

shew him greater works than these.' He lays the foundation of all the trust that God the Father committed unto him, in the peculiar love of the Father to him, as the Son incarnate.

Truly I shall not go beyond this foundation to manifest to you, that the person of Christ is the complete, adequate object of the love of the Father. The great satisfaction of the soul of God wherein he rests and delights, consists in love to Christ as incarnate.

I will make but this one inference from it; proportionable to the renovation of the image and likeness of God upon any of our souls, is our love to Jesus Christ. He that knows Jesus Christ most is most like unto God, for there the soul of God rests, there is the complacency of God; and if we would be like to God, have pledges in ourselves of the renovation of this image upon us, it must be in the gracious exercise of our love to the person of Jesus Christ. And pray let me observe it to you, the world, that is full of enmity to God, doth not exercise its enmity against God immediately under the first notion of God, but exerciseth its enmity against God in Christ: and if we return to God by the renovation of his image, we do not exercise our love to God immediately as God, but our love to God by and in Christ; that ye through him might believe in God. Here is a trial, brethren, of our return to God, and of the renovation of his image in us, viz. in our love to Jesus Christ. There God and man do meet, there God and his church above and below centre. The Lord grant that this ordinance may be the means to stir up our hearts more to the exercise of this grace!

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### DISCOURSE XXIII.\*

I SHALL speak to them who have a mind to be found performing their duty; but it may be, it doth not occur to them what is particularly required of them. They are such as are least acquainted with this mystery that I would have most respect unto, that nothing of God's provision in his house

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may be lost to his children for want of understanding aright to come to his table, where he makes this provision.

I pray you, brethren, exercise your thoughts unto the institution of this ordinance, wherein you exercise your obedience; unto the proposition of Christ in this ordinance, wherein consists the peculiar acting of your faith; and unto the exhibition of Christ in this ordinance, which is the ground of your thankfulness.

What shall I do that I may please God now, please Jesus Christ, and benefit my own soul in the administration of this ordinance?

Why, 1. Consider the institution of it, wherein we have the authority of Jesus Christ put forth, and acting towards our souls. 'Do this in remembrance of me.' Labour therefore to bring your hearts into an actual obedience to the authority of Jesus Christ in what we are about. This the Lord Jesus doth require at our hands. We do not come here in a customary manner to satisfy our convictions, because we ought to come; we do not come here merely to make use of our privilege, but our hearts are to bow to the authority of Jesus Christ. Consider, I pray you, the institution of this ordinance, and labour to bring your souls into actual obedience to Jesus Christ. We do it because Christ has required it of us. If our hearts are in that frame, that we are here upon the command of Christ, to do what he has appointed, and we can recommend our consciences unto him, that it is in obedience to his command that we are here, then our obedience is in exercise.

2. Consider the proposition that is made of Jesus Christ in this ordinance to us, that our faith may be in its proper exercise.

The Lord take off our hearts from the consideration of the outward signs merely. Christ in his love, Christ in his bloodshed, agony, and prayer, Christ in his death is here proposed before us. 'Ye shew forth the Lord's death.' Who proposes it? He that hath appointed these things proposes it. And there is the engagement of the faithfulness of God and Christ in this proposition and tender that is made of Jesus Christ; and it is a peculiar way, and as I could prove, full of love, that God hath found out a way to propound Christ as dying, and crucified, to all our souls.

Therefore stir up your hearts to this. To every one of you there is by the grace and faithfulness of God a proposal of Jesus Christ in his death, and all the benefits of it, unto your souls. The whole question is, Whether you will stir up your hearts to a new and fresh receiving of Jesus Christ who is thus proposed and tendered unto you, evidently crucified before your eyes, offered to you by the love and faithfulness of God? But if we do not endeavour every one of us in the participation of this ordinance a fresh acceptance of Jesus Christ, we do what we can to make God a liar, as though he was not tendered unto us. The especial exercise of your faith in this ordinance is upon the love, grace, and faithfulness of God, proposing and tendering of Christ unto you, the death of Christ, and the benefits of Christ in this way which he has chosen; submit unto it, and embrace it.

3. As your obedience is required with respect to the institution (we give this account before God, angels, and men, that we are here in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ); and as faith is required with respect to the proposition of Christ, whereby he is evidently proposed and tendered by God unto us; so in this ordinance, to them that believe there is an exhibition of Christ, Christ is really exhibited and communicated to the souls of men who exercise faith upon him in this ordinance; really exhibited with all the benefits of his death. And want of receiving by faith in particular Christ as exhibited and communicated in this ordinance is the great ground of our want of profiting by it, and thriving under it; of our want of receiving strength, joy, and life by it; because we do not exercise ourselves to the receiving of Christ as he is exhibited, as God doth really give him out, and communicate him to them that do believe.

That there is such an exhibition of Christ appears, (1.) By the sacramental relation there is between the outward elements and the thing signified. 'This is my body,' says Christ; this bread is so; and 'this is my blood.' It is the body of Christ and the blood of Christ, that we are invited to the participation of. If there was no more in this ordinance exhibited, but only the outward elements, and not by virtue of sacramental relation upon God's institution, the body and blood of Christ, his life and death and merits exhibited unto us, we should come to the Lord's table like

men in a dream, eating and drinking, and be quite empty when we have done, for this bread and wine will not satisfy our souls.

2. As it is plain from the sign and the thing signified, that there is a grant, or a real communication of Jesus Christ unto the souls of them that do believe, so it is evident from the nature of the exercise of faith in this ordinance; it is by eating and drinking. Can you eat and drink unless something be really communicated? You are called to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man; unless really communicated we cannot eat it nor drink it. We may have other apprehensions of these things, but our faith cannot be exercised in eating and drinking, which is a receiving of what is really exhibited and communicated. As truly, my brethren, as we do eat of this bread and drink of this cup, which is really communicated to us, so every true believer doth receive Christ, his body and blood, in all the benefits of it, that are really exhibited by God unto the soul in this ordinance: and it is a means of communicating to faith.

We come to receive a crucified Christ, come to be made partakers of the body and blood of the Lord, to have the Lord Jesus really united to our hearts more and more. The Lord open our hearts to embrace the tender, receive the exhibition, take in Jesus Christ as food, that he may be incorporated in our hearts by faith, that he may dwell in us plentifully, more and more; that we may go away refreshed by this heavenly food, this glorious feast of fat things which the Lord has made in his mount for his people. The whole of our comfort depends on our particular receiving of Christ by faith, and carrying him away by believing.

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## DISCOURSE XXIV.\*

WE are met together again by the patience and kindness of God for the celebration of this great ordinance, and therein to shew forth the death of the Lord.

I have often spoken to you on this occasion concerning the nature of this ordinance, the expression of the love of

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