord;' Ps. xvi. 3, 'But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight;' Ps. cxix. 63, 'I am a companion of them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts;' Heb. x. 33, 'Partly while ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions;

and partly while ye became companions of them that were so used.' We must not measure the glory of the people of God by the judgment of sense or bodily eyes, for it is spiritual and future ; it lieth not in pomp, but holiness ; and this holiness is perfect at the last day.

[5.] Improve it to thankfulness to Christ ; for we have all our holiness from Christ ; from first to last, he is the author and finisher ; he purchased and procured the Spirit of sanctification for us : Titus iii. 5, 6, ' According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.' And also this glorious estate ; he gave himself not only to sanctify his people, but glorify them. Heaven is the fruit of his blood and love : Rev. i. 5, ' Who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' First he purchased it for us, and then communicateth it to us.

END OF VOL. XIX.