

SERMON UPON 1 JOHN II. 20.

But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.—
1 JOHN ii. 20.

IN the context you have a caution against seducers, who are represented under the term of antichrists, because they took upon themselves to be sent of God, as Christ was, and yet opposed the dignity of his person and the interest of his kingdom. For their number, they are said to be many, because they swarmed everywhere; and for their prevalency they had proselyted many of the baser and looser sort of christians; but the more solid were preserved untainted. And what was their preservative we are told in the text, 'But ye have an unction,' &c.

This is mentioned—

1. Partly to show the reason of their standing; not by the sharpness of their own discerning, but the enlightening of the Holy Ghost. It is the Spirit that confirmeth us in the truth of Christ's doctrine. *Hoc non docet eruditio, sed unctio*—Bernard.

2. Partly to comfort them. So many had miscarried, and been led away by this stream of error, that the best christians might be discouraged. But they had a teacher near at hand, an oracle, as it were, in their own bosoms, sufficient means and helps within themselves to keep them from these snares.

3. Partly to quicken them to the more caution. If they should be seduced, they had no excuse, having sufficient evidence of the truth of the gospel, or that Jesus is the Messiah, and so were fortified against those that would deceive them. In all reason it might be expected they should not swallow these cheats and impostures, having such experience and assurance of the truth.

In the words we have three things—

1. The privilege, or gift imparted to them, 'Ye have an unction.'

2. The fountain, or author of it, 'From the Holy One.'

3. The effect and benefit thence resulting, 'And ye know all things.'

Doct. The saints have a special anointing from Jesus Christ, to enlighten and confirm them in the truth of the gospel.

First this must be explained—

1. What is this unction or anointing? Probably the word alludeth to the holy ointment, the composition of which is described, Exod. xxx. 25; the figure of pouring out the Holy Spirit on Christ, his church, and ministers. Or if you will more largely refer it, anointing was for

two uses—to inaugurate men into any eminent office, suppose of king, or priest, or prophet; so the holy oil was poured on Aaron and his sons; and thus Jesus Christ himself was anointed; as Acts iv. 27, ‘Against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed;’ which was done at the Spirit’s coming down upon him. Then was his solemn inauguration manifested, and the authority and power of his mediatory office showed forth. ‘God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power,’ Acts x. 38. Now as Jesus was thus anointed, so were the apostles when the Spirit was poured on them, Acts ii.; and so are all ordinary ministers of the gospel, when furnished with the gifts and graces of the Spirit suitable to their calling. So are all christians: 2 Cor. i. 21, ‘Now he that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.’ So made kings and priests unto God.

2. For the entertainment of honourable guests invited to a feast: Mat. xxvi. 7, ‘A woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, poured it on his head as he sat at meat;’ Ps. xxiii. 5, ‘Thou preparest a table for me in the sight of mine enemies; thou anointest mine head with oil, my cup runneth over.’ So Ps. civ. 15, ‘Oil that maketh his face to shine,’ and ‘the oil of gladness’ spoken of in scripture related to the oil used in feasts: Ps. xlv. 8, ‘Anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows.’ Jesus Christ, as head, was advanced and dignified above angels and men: yet his fellows or companions have a liberal effusion or communication of grace from the Spirit at the gospel-feast; there is an abundance of grace poured on them, to the refreshing of their souls.

Well, then, what is this anointing but the testimony of the Spirit given to the truth of the gospel? Now the testimony of the Spirit is twofold—objective or subjective, internal or external.

[1.] The objective or external testimony was the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon Christ and his apostles in a wonderful and miraculous manner, together with the many signs and wonders which accompanied the preaching of the gospel, whereby assurance was given them of the truths which they were to believe, especially that Christ is the Messiah: Acts v. 31, 32, ‘Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey him;’ and Heb. ii. 3, 4, ‘How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost?’ If there were no more in it than so, yet from heavenly truths thus asserted and assured to them they should not lightly depart upon every suggestion and insinuation from a crafty seducer, till they could bring something with as good or better evidence than those things which they had received. Christians should continue as they were.

[2.] Internal and subjective. And here I shall take notice of a threefold work of the Holy Ghost—(1.) Illumination; (2.) Conversion; (3.) Consolation.

(1.) Illumination ; as they were enlightened by the Holy Ghost in the knowledge of the gospel, and the necessary things contained therein. Besides an object sufficiently revealed and externally confirmed, there is need of a prepared faculty, or visive power. Therefore an internal efficiency is necessary: Eph. i. 17, 18, 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling.' That is the work of the Spirit, to open the eyes of the mind: 2 Cor. iv. 6, 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;' there is *lumen internum*, inward light. Therefore when Peter had acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ, Mat. xvi. 17, 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven.' Human credulity is wrought by tradition, but saving faith and knowledge by spiritual illumination. When man leadeth us into truth, man may easily lead us off again. Education may furnish us with opinions in religion, and we may sacrifice some of our weaker lusts for the opinions we have imbibed by education, for men will not easily forego their prejudices; but it is the Spirit of God that setteth and confirmeth us against all contradiction; such a difference there is between taking up religion out of inspiration and out of opinion. It is the Spirit only that giveth us a clear perception and discerning of the truth, and firm adherence to it; because it removeth the incapacity or disproportion between the things revealed and the constitution and temper of our hearts: 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.'

(2.) The mind is not only illuminated, but the heart sanctified and converted to God, and fitted for God, and so suited to spiritual and heavenly things: 'That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;' Titus iii. 5, '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.' Surely the renovation of the soul and the restitution of God's image giveth us greater advantages, both for the perception of truth and the retention of it.

(1st.) For the perception or discerning of truth from falsehood; for there are such impressions of the holiness, righteousness, and goodness of God left upon their hearts, that nothing can be offered unto them but whereof they may be competent judges by means of those dispositions stamped upon their hearts by the Holy Ghost: 2 Cor. iii. 3, 'Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.' They can better taste doctrines, being freed from the distempers and delusions of the flesh, and may more easily scent an error; for there is something in holy, believing souls which is of kin to anything of truth represented without, or carrieth a repugnancy to it if it be error: Heb. viii. 10, 'I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts,'

besides the light of nature, doctrine of your deliverance and redemption by the Son of God, and your future glorification according to his promises. Therefore they have an advantage above other men: Ps. xi. 3, 'The Spirit of the Lord shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.' He shall scent, or smell, or breathe of nothing but what is pious and religious; and therefore is more acute in discerning of matters of godliness, and what is agreeable or disagreeable thereunto.

(2d.) For retention, or holding fast the truth of christian doctrine. A man in his corrupt estate is more apt to believe Satan than he is to believe God; and the scale will more easily be turned against the truth when the flesh holdeth the balance; especially where men among professors of the truth are, as birds in a cage, still seeking to get out. Therefore if the understanding be not cleared, and the will inclined to Christ, and to God the Father by him, we shall easily fall off when the temptation cometh with any considerable strength. Certainly a man is held faster by the heart than by the head alone. Conviction may breed an awe upon the conscience, but conversion suiteth the heart to it. Love maketh us quick of discerning, and firm of retaining truth; and for retaining there is something in a renewed man that taketh part with Christ, and strongly biasseteth and inclineth him to him: 2 Thes. ii. 10, 'They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.' Truth looketh to be entertained as truth, and preferred before any carnal interest. Divines, when they open the nature of faith, distinguish of *certitudo evidentiae*, and *certitudo adhærentiæ*. There may be more evidence in matters of sense than in matters of faith, but not more adherence; the one ariseth from the clear sight of the thing, the other from the weight and worth of it. I have not such evidence of the world to come as I have of the things before my eyes; but I have such a persuasion of the certainty, which draweth me off from things I see with my eyes, and so leave all that I see and have for that glory which I never saw, but expect on God's promise.

(3.) Consolation. This oil is not only the 'oil of grace,' but the 'oil of gladness;' and the Spirit is a comforter as well as a sanctifier. Now when we have not only been enlightened and converted, but comforted, found benefit by it, surely this will be a means to establish and settle us in the truth; for then there is a spiritual sense, or taste and savouring the things of God: Phil. i. 9, 'That your love may abound more and more in all knowledge, and in all judgment,' *ἐν αἰσθήσει*, sense. And what use is there of it? 'That ye may approve the things that are excellent;' or *δοκιμάζεν τὰ διαφέροντα*, try the things that differ, 1 Peter ii. 3. *Optima demonstratio est à sensibus*—the best demonstration is by the senses; to know honey by description and by taste, or a country by a map and travel. Others have but the notion of things contained in the gospel; these feel the sweetness and power of them in their own souls, Col. i. 6. Now when a man must be persuaded, not only against his knowledge, and against his love and his sense, desires, hopes, against his very heart and his nature, and all his experience, his new nature, and all the inclinations and notions of it, surely he will not be so easily won as one that hath no experience; there is something within that checketh the temptation. Arguments have little

force against the inclination of nature and constant experience. There is *communis sensus fidelium*. Well, then, this anointing is the gracious operation of the Holy Ghost, whereby we are enlightened, regenerated, comforted.

Secondly, The author or fountain of the gift, 'The Holy One;' whereby is meant Christ, often so called: Luke i. 35, 'That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God;' Rev. ii. 7, 'These things saith he that is holy;' Acts iii. 14, 'But ye denied the Holy One.' He was the first anointed, and hath the fulness of all grace in himself, therefore called Messiah: Dan. ix. 24, 'To anoint the Most Holy.' And from him this anointing is derived to his people, Ps. cxxxiii. 2, like the oil on Aaron's head, that descended to the beard and the skirts of his clothing. So that this holy oil is from Christ, and from him freely and abundantly dispensed unto his people. First Christ purchased it for us; secondly conveyeth it to us; for he shed his blood for us, and then his Spirit on us: Titus iii. 6, 'Which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

1. He procured it for us: Gal. iii. 13, 14, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' Compare 1 Cor. x. 4, with John iv. 14, and John vii. 38, 39; the rock struck with the rod of Moses.

2. He conveyeth it to us: John i. 16, 'Of his fulness have we received, and grace for grace.' Christ is an head of influence as well as an head of eminence. It is by virtue of his anointing that we are anointed: 'Of his fulness we receive.' We go to God for it in the name of Christ. We receive it for his sake and from him; upon the account of his merit, and from him as our head.

Thirdly, The benefit, 'And ye shall know all things.' How is this to be understood? For omniscience and infallibility is God's prerogative. And it is said of the saints that 'we know but in part,' 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

Ans. This universal particle must be restrained to the matter in hand. Two restrictions all will grant—

1. All divine things. Not secrets of nature, mysteries of trade and policy, or skill in worldly affairs. Heathens may excel God's children in these things. No; the holy Spirit, with his gifts and graces, is not given us for these ends: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given us of God.' We have this Spirit to know our privileges by the gospel and the duties which belong thereunto, what is required and what granted in the charter of the new covenant.

2. There is another restriction which all will assent unto: all divine things which are revealed unto men: for Deut. xxix. 19, 'Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which he hath revealed, to us, and our children for ever.' Hidden things, not revealed in the word are to be left unto Jehovah, to do with them as he pleaseth; but it is our care only to regard those things which concern our duty and happiness; and for events or the government of his providence, to leave it to God.

3. In things revealed we must distinguish between matters that

belong to the plentitude of knowledge, and matters necessary either to salvation or establishment in the points controverted in that age.

[1.] Matters that belong to the plentitude and fulness of knowledge, as the gift of interpretation of tongues, knowledge of words, and the art of reasoning many matters in scripture. These things depend upon wit, industry, secular learning, and the common gifts of the Spirit. There are *dona ministrantia*, and *dona sanctificantia*, ministering gifts and sanctifying gifts. The carnal may come behind in no gift; for these things are for the good of the body rather than the person that hath them: 1 Cor. i. 7, 'He came behind in no gift.' And yet they were not the best sort of christians which the gospel speaketh of. But the Spirit of holiness is given us to another purpose, to bring us safe to heaven by drawing off our hearts from the creature to God, and from sin to holiness, and from self to Christ. A carnal man may excel in one sort of gifts above the sanctified in opening the signification of words and phrases, methodically disposing truths, and in framing such rational deductions and pressing such arguments as are most apt to work on the heart of man. Indeed, where both meet together, ministering gifts and sanctifying gifts, there a christian is most accomplished; and when grace governeth his parts and quickeneth his parts, he bringeth most honour to Christ, and doth not expose religion to contempt, as others do; but everything must be regarded in its proper place.

[2.] Matters necessary. These are of two sorts; either—

(1.) Essential to christianity, and absolutely necessary to salvation. In these things the unction prevaileth: Ps. xxv. 14, 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant.' God will not conceal from them the knowledge of his will, so far as their salvation is concerned in it, the secret of the Lord, that way wherein we ought to walk, if ever we would be accepted by him. So that in the great fundamental truths the sincere christian hath the advantage: Mat. xxiv. 24, 'Insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.' When learned, subtle men are deceived, the Spirit will keep the elect right.

(2.) Necessary to escape seduction, or the cheats of those antichrists that were then gone abroad, or might afterwards break into the church, to pervert the flock of Christ. In points not absolutely necessary, a godly man is more likely to be in the right rather than the ungodly; he is under the promise of God when, according to light received, he walketh in God's ways: John vii. 17, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.' He is most faithful to his end, which shineth to him all along his way: Mat. vi. 22, 'If thine eye be single, thy whole body is full of light.' Having a single eye, he is most serious and industrious in the use of means; and God's blessing usually goeth along with diligence. And so in improvement of common helps: Prov. ii. 3, 4, 'If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding: if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord.' He hath a measure and touchstone within him, the work of grace upon his heart, by which he can try doctrines, which do most obstruct or further the work of godliness; not which please or

displease the flesh ; though yet good men, in some cases, may be misled with error.

2. Why this anointing doth confirm us in the truths of the gospel.

[1.] From the Spirit, who is the anointing which we have from the Holy One. And his effects suit with the nature of God. The conceptions which we have of God may be reduced to these heads—Wisdom, power, and goodness : these are the most obvious notions. Now the regenerating Spirit giveth us the effect of all these : 2 Tim. i. 7, ‘ God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.’

(1.) Wisdom, in making wise the simple by the doctrine of the gospel, Ps. xix. 7, as teaching the way to true happiness and salvation, and enabling them to walk in it. The wise men of the world cannot but applaud this course ; and the dying are all of this mind, and acknowledge their own folly in doing otherwise.

(2.) Power : Phil. iv. 13, ‘ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’ In overcoming those appetites and desires by which the rest of the world are mastered and captivated. To be contented with their portion ; to animate them against all the terrors of the world, and subdue the delights of the flesh, that they may mind the things of another world, and so have comfort in life and death.

(3.) Goodness. It discovereth the greatest love to mankind that possibly can be conceived, both in the way and the end ; redemption by Christ, and the glory prepared for believers. Love becometh the very constitution of our souls : 1 John iv. 7, 8, ‘ Let us love one another : for love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God,’ &c. And moral goodness in the way we are to walk in, which is the way of holiness, without any respect to fleshly pleasure or interest, and through obedience to God : 1 Peter iv. 2, ‘ That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.’ Now the soul thus formed by the Spirit, where shall he find such a discovery of God ? What profession is there that can possess us with a new spirit, and such a spirit as the christian religion doth ? This begets a spirit that beareth the lively image and impress of God, where it hath its natural effects on the souls of men. Half christians go beyond others in such gifts as God giveth not to the heathen world ; but especially through christians, therefore rejecteth other ways.

[2.] From the nature of this enlightening or knowledge of the truth which the Spirit worketh in us. It is not a bare conjecture, but a certain establishing knowledge : John vi. 69, ‘ We believe, and are sure, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God ;’ John xvii. 8, ‘ They have known surely that I came out from thee.’ So that the soul is willing to adhere to it with the loss of all. A slight perfunctory apprehension is soon shaken, either by subtlety or violence ; but this is firm and strong.

[3.] Those who are anointed are sanctified and consecrated to God, and so under the care and protection of his special providence. Anointing hath the notion of consecrating, and setting apart for some holy use, for God’s special service. As Christ as mediator ; and so christians in their proportion, as his servants, and instruments of his

glory in the world; they are qualified for it by the gifts and graces of his Spirit: 2 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 light.' Now God is very chary and tender of such: Ps. cv. 15, 'Touch not mine anointed.' They are particularly owned by God, that none might dare to do them the least injury. Now as it is so in God's outward government by his providence, so in his internal government by his Spirit; God looketh after them more than others, that they may take no hurt nor annoyance.

[4.] This anointing giveth them familiar acquaintance with God, Christ, and the Spirit. Christ's sheep will hear his voice, and will not hear the voice of strangers, John x. 5. They have a spirit of discerning: John xiv. 17, 'Ye know him; for he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you.' The poor infant knoweth his mother's milk, puketh if suckled by a strange nurse, 1 Peter ii. 2, *ἄδολον γάλα*. *Homīnem olet homo*, the man in it: 'The world heareth them,' 1 John iv. 5. Besides literal instruction, they have the advantage of knowledge and experience.

Use 1. To persuade us to get this anointing. If we pretend to christianity, where is our unction, the virtue and efficacy of it, for the renewing and sanctifying of our hearts?

1. You are christians only in name if you want it; of the letter, and not of the spirit; that take up your religion upon trust, have only the form of it. Ignorant and profane persons, have they this choice anointing? May you not as well call a dunghill a perfume, or tainted grease a sweet oil, as to count them to have this spiritual anointing who roll themselves in the filth and vomit of sin, as the common rabble of nominal christians do? If you have this anointing indeed, your whole life will be a sweet savour or a precious odour. One dead fly, one base lust cherished, spoileth the whole box of ointment, Eccles. x. 1.

2. If you have this unction, you have a great advantage against error and infidelity. We live in a time wherein there are many antichrists; now he that hath an unction from the Holy One hath an evidence always at hand to refute what is contrary to sound doctrine; something in his bosom that will not permit him to hearken to popery and other errors. Disputes are long, and managed with great subtlety; and as they are backed with violence, we may be strangely perverted and blinded by interests; nothing will be our safety but a sound experience of the religion we do profess, of the virtue, power, comfort, and sweetness of it. God's Spirit is the seal of any doctrine, and our anointing is our establishment: 2 Cor. i. 21, 'He which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.' I do not say you should not look after other things, a sound understanding of the truth in controversy; but there will be your best preservative, which will not easily suffer them to change their religion.

3. If you have this unction, your own interest in Christ and eternal life is secured to you: 2 Cor. i. 22, 'Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts;' Eph. i. 13, 14, 'In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance.' That which is the seal of religion is the seal of those that profess it. The Spirit of sanctification

subduing our corruptions, sanctifying our natures, and enabling us to do the will of God, and causing us to live in the sweet and delightful forethoughts of the life to come. This is your seal and earnest, and this is nothing but the unction spoken of in the text. Ordinary men have a reasonable nature; common christians, those common gifts which he giveth not to the heathen world; but the true christians have a divine nature, or the sanctifying Spirit, as their great evidence. This is given unto none but God's children. The case is determined against you if you have not this anointing: Rom. viii. 9, 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' But for you, if you have, 1 John iv. 13, 'Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.' Therefore without this you can have no sound comfort; but have it, and you carry about the matter of continual joy.

4. By having this unction we are more quickened to do what we know, and to be true to the religion which we do profess; because the truth then lieth near our hearts, and so likely to work more effectually than what is at a great distance: 1 Thes. i. 5, 6, 'Our gospel came to you not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost;' 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'We thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as the word of God, which effectually worketh in you that believe.' This unction maketh a real change in the soul: 2 Cor. iii. 8, 'We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' If there be but a form of knowledge, there will be but a form of godliness. But where this anointing is, there we are made partakers of the divine nature, and live an holy life.

What shall we do to get this unction? I answer—

1. Beg it of God for Christ's sake, who purchased it for you, and who is ready to give you this spiritual eye-salve: Rev. iii. 18, 'Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.' It is his office to dispense this oil, and he will dispense it freely and liberally; for he had this power to this end and purpose. Christ taught us to pray for the Spirit.

2. Be diligent in the use of the means of grace, whereby you get the Spirit, or further measures and degrees of it. The ministration of the Spirit: 2 Cor. iii. 8; the word: Acts x. 44, 'The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word;' the Lord's supper: 1 Cor. xii. 13, 'By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.' Manna came down in the dew, so the Spirit in the doctrine which distils as the dew; so communion with the saints in all the ordinances of Christ: Ps. cxxxiii. 2, 'It is like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's, which ran down on the skirts of his garment.' The Spirit of grace is a spirit of communion. Therefore we read of the unity of the Spirit, Eph. iv. 3. When they were of one heart and one mind, then had they most plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost.

3. Do not grieve the Spirit: Eph. iv. 30, 'Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.' How is the Spirit grieved? By some one heinous provoking transgression, or

by living in a course of known sin, pride, worldliness, or sensuality. If we wound conscience, and be secretly false to the religion which we do profess, or have pleasure in unrighteousness, we lie open to temptations, to error and falsehood, provoke God to withhold discerning light, and cannot know whether we have the Spirit of God or no. Loose and careless christians are always weak in the knowledge of the truth.

4. Let us improve our anointing, and discover it in all companies, temptations, exercises, businesses. Wherever you come, show forth the fragrancy of your good ointments. In your converse with God, pray in the Holy Ghost, Jude 20; that is, pray as one that hath an unction, with a savoury spirit, and enlarged affections. In thy converse with men, all thy words and actions must savour of this ointment: Prov. xxvii. 9, 'Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.' In your temptations to sluggish negligence in the spiritual life: Heb. ii. 3, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' If to downright unbelief, there is somewhat written upon his heart that is contrary, a sense of God and heaven there that cannot be blotted out. If by a seducer without, it is not the regenerate, well-grounded, and experienced christians, but the loose and superficial sort, that are in most danger, like light chaff. They that know the truth, and are made free by the truth, the word of God will abide in them. Disciples indeed will not start from Christ, though those in name and title often did: John viii. 31, 32, 'If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'

5. Do not abuse or make an ill use of this teaching which you have by the anointing.

[1.] Not to rashness and self-confidence. We may be apt to do so. Though the anointing teacheth us all things, yet three things are still necessary—(1.) Scripture, or an outward word; for that is still God's instrument to beget and increase faith and obedience: John xvii. 20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.' There is but one gospel, and no other to be expected: Gal. i. 7, 8, 'Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ: but though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' The Spirit is never given to detract anything from the authority of the word. (2.) Ministers and teachers: Eph. iv. 11, 'And he gave some apostles, and some pastors and teachers.' These are instituted by Christ, so appointed by the Spirit: Acts xx. 28, 'Take heed to yourselves, and to the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.' The Spirit would never contradict himself. (3.) The Spirit himself: 1 Cor. iii. 7, 'So neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth,' &c. The spirit must breathe on his own graces, and assist the soul in the exercise of them. It is our advantage that he is at hand to excite our faith, that there is a preparation already.

[2.] Do not abuse it to pride and boasting that we have the Spirit, and contemning those who excel us in useful knowledge: Jude 19, 'These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the

Spirit.' Those men have not most of the Spirit who boast most of it: 1 Cor. viii. 2, 'If a man think he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.' This anointing is given us to see our sinfulness, and need of Christ and his grace, and the excellency of the life to come. There are several ages: 1 John ii. 13, 14, 'I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one,' &c., Heb. xii. 13, 14. Some have senses exercised more than others; all have not a full measure of knowledge at first. Babes, young men, fathers; some truths harder, some easier.

[3.] Not to security, as if infallible. Though he that hath this anointing be not so easily carried into error, and do not so obstinately continue in it, for it is impossible for him to live in a gross error as well as in a gross sin, yet they may err in lesser things, which may occasion much trouble to the church. Yea, they may be led into some dangerous error for a while, especially when they have grieved the Spirit, and blotted that character of gospel-truth which was impressed upon their souls; therefore must live in a constant dependence, and holy jealousy of themselves: 1 Cor. x. 12, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.'

[4.] Not to idleness and laziness; for still we must cry for knowledge, and dig for understanding as for choice silver, Prov. ii. 3, 4, 5. And it is the character of the good man, Ps. i. 2, 'His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.' It is a vile abuse of this heavenly privilege to make the Spirit a patron of negligence, and indulging the ease of the flesh; as if a good wit in secular learning should never study. So as if meditation were needless because they have the Spirit. Avoid these things, handle the matter as the new nature directs, and it will be a great help to you.
