

A DISCOURSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

CHAP. I.

Spiritual gifts; their names and signification.

THE second part of the *dispensation of the Spirit* in order unto the perfecting of the new creation, or the edification of the church, consists in his *communication of spiritual gifts* unto the members of it, according as their places and stations therein do require. By his work of *saving grace* (which in other discourses we have given a large account of) he makes all the elect *living stones*; and, by his communication of *spiritual gifts*, he fashions and builds those stones into a *temple for the living God* to dwell in. He spiritually unites them into one *mystical body* under the Lord Christ, as a *head of influence* by faith and love; and he unites them into an *organical body* under the Lord Christ as a *head of rule*, by gifts and spiritual abilities. Their *nature* is made one and the same by grace; their *use* is various by gifts. Every one is a part of the body of Christ, of the *essence* of it, by the same quickening, animating spirit of grace; but one is an *eye*, another a *hand*, another a *foot*, in the body, by virtue of peculiar gifts. ‘For unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;’ Eph. iv. 7.

These *gifts* are not saving sanctifying graces; those were not so in themselves which made the most glorious and astonishing appearance in the world, and which were most eminently useful in the foundation of the church, and propagation of the gospel. Such as were those that were *extraordinary* and *miraculous*. There is something of the *divine nature* in the *least grace*, that is not in the most *glorious gift* which is only so. It will therefore be part of our work, to shew wherein the essential difference between these *gifts* and sanctifying graces doth consist; as, also, what is their nature and *use* must be inquired into. For although they are not *grace*, yet they are that without which the church cannot

subsist in the world, nor can believers be useful unto one another, and the rest of mankind, unto the glory of Christ, as they ought to be. They are the *powers of the world to come*; those effectual operations of the power of Christ, whereby his kingdom was erected and is preserved.

And hereby is the church state under the *New Testament* differenced from that under the *Old*. There is, indeed, a great difference between their *ordinances* and ours; theirs being suited unto the dark apprehensions which they had of spiritual things; ours accommodated unto the clearer *light of the gospel*, more plainly and expressly representing heavenly things unto us; Heb. x. 1. But *our* ordinances with *their* spirit would be *carnal* also. The principal difference lies in the *administration of the Spirit*, for the due performance of gospel worship, by virtue of these gifts bestowed on men for that very end. Hence the whole of *evangelical worship* is called the *ministration of the Spirit*, and thence said to be *glorious*; 2 Cor. iii. 8. And where they are neglected, I see not the advantage of the outward worship and ordinances of the gospel, above those of the law. For although their institutions are accommodated unto that administration of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ; yet they must lose their whole glory, force, and efficacy, if they be not dispensed, and the duties of them performed, by virtue of these *spiritual gifts*. And therefore, no sort of men by whom they are neglected, do or can content themselves with the pure and unmingled gospel institutions in these things, but do rest principally in the outward part of divine service in things of their own finding out. For as *gospel gifts* are useless without attending unto *gospel institutions*; so *gospel institutions* are found to be fruitless and unsatisfactory, without the attaining and exercising of *gospel gifts*.

Be it so, therefore, that these *gifts* we intend are not in themselves *saving graces*; yet are they not to be despised. For they are, as we shall shew, *the powers of the world to come*, by means whereof the kingdom of Christ is preserved, carried on, and propagated in the world. And although they are not grace, yet are they the great means whereby all grace is ingenerated and exercised. And although the *spiritual life* of the church doth not consist in them, yet the *order and edification* of the church depends wholly on them.

And therefore are they so frequently mentioned in the Scripture as the great privilege of the New Testament; directions being multiplied in the writings of the apostles, about their nature and proper use. And we are commanded earnestly to desire and labour after them, especially those which are most useful and subservient unto *edification*; 1 Cor. xii. 31. And as the neglect of *internal saving grace*, wherein the power of godliness doth consist, hath been the bane of Christian profession as to obedience, issuing in that form of it which is consistent with all manner of lusts; so the neglect of these *gifts* hath been the ruin of the same profession as to *worship* and order, which hath thereon issued in fond superstition.

The great and signal promise of the communication of these gifts, is recorded, Psal. lxxviii. 18. ‘Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men.’ For these words are applied by the apostle unto that communication of *spiritual gifts* from Christ, whereby the church was founded and edified; Eph. iv. 8. And whereas it is foretold in the Psalm, that Christ should *receive gifts*, that is, to *give them unto men*, as that expression is expounded by the apostle; so he did this by *receiving of the Spirit*, the proper cause and immediate author of them all, as Peter declares, Acts ii. 23. ‘Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear;’ speaking of the miraculous gifts conferred on the apostles at the day of Pentecost. For these gifts are from Christ, not as God absolutely, but as mediator, in which capacity he received all from the Father in a way of free donation. Thus, therefore, he received the *Spirit* as the author of all *spiritual gifts*. And whereas all the *powers of the world to come* consisted in them, and the whole work of the building and propagation of the church depended on them, the apostles after all the instructions they had received from Christ, whilst he conversed with them in the days of his flesh, and also after his resurrection, were commanded not to go about the great work which they had received commission for, until they had *received power by the coming of the Holy Ghost* upon them in the communication of those gifts; Acts i. 4. 8. And as they neither might nor could do any thing in their peculiar work, as to the laying of the foundation of

the Christian church, until they had actually received those *extraordinary gifts* which gave them power so to do ; so if those who undertake in any place, degree, or office, to carry on the edification of the church, do not receive those more *ordinary gifts* which are continued unto that end, they have neither *right* to undertake that work, nor *power* to perform it in a due manner.

The things which we are to inquire into concerning these gifts, are, I. Their *name* ; II. Their *nature* in general, and therein how they agree with and differ from saving graces ; III. Their *distinction* ; IV. The *particular nature* of them ; and, V. Their use in the church of God.

I. The general *name* of those spiritual endowments which we intend is *δώρα* ; so the apostle renders מתנות, Eph. iv. 8. from Psal. lxxviii. 18. *dona*, gifts. That is, they are free and undeserved effects of divine bounty. In the minds of men on whom they are bestowed, they are spiritual powers and endowments with respect unto a certain end. But as to their original and principal cause, they are *free, undeserved gifts*. Thence the Holy Spirit, as the author of them, and with respect unto them, is called δωρεὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, the ‘gift of God ;’ John iv. 10. And the effect itself is also termed δωρεὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, the ‘gift of the Holy Ghost ;’ Acts x. 45. The ‘gift of God ;’ Acts viii. 20. The ‘gift of the grace of God ;’ Eph. iii. 7. The ‘gift of Christ ;’ Eph. iv. 7. The ‘heavenly gift ;’ Heb. vi. 4. All expressing the freedom of their communication on the part of the Father, Son, and Spirit. And in like manner on the same account are they called χαρίσματα, that is, ‘gracious largesses ;’ gifts proceeding from mere bounty. And therefore saving *graces* are also expressed by the same name in general, because they also are *freely* and *undeservedly* communicated unto us ; Rom. xi. 28. But these gifts are frequently and almost constantly so expressed ; Rom. xii. 6. 1 Cor. i. 7. vii. 7. xii. 4. 9. 28. 30. 1 Pet. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6. And it is *absolute freedom* in the bestower of them that is principally intended in this name. Hence he hath left his name as a curse unto all posterity, who thought this *free gift* of God might be purchased with money ; Acts viii. 20. A *pageantry* of which crime the apostate ages of the church erected, in applying the *name of that sin* to the *purchase of benefices and dignities*, whilst the *gift of God* was

equally despised on all hands. And indeed this was that whereby in all ages countenance was given unto apostacy and defection from the power and truth of the gospel. The *names* of spiritual things were still retained, but applied to outward *forms* and *ceremonies*, which thereby were substituted insensibly into their room, to the ruin of the gospel in the minds of men. But as these gifts were not any of them to be *bought*, no more are they absolutely to be attained by the natural abilities and industry of any, whereby an *image* of them is attempted to be set up by some, but *deformed* and useless. They will do those things in the church by their own abilities, which can never be acceptably discharged but by virtue of those *free gifts* which they despise; whereof we must speak more afterward. Now the full signification of these words in our sense is peculiar unto the New Testament. For although in other authors they are used for a *gift* or *free grant*, yet they never denote the *endowments or abilities of the minds of men* who do receive them, which is their principal sense in the Scripture.

With respect unto their *especial nature*, they are called *πνευματικά*: sometimes absolutely; 1 Cor. xii. 1. *περί δε τῶν πνευματικῶν*, ‘but concerning spirituals;’ that is, *spiritual gifts*. And so again, chap. xiv. 1. *ζηλοῦτε τὰ πνευματικά*, ‘desire spirituals;’ that is, *gifts*; for so it is explained; chap. xii. 31. *ζηλοῦτε τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ κρείττονα*, ‘covet earnestly the best gifts.’ Whenever therefore, they are called *πνευματικά*, there *χαρίσματα*, denoting their *general nature*, is to be supplied: and where they are called *χαρίσματα* only, *πνευματικά* is to be understood, as expressing their *especial difference* from all others. They are neither *natural*, nor *moral*, but *spiritual* endowments. For both their *author*, *nature*, and *object*, are respected herein. Their *author* is the Holy Spirit; their *nature* is spiritual; and the *object* about which they are exercised, are *spiritual things*.

Again, with respect unto the *manner* of their communication they are called *μερισμοί τοῦ πνευμάτος ἁγίου*; Heb. ii. 4. ‘Distributions, or partitions of the Holy Ghost;’ not whereof the Holy Ghost is the *subject*, as though he were parted or divided, as the *Socinians* dream on this place; but whereof he is the *author*, the distributions which he makes. And they are thus called divisions, partitions, or distribu-

tions, because they are of divers sorts and kinds, according as the edification of the church did require. And they were not, at any time, all of them given out unto any one person, at least so, as that others should not be made partakers of the same sort. From the same inexhaustible treasure of bounty, grace, and power, these gifts are variously distributed unto men. And this variety, as the apostle proves, gives both ornament and advantage to the church. 'If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 16—25. It is this *μερισμὸς*, this *various distribution* of gifts, that makes the church an *organical* body; and in this composure, with the peculiar uses of the members of the body, consists the harmony, beauty, and safety of the whole. Were there no more but *one gift*, or gifts of *one sort*, the whole body would be but one member: as where there is none, there is no animated body but a dead carcass.

And this various distribution, as it is an act of the Holy Spirit, produceth *διαίρεσιν*: *διαίρέσεις χαρισμάτων εἰσὶ*, 'There are diversities of gifts;' 1 Cor. xii. 4. The *gifts* thus distributed in the church are *divers* as to their sorts and kinds, one of one kind, another of another: an account hereof is given by the apostle particularly, ver. 8—10. in a distinct enumeration of the sorts or kinds of them. The edification of the church is the general end of them all; but *divers*, *distinct*, *different* gifts are required thereunto.

These gifts being bestowed, they are variously expressed with regard unto the nature and manner of those operations which we are enabled unto by virtue of them. So are they termed *διακονίας*, 'ministrations;' 1 Cor. xii. 5. That is, powers and abilities whereby some are enabled to *administer* spiritual things unto the benefit, advantage, and edification of others: and *ἐνεργήματα*, ver. 6. 'effectual workings' or operations, efficaciously producing the effects which they are applied unto. And lastly, they are comprised by the apostle in that expression, *φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος*, 'The manifestation of the Spirit;' ver. 7. In and by them doth the Holy Spirit evidence and manifest his power. For the effects produced by them, and themselves in their own nature, especially some of them, do evince, that the Holy Spirit is in them, that they are given and wrought by him, and are the ways whereby he acts his own power and grace.

These things are spoken in the Scripture as to the *names* of these spiritual gifts: and it is evident, that if we part with our interest and concern in them, we must part with no small portion of the New Testament. For the mention of them, directions about them, their use, and abuse, do so frequently occur, that if we are not concerned in them, we are not so in the gospel.

CHAP. II.

Differences between spiritual gifts and saving grace.

THEIR *nature in general*, which in the next place we inquire into, will be much discovered in the consideration of those things wherein these *gifts* do agree with *saving graces*, and wherein they differ from them.

First, There are three things wherein *spiritual gifts* and *saving graces* do agree.

1. They are both sorts of them the *purchase of Christ* for his church, the especial fruit of his mediation. We speak not of such gifts or endowments of men's minds as consist merely in the improvement of their natural faculties. Such are *wisdom, learning, skill in arts and sciences*, which those may abound and excel in who are utter strangers to the church of Christ; and frequently they do so, to their own exaltation and contempt of others. Nor do I intend abilities for actions moral, civil, or political; as *fortitude, skill in government* or rule, and the like. For although these are gifts of the power of the Spirit of God, yet they do belong unto those operations which he exerciseth in upholding or ruling of the world, or the old creation as such, whereof I have treated before. But I intend those alone which are conversant about the gospel, the things and duties of it, the *administration* of its ordinances, the propagation of its doctrine and profession of its ways. And herein also I put a difference between them, and all those gifts of the Spirit about sacred things, which any of the people of God enjoyed under the Old Testament. For we speak only of those which are *powers of the world to come*. Those others were

suited to the *economy* of the old covenant, and confined with the light which God was pleased then to communicate unto his church. Unto the *gospel state* they were not suited, nor would be useful in it. Hence the prophets, who had the most eminent gifts, did yet all of them come short of John the Baptist; because they had not by virtue of their gifts that acquaintance with the person of Christ, and insight into his work of mediation, that he had; and yet also, he came short of him that is *least in the kingdom of heaven*, because his gifts were not purely *evangelical*. Wherefore these gifts whereof we treat, are such as belong unto the kingdom of God erected in an especial manner by Jesus Christ after his ascension into heaven: for he was exalted that he might *fill all things*, τὰ πάντα, that is, the whole church with these effects of his power and grace. The power, therefore, of communicating these gifts, was granted unto the Lord Christ as mediator by the Father, for the foundation and edification of his church, as it is expressed, Acts ii. 33. And by them was his kingdom both set up and propagated, and is preserved in the world. These were the *weapons of warfare* which he furnished his disciples withal, when he gave them commission to go forth and *subdue the world* unto the obedience of the gospel; Acts i. 4. 8. And *mighty* were they through God unto that purpose; 2 Cor. x. 3—6. In the use and exercise of them did the gospel *run, and was glorified*, to the ruin of the kingdom of Satan and darkness in the world. And that he was ever able to erect it again under another form than that of *Gentilism*, as he hath done in the *antichristian* apostacy of the church visible, it was from a neglect and contempt of these gifts, with their due use and improvement. When men began to neglect the attaining of these spiritual gifts, and the exercise of them, in praying, in preaching, in interpretation of the Scripture, in all the administrations and whole worship of the church, betaking themselves wholly to their own abilities and inventions, accommodated unto their ease and secular interest, it was an easy thing for Satan to erect again his kingdom, though not in the old manner, because of the light of the Scripture which had made impression on the minds of men, which he could not obliterate. Wherefore he never attempted openly any more to set up *Heathenism* or *Paganism*, with the gods of

the old world and their worship ; but he insensibly raised another kingdom, which pretended some likeness unto and compliance with the *letter of the word*, though it came at last to be in all things expressly contrary thereunto. This was his kingdom of *apostacy and darkness* under the *papal anti-christianism*, and woful degeneracy of other Christians in the world. For when men who pretend themselves intrusted with the *preservation of the kingdom of Christ*, did wilfully cast away those *weapons of their warfare* whereby the world was subdued unto him, and ought to have been kept in subjection by them, what else could ensue ?

By these gifts, I say, doth the Lord Christ demonstrate his power, and exercise his rule. External force and carnal weapons were far from his thoughts, as unbecoming his absolute sovereignty over the souls of men, his infinite power and holiness. Neither did any ever betake themselves unto them in the affairs of Christ's kingdom, but either when they had utterly lost and abandoned these spiritual weapons, or did not believe that they are sufficient to maintain the interest of the gospel, though originally they were so to introduce and fix it in the world ; that is, that although the *gifts of the Holy Ghost* were sufficient and effectual to *bring in* the truth and doctrine of the gospel against all opposition, yet are they not so to *maintain* it ; which they may do well once more to consider. Herein, therefore, they agree with *saving graces* : for that they are peculiarly from Jesus Christ the mediator, is confessed by all ; unless it be by such as by whom all real internal grace is denied. But the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit, with their respect unto the Lord Christ as Mediator, have been sufficiently before confirmed.

2. There is an agreement between *saving graces* and *spiritual gifts*, with respect unto their *immediate efficient cause*. They are both sorts of them wrought by the *power of the Holy Ghost*. As to what concerneth the former or saving grace, I have already treated of that argument at large ; nor will any deny that the Holy Ghost is the author of these *graces*, but those that deny that there are any such. That these *gifts* are so wrought by him is expressly declared wherever there is mention of them in general or particular. Wherefore, when they acknowledge that there were such gifts, all con-

fess him to be their author ; by whom he is denied so to be, it is only because they deny the *continuance of any such gifts* in the church of God. But this is that which we shall disprove.

3. Herein also they agree, that both sorts of them are designed unto the *good, benefit, ornament, and glory* of the church. The church is the proper seat and subject of them, to it are they granted, and in it do they reside. For Christ is given to be the ‘head over all things unto the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all ;’ Eph. i. 22, 23. But this church falls under a double consideration. First, as it is *believing* ; Secondly, as it is *professing*. In the first respect absolutely it is *invisible*, and as such is the peculiar subject of saving grace. This is that church which Christ ‘loved and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish ;’ Eph. v. 26, 27. This is the work of saving grace, and by a participation thereof do men become *members of this church*, and not otherwise. And hereby is the *professing* church quickened and enabled unto profession in an acceptable manner. For the *elect* receive grace unto this end in this world, that they may glorify Christ and the gospel in the exercise of it ; Col. i. 6. John xv. 8. But gifts are bestowed on the professing church, to render it *visible* in such a way as whereby God is glorified. Grace gives an *invisible life* to the church ; gifts give it a *visible profession*. For hence doth the church become *organical* and disposed into that order which is beautiful and comely. Where any church is *organized* merely by *outward rules*, perhaps of their own devising, and makes profession only in an attendance unto outward order, not following the leading of the Spirit in the communication of his gifts, both as to order and discharge of the duties of profession, it is but the *image* of a church wanting an animating principle and form. That profession which renders a church *visible* according to the mind of Christ, is the *orderly exercise of the spiritual gifts* bestowed on it, in a conversation evidencing the *invisible principle* of saving grace. Now these gifts are conferred on the church in order unto the *edification* of itself in love ; Eph. iv. 16. as also the propagation of its profession in the world, as shall

be declared afterward. Wherefore, both of these sorts have in general the *same end*, or are given by Christ unto the same purpose, namely, the *good and benefit* of the church, as they are respectfully suited to promote them.

It may also be added, that they agree herein, that they have both the same respect unto the *bounty of Christ*. Hence every *grace* is a *gift*, that which is given and freely bestowed on them that have it; Matt. xiii. 11. Phil. i. 29. And although on the other side every *gift* be not a *grace*, yet proceeding from gracious favour and bounty, they are so called; Rom. xii. 6. Eph. iv. 7. How, in their due exercise they are mutually helpful and assistant unto each other, shall be declared afterward.

Secondly, We may consider wherein the difference lies or doth consist, which is between these *spiritual gifts* and *sanctifying graces*. And this may be seen in sundry instances. As,

1. Saving graces are καρπός, the ‘fruit or fruits of the Spirit;’ Gal. v. 22. Eph. v. 9. Phil. i. 11. Now *fruits* proceed from an *abiding root* and stock of whose nature they do partake. There must be a ‘good tree’ to bring forth ‘good fruit;’ Matt. xii. 33. No external watering or applications unto the earth, will cause it to bring forth useful fruits, unless there are roots from which they spring and are educed. The Holy Spirit is as the root unto these fruits; the root which bears them, and which they do not bear, as Rom. xi. 18. Therefore, in order of nature is he given unto men before the production of any of these fruits. Thereby are they ingrafted into the olive, are made such branches in Christ the true vine, as derive vital juice, nourishment, and fructifying virtue from him even by the Spirit. So is he ‘a well of water springing up unto everlasting life;’ John iv. 14. He is a spring in believers, and all saving graces are but waters arising from that living overflowing spring. From him a *root* or spring, as an internal virtue, power, or principle, do all these *fruits* come. To this end doth he *dwell in them* and *abide with them* according to the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ; John xiv. 17. Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 16. whereby the Lord Christ effecteth his purpose in ordaining his disciples to ‘bring forth fruit that should remain;’ John xv. 16. In the place of his holy residence he worketh these effects

freely according to his own will. And there is nothing that hath the true nature of *saving grace*, but what is so a *fruit of the Spirit*. We have not first these *graces*, and then by virtue of them receive the *Spirit*, (for whence should we have them of ourselves?) but the *Spirit* bestowed on us, worketh them in us; and gives them a *spiritual divine nature* in conformity unto his own.

With *gifts* singly considered, it is otherwise. They are indeed *works* and *effects*, but not properly *fruits* of the Spirit, nor are any where so called. They are *effects* of his operation upon men, not *fruits* of his working in them. And, therefore, many receive these gifts, who never receive the Spirit as to the principal ends for which he is promised. They receive him not to sanctify and make them *temples* unto God; though *metonymically* with respect unto his outward effects they may be said to be made partakers of him. This renders them of a *different nature* and kind from saving graces. For, whereas there is an agreement and coincidence between them in the respects beforementioned, and whereas the seat and subject of them, that is, of gifts absolutely, and principally of graces also, is the *mind*, the difference of their nature proceeds from the different manner of their communication from the Holy Spirit.

2. *Saving grace* proceeds from, or is the effect and fruit of, *electing love*. This I have proved before in our inquiry into the nature of holiness. See it directly asserted, Eph. i. 3, 4. 2 Thess. ii. 13. Acts ii. 41. xiii. 48. Whom God graciously chooseth and designeth unto eternal life, them he prepares for it by the communication of the means which are necessary unto that end; Rom. viii. 28—30. Hereof sanctification, or the communication of saving grace, is comprehensive; for we are ‘chosen unto salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit;’ 2 Thes. ii. 13. For this is that whereby we are made ‘meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;’ Col. i. 12. The end of God in election is the *sonship and salvation* of the elect, unto the ‘praise of the glory of his grace;’ Eph. i. 5, 6. And this cannot be, unless his *image* be renewed in them in holiness or saving graces. These, therefore, he works in them, in pursuit of his eternal purpose therein. But *gifts* on the other hand which are no more but so, and where they are solitary or alone, are only

the effects of a temporary election. Thus God *chooseth* some men into some *office* in the church, or unto some *work* in the world. As this includeth a preferring them before or above others, or the using them when others are not used, we call it *election*; and in itself it is their fitting for, and separation unto, their office or work. And this *temporary election* is the cause and rule of the *dispensation* of gifts. So he chose Saul to be king over his people, and give him thereon *another spirit*, or gifts fitting him for rule and government. So our Lord Jesus Christ chose and called at the first *twelve* to be his apostles, and gave unto them all alike miraculous gifts. His *temporary choice* of them was the ground of his communication of gifts unto them. By virtue hereof no saving graces were communicated unto them, for one of them never arrived unto a participation of them. ‘Have not I,’ saith our Saviour unto them, ‘chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?’ John vi. 70. He had chosen them unto their office, and endowed them with extraordinary gifts for the discharge thereof, but *one* of them being not *chosen unto salvation* before the foundation of the world, being not ordained unto eternal life, but on the other side being the *son of perdition*, or one certainly appointed unto destruction, or before of old ordained unto that condemnation, he continued void of all sanctifying graces, so as unto any acceptance with God, he was in no better condition than the devil himself, whose work he was to do. Yet was he, by virtue of this choice unto the office of *apostleship* for a season, endowed with the same spiritual gifts that the other was: and this distinction our Saviour himself doth plainly lay down. For, whereas he says, John vi. 70. ‘I have chosen you twelve,’ that is, with a *temporary choice* unto office; John xiii. 18. he saith, ‘I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen,’ so excepting Judas from that number, as is afterward expressly declared. For the *election* which here he intends, is that which is accompanied with an ‘infallible ordination unto abiding fruit-bearing;’ chap. xv. 16. that is, eternal election wherein Judas had no interest.

And thus it is in general and in other instances. When God chooseth any one to *eternal life*, he will in pursuit of that purpose of his, communicate *saving grace* unto them. And although all believers have gifts also sufficient to enable

them unto the discharge of their duty in their station or condition in the church, yet they do not depend on the *decree of election*. And where God calleth any, or chooseth any unto an office, charge, or work in the church, he always furnisheth them with gifts suited unto the end of them. He doth not so indeed unto all that will take any office unto themselves; but he doth so unto all whom he calls thereunto. Yea his call is no otherwise known but by the *gifts* which he communicates for the discharge of the work or office, whereunto any are called. In common use I confess all things run contrary hereunto. Most men greatly insist on the necessity of an *outward call* unto the office of the ministry, and so far no doubt they do well; for ‘God is the God of order;’ that is, of his own. But, whereas they limit this outward call of theirs unto certain persons, ways, modes, and ceremonies of their own, without which they will not allow that any man is rightly called unto the ministry, they do but contend to oppress the consciences of others by their power and with their inventions. But their most pernicious mistake is yet remaining: so that persons have or do receive an *outward call* in their mode and way, which what it hath of a call in it I know not, they are not solicitous whether they are called of God or no. For they continually admit of them unto their *outward call*, on whom God hath bestowed no spiritual gifts to fit them for their office; whence it is as evident as if written with the beams of the sun, that he never called them thereunto. They are as watchful as they are able, that God himself shall impose none on them besides their way and order, or their *call*. For, let a man be furnished with ministerial gifts never so excellent, yet if he will not come up to their call, they will do what lies in them for ever to shut him out of the ministry: but they will impose upon God without his *call* every day. For if they *ordain* any one in their way unto an office, though he have no more of spiritual gifts than Balaam’s ass, yet if you will believe them, Christ must accept of him for a minister of his whether he will or no. But let men dispose of things as they please, and as it seemeth good unto them, Christ hath no other order in this matter, but as ‘every one hath received the gift, so let them minister as good stewards of the grace of God;’ 1 Pet. iv. 10. and Rom. xii. 6—8. It is true, that no man ought to take upon him the

office of the ministry, but he that is, and until he be, solemnly *called* and set apart thereunto by the church: but it is no less true, that no church hath either *rule* or *right* so to call or set apart any one to the ministry, whom Christ hath not previously called by the communication of spiritual gifts necessary to the discharge of his office; and these things must be largely insisted on afterward.

3. *Saving grace* is an effect of the *covenant*, and bestowed in the accomplishment, and by virtue of the promises thereof. This hath been declared elsewhere at large, where we treated of regeneration and sanctification. All that are taken into this covenant are sanctified and made holy. There is no grace designed unto any in the *eternal purpose of God*, none purchased or procured by the *mediation of Christ*, but it is *comprised* in, and *exhibited* by the promises of the covenant. Wherefore, they only who are taken into that covenant are made partakers of saving grace, and they are all so. Things are not absolutely so with respect unto spiritual gifts, although they also in some sense belong unto the covenant. For the promises of the covenant are of two sorts. (1.) Such as belong unto the *internal* form and essence of it. (2.) Such as belong unto its *outward administration*; that is, the ways and means whereby its internal grace is made effectual. *Saving grace* proceedeth from the former; *gifts* relate unto the latter. For all the promises of the *plentiful effusion of the Spirit* under the New Testament, which are frequently applied unto him as he works and effects evangelical gifts extraordinary and ordinary in men, do belong unto the new covenant; not as unto its internal essence and form, but as unto its outward administration. And if you overthrow this distinction, that the covenant is considered either with respect unto its internal grace, or its external administration, every thing in religion will be cast into confusion. Take away *internal grace* as some do, and the whole is rendered a mere outside appearance: take away the *outward administration*, and all spiritual gifts and order thereon depending must cease. But as it is possible that some may belong unto the covenant with respect unto *internal grace*, who are no way taken into the external administration of it, as elect infants who die before they are baptized; so it is frequent that some may belong to the covenant, with respect to its *outward ad-*

ministration by virtue of spiritual gifts, who are not made partakers of its inward effectual grace.

4. Saving grace hath an immediate respect unto the *priestly office of Jesus Christ*, with the discharge thereof, in his oblation and intercession. There is, I acknowledge, no gracious communication unto men that respects any one office of Christ exclusively unto the other. For his whole mediation hath an influence into all that we receive from God in a way of favour or grace. And it is his person as vested with all his offices, that is the immediate fountain of all grace unto us. But yet something may, yea, sundry things do peculiarly respect some one of his offices, and are the immediate effects of the virtue and efficacy thereof. So is our *reconciliation* and peace with God the peculiar effect of his *oblation*, which as a priest he offered unto God. And so in like manner is our *sanctification* also, wherein we are ‘washed and cleansed from our sins in his blood;’ Eph. v. 25, 26. Tit. ii. 14. And, although grace be wrought in us by the administration of the *kingly* power of Christ, yet it is in the pursuit of what he had done for us as a *priest*, and the making of it effectual unto us. For by his *kingly* power he makes effectual the fruits of his oblation and intercession: but gifts proceed solely from the *regal office* and power of Christ. They have a remote respect unto, and foundation in the death of Christ, in that they are all given and distributed unto, and for the good of that church which he purchased with his own blood; but immediately they are effects only of his *kingly* power. Hence authority to give and dispose them is commonly placed as a consequent of his exaltation at the right hand of God, or with respect thereunto; Matt. xxviii. 18. Acts ii. 33. This the apostle declares at large; Eph. iv. 7—11. Christ being exalted at the right hand of God, all power in heaven and earth being given unto him, and he being given to be head over all things unto the church, and having for that end received the promise of the Spirit from the Father, he gives out these gifts as it seemeth good unto him. And the continuation of their communication, is not the least evidence of the continuance of the exercise of his kingdom: for besides the faithful testimony of the word to that purpose, there is a threefold evidence thereof, giving us experience of it. (1.) His communication of saving grace in the regeneration,

conversion, and sanctification of the elect. For these things he worketh immediately by his kingly power. And whilst there are any in the world savingly called and sanctified, he leaves not himself without witness as to his kingly power over all flesh, whereon he gives ‘eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him;’ John xvii. 2. But this evidence is wholly invisible unto the world, neither is it capable of receiving it when tendered, because it cannot ‘receive the Spirit, nor seeth him, nor knoweth him;’ John xiv. 17. Nor are the things thereof, exposed to the judgment of sense or reason; 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. (2.) Another evidence hereof, is given in the *judgments* that he executes in the world, and the outward protection which he affords unto his church. On both these there are evident impressions of the continued actual exercise of his divine power and authority: for, in the judgments that he executes on persons and nations that either reject the gospel or persecute it, especially in some signal and uncontrollable instance, as also in the guidance, deliverance, and protection of his church, he manifests that ‘though he was dead yet he is alive, and hath the keys of hell and death.’ But yet because he is on the one hand pleased to exercise great patience towards many of his open stubborn adversaries, yea, the greatest of them, suffering them to walk and prosper in their own ways, and to leave his church unto various trials and distresses, his power is much hid from the world at present in these dispensations. (3.) The third evidence of the continuance of the administration of his mediatory kingdom, consists in his *dispensations of these spiritual gifts*, which are properly the *powers of the new world*. For such is the nature of them and their use, such the sovereignty that appears in their distribution, such their distinction and difference from all natural endowments, that even the world cannot but take notice of them, though it violently hate and persecute them; and the church is abundantly satisfied with the sense of the power of Christ in them. Moreover, the principal end of these gifts is, to enable the officers of the church unto the due administration of all the laws and ordinances of Christ unto its edification. But all these laws and ordinances, these offices and officers, he gives unto the church as the Lord over his own house, as the sole sovereign lawgiver and ruler thereof.

5. They differ as unto the *event* even in this world they may come unto, and oft-times actually do so accordingly. For all *gifts*, the best of them, and that in the highest degree wherein they may be attained in this life, may be utterly lost or taken away. The *law* of their communication is, that who improveth not that *talent* or measure of them which he hath received, it shall be taken from him. For, whereas, they are given for no other end, but to *trade withal* according to the several capacities and opportunities that men have in the church, or their families, or their own private exercise, if that be utterly neglected, to what end should they be left unto rust and uselessness in the minds of any? Accordingly we find it to come to pass. Some neglect them, some reject them, and from both sorts they are judicially taken away. Such we have amongst us. Some there are who had received considerable spiritual abilities for evangelical administrations: but after a while they have fallen into an outward state of things, wherein, as they suppose, they shall have no *advantage* by them; yea, that their exercise would turn to their *disadvantage*, and thereon do wholly neglect them: by this means they have insensibly decayed, until they become as devoid of spiritual abilities, as if they never had experience of any assistance in that kind. They can no more either pray, or speak, or evidence, the power of the Spirit of God in any thing unto the edification of the church. ‘Their arm is dried up, and their right eye is utterly darkened;’ Zech. xi. 17. And this sometimes they come to be sensible of, yea, ashamed of, and yet cannot retrieve themselves. But for the most part they fall into such a state, as wherein the profession and use of them becomes as they suppose inconsistent with their present interest, and so they openly renounce all concernment in them: neither for the most part do they stay here, but after they have rejected them in themselves, and espoused *lazy, profitable* outward helps in their room, they *blaspheme* the author of them in others, and declare them all to be delusions, fancies, and imaginations. And, if any one hath the confidence to own the assistance of the Holy Spirit in the discharge of the duties of the gospel unto the edification of the church, he becomes unto them a scorn and reproach. These are branches cut off from the vine, whom men gather; or those whose miserable condition

is described by the apostle; Heb. vi. 4—6. But one way or other, these gifts may be utterly lost or taken away from them, who have once received them, and that whether they be *ordinary* or *extraordinary*. There is no kind of them, no degree of them, that can give us any security, that they shall be always continued with us, or at all beyond our diligent attendance unto their use and exercise. With *saving grace* it is not so. It is, indeed, subject unto various decays in us; and its thriving or flourishing in our souls, depends upon, and answers unto our diligent endeavour in the use of all means of holiness, ordinarily; 2 Pet. i. 5—10. For besides that, no man can have the least evidence of any thing of this grace in him, if he be totally negligent in its exercise, and improvement; so no man ought to expect that it will thrive or abound in him, unless he constantly and diligently attend unto it, and give up himself in all things to its conduct. But yet, as to the continuance of it in the souls of the elect, as to the life and being of its principle, and principal effect in habitual conformity unto God and his will, it is secured in the covenant of grace.

6. On whomsoever *saving grace* is bestowed, it is so firstly and principally for *himself* and his own good. It is a fruit of the especial love and kindness of God unto his own soul; Jer. xxxi. 3. This both the nature and all the ends of it do declare. For it is given unto us to renew the *image of God in us*, to make us like unto him, to restore our nature, enable us unto obedience, and to make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. But yet we must take heed that we think not that grace is bestowed on any *merely for themselves*. For, indeed, it is that wherein God designeth a good unto all, ‘*Vir bonus commune Bonum.*’—‘A good man is a good to all:’ Mic. v. 7. And, therefore, God in the communication of *saving grace* unto any, hath a three-fold respect unto others, which it is the duty of them that receive it diligently to consider and attend unto. (1.) He intends to give an example by it of what is his will, and what he approveth of; and, therefore, he requires of them in whom it is, such fruits in holy obedience, as may express the example of a holy life in the world, according to the will of God and unto his glory. Hereby doth he farther the salvation of the elect; 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. vii. 16. convince the unbelieving world at

present, 1 Pet. ii. 12. 15. iii. 16. and condemn it hereafter; Heb. xi. 7. and himself is glorified; Matt. v. 16. Let therefore no man think, that because grace is firstly and principally given him for *himself* and his own spiritual advantage, that therefore he must not account for it also with respect unto those other designs of God. Yea, he who in the exercise of what he esteems grace, hath respect only unto himself, gives an evidence that he never had any that was genuine and of the right kind. (2.) Fruitfulness unto the benefiting of others is hence also expected. Holy obedience, the effect of saving grace, is frequently expressed in the Scripture by *fruits* and *fruitfulness*. See Col. i. 10. And these fruits, or the things which others are to feed upon and to be sustained by, are to be born by the *plants of the Lord, the trees of righteousness*. The fruits of *love, charity, bounty, mercy, wisdom*, are those whereby grace is rendered useful in the world, and is taken notice of as that which is lovely and desirable, Eph. ii. 10. (3.) God requires, that by the exercise of *grace* the doctrine of the gospel be adorned and propagated. This doctrine is from God; our profession is our avowing of it so to be: what it is the world knows not, but takes its measures of it from what it observes in them by whom it is professed. And it is the unprofitable flagitious lives of Christians that have almost thrust the gospel out of the world with contempt. But the care that it be *adorned*, that it be *glorified*, is committed of God unto every one on whom he bestows the least of saving grace. And this is to be done only by the guidance of a holy conversation in conformity thereunto. And many other such blessed ends there are, wherein God hath respect unto the good and advantage of other men in the collation of saving grace upon any. And if gracious persons are not more useful than others in all things that may have a real benefit in them unto mankind, it is their sin and shame. But yet, after all, grace is principally and in the first place given unto men for themselves, their own good and spiritual advantage, out of love to their souls, and in order unto their eternal blessedness; all other effects are but secondary ends of it. But as unto these *spiritual gifts* it is quite otherwise. They are not in the first place bestowed on any for their *own sakes*, or their own good but for the good and benefit of *others*. So the apostle ex-

pressly declares, 1 Cor. xii. 7. 'The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.' These gifts whereby the Spirit evidenceth and manifesteth his power, are bestowed on men for this very end, that they may profit and benefit others in their edification. And yet also where they are duly improved, they tend much to the spiritual advantage of them on whom they are bestowed, as we shall see afterward. Wherefore as *grace* is primarily given unto us for ourselves, and secondarily for the good of others; so *gifts* are bestowed in the first place for the edification of others, and secondly for our own spiritual advantage also.

7. The principal difference between them is in their *nature* and kind, discovering itself in their different *subjects*, *operations*, and *effects*. For those already insisted on, are principally from external causes and considerations. And, (1.) As to the different *subjects* of them, *spiritual gifts* are placed and seated in the *mind* or understanding only, whether they are ordinary or extraordinary they have no other hold nor residence in the soul. And they are in the mind as it is *notional* and theoretical, rather than as it is *practical*. They are *intellectual abilities* and no more. I speak of them which have any residence in us; for some *gifts*, as *miracles* and *tongues*, consisted only in a *transient operation* of an extraordinary power. Of all others *illumination* is the foundation, and spiritual light their matter. So the apostle declares in his order of expression, Heb. vi. 4. The will, and the affections, and the conscience, are unconcerned in them. Wherefore they *change not the heart* with power, although they may reform the life by the efficacy of light. And although God doth not ordinarily bestow them on flagitious persons, nor continue them with such as after the reception of them become flagitious; yet they may be in those who were unrenewed, and have nothing in them to preserve men absolutely from the worst of sins. But saving grace possesseth the *whole soul*; men are thereby 'sanctified throughout in the whole spirit, soul, and body,' 1 Thess. v. 17. as hath been at large declared. Not the *mind* only is savingly enlightened, but there is a principle of spiritual life infused into the whole soul, enabling it in all its powers and faculties to act obedientially unto God, whose nature hath been fully explained elsewhere. Hence, (2.) They differ in their *opera-*

tions. For grace changeth and transformeth the whole soul into its own nature, Isa. xi. 6—8. Rom. vi. 17. xii. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 18. It is a new, a divine nature unto the soul, and is in it a habit disposing, inclining and enabling of it unto obedience. It acts itself in *faith*, *love*, and *holiness*, in all things. But *gifts* of themselves have not this power nor these operations. They may and do, in those who are possessed of them in and under their exercise, make great impression on their own affections, but they change not the heart, they renew not the mind, they transform not the soul into the image of God. Hence where *grace* is predominant, every notion of light and truth which is communicated unto the mind, is immediately turned into practice, by having the whole soul cast into the mould of it; where only *gifts* bear sway, the use of it in duties unto edification is best whereunto it is designed. (3.) As to *effects* or consequents, the great difference is, that on the part of Christ; Christ doth thereby dwell and reside in our hearts; when concerning many of those who have been made partakers of these other spiritual endowments, he will say, ‘Depart from me, I never knew you,’ which he will not say of any one whose soul he hath inhabited.

These are some of the principal *agreements and differences* between *saving graces* and *spiritual gifts*; both sorts of them being wrought in believers by that ‘one and self-same Spirit which divideth to every one as he will.’ And for a close of this discourse I shall only add, that where these *graces* and *gifts* in any eminency or good degree are bestowed on the same persons, they are exceedingly helpful unto each other. A soul sanctified by saving grace, is the only proper soil for gifts to flourish in. Grace influenceth gifts unto a due exercise, prevents their abuse, stirs them up unto proper occasions, keeps them from being a matter of pride or contention, and subordinates them in all things unto the glory of God. When the actings of *grace* and *gifts* are inseparable, as when in prayer the Spirit is a Spirit of grace and supplication, the grace and gift of it working together, when utterance in other duties is always accompanied with faith and love, then is God glorified, and our own salvation promoted. Then have edifying gifts a beauty and lustre upon them, and generally are most successful, when they are clothed and

adorned with humility, meekness, a reverence of God, and compassion for the souls of men. Yea, when there is no evidence, no manifestation of their being accompanied with these and the like graces, they are but as a *parable* or wise saying in the mouth of a fool. *Gifts* on the other side excite and stir up *grace* unto its proper exercise, and operations. How often is faith, love, and delight in God excited and drawn forth unto especial exercise in believers by the use of their own gifts. And thus much may suffice as to the nature of these gifts in general ; we next consider them under their most general distributions.

CHAP. III.

Of gifts and offices extraordinary : and first of offices.

THE spiritual gifts whereof we treat, respect either *powers* and *duties* in the church, or *duties* only. Gifts that respect *powers* and *duties* are of two sorts, or there have been, or are at any time, two sorts of such *powers* and *duties* : the first whereof was *extraordinary*, the latter *ordinary*, and consequently the gifts subservient unto them must be of two sorts also, which must farther be cleared.

Wherever *power* is given by Christ unto his churches, and *duties* are required in the execution of that *power*, unto the ends of his spiritual kingdom, to be performed by virtue thereof, there is an *office* in the church. For an ecclesiastical office is an especial power given by Christ unto any person or persons for the performance of especial duties belonging unto the edification of the church in an especial manner. And these offices have been of two sorts. First, *extraordinary*. Secondly, *ordinary*. Some seem to deny that there was ever any such thing as *extraordinary power* or *extraordinary offices* in the church. For they do provide successors unto all who are pleaded to have been of that kind ; and those such as look how far short they come of them in other things, do exceed them in *power* and *rule*. I shall not contend about words, and shall therefore, only inquire what it was that constituted them to be officers of Christ in his church whom thence we call *extraordinary* ; and then, if

others can duly lay claim unto them, they may be allowed to pass for their successors.

There are four things which constitute an extraordinary officer in the church of God, and consequently are required in, and do constitute, an extraordinary office. 1. An extraordinary *call* unto an office, such as none other have or can have by virtue of any law, order, or constitution whatever. 2. An extraordinary *power* communicated unto persons so called, enabling them to act what they are so called unto, wherein the essence of any office doth consist. 3. Extraordinary *gifts* for the exercise and discharge of that power. 4. Extraordinary *employment* as to its extent and measure, requiring extraordinary labour, travail, zeal, and self-denial. All these do and must concur in that office, and unto those offices which we call extraordinary.

Thus was it with the apostles, prophets and evangelists at the first, which were all extraordinary *teaching officers* in the church, and all that ever were so; 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. Besides these, there were at the first planting of the church, persons endued with extraordinary gifts, as of miracles, healing, and tongues, which did not of themselves constitute them officers, but do belong to the second head of gifts which concern duties only. Howbeit these gifts were always most eminently bestowed on them who were called unto the extraordinary offices mentioned; 1 Cor. xiv. 18. 'I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all.' They had the same gift some of them, but the apostle had it in a more eminent degree. See Matt. x. 8. And we may treat briefly in our passage of these several sorts of extraordinary officers.

First, For the *apostles*, they had a double *call*, *mission*, and *commission*, or a twofold apostleship. Their first call was unto a subserviency unto the personal ministry of Jesus Christ. For he was a 'minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers;' Rom. xv. 8. In the discharge of this his personal ministry it was necessary that he should have peculiar servants and officers under him to prepare his way and work, and to attend him therein. So he 'ordained twelve that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach;' Mark iii. 14. This was the substance of their first call and

work, namely, to attend the presence of Christ, and to go forth to preach as he gave them order. Hence because he was in his own person, as to his *prophetical* office, the *minister only of the circumcision*, being therein according to all the promises sent only to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel,' he confined those who were to be thus assistant unto him in that his especial work and ministry, and whilst they were so, unto the same persons and people, expressly prohibiting them to extend their line or measure any farther. 'Go not,' saith he, 'into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter you not; but go rather unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel;' Matt. x. 5. This *rather* was absolutely exclusive of the others during his personal ministry, and afterward included only the pre-eminence of the Israelites, that they were to have the gospel offered unto them in the first place. 'It was necessary the word of God should be first spoken unto them;' Acts xiii. 46.

And this, it may be, occasioned that difference which was afterward among them, whether their ministry extended unto the Gentiles or no; as we may see, Acts x. and xi. But whereas our Saviour in that commission, by virtue whereof they were to act after his resurrection, had extended their office and power expressly to 'all nations;' Matt. xxviii. 19. or to 'every creature in all the world;' chap. xvi. 15. A man would wonder whence that uncertainty should arise. I am persuaded that God suffered it so to be, that the calling of the Gentiles might be more signalized, or made more eminent thereby. For whereas this was the great 'mystery which in other ages was not made known but *hid in God*, namely, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ,' that is, of the promise made unto Abraham by the gospel; Eph. iii. 5—10. it being now to be laid open and displayed, he would by their hesitation about it have it searched into, examined, tried, and proved, that the faith of the church might never be shaken about it in after ages. And in like manner when God at any time suffereth differences and doubts about the truth, or his worship, to arise in the church, he doth it for holy ends, although for the present we may not be able to discover them. But this ministry of the apostles with its powers and duties, this apostleship which extended only

unto the church of the Jews, ceased at the death of Christ, or at the end of his own personal ministry in this world. Nor can any, I suppose, pretend unto a succession to them therein. Who or what peculiar instruments he will use and employ for the final recovery of that miserable lost people, whether he will do it by an ordinary or an extraordinary ministry, by gifts miraculous, or by the naked efficacy of the gospel, is known only in his own holy wisdom and counsel; the conjectures of men about these things are vain and fruitless. For although the promises under the Old Testament for the *calling of the Gentiles* were far more clear and numerous than those which remain concerning the *recalling of the Jews*, yet because the manner, way, and all other circumstances were obscured, the whole is called a *mystery hid in God* from all the former ages of the church; much more, therefore, may the way and manner of the recalling of the Jews be esteemed a hidden mystery; as indeed it is notwithstanding the dreams and conjectures of too many.

But these same apostles, the same individual persons, Judas only excepted, had another call unto that office of apostleship which had respect unto the whole work and interest of Christ in the world. They were now to be made *princes in all lands*, rulers, leaders in spiritual things, of all the inhabitants of the earth; Psal. xlv. 16. And to make this call the more conspicuous and evident, as also because it includes in it the institution and nature of the office itself whereunto they were called, our blessed Saviour proceedeth in it by sundry degrees. For, 1. he gave unto them a *promise of power* for their office, or office-power; Matt. xvi. 19. So he promised unto them, in the person of Peter, the *keys of the kingdom of heaven*, or a power of spiritual binding and loosing of sinners, of remitting or retaining sin by the doctrine of the gospel; Matt. xviii. 18. John xx. 23. 2. He actually collated a *right* unto that power upon them, expressed by an outward pledge; John xx. 21—23. ‘Jesus saith to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.’ And this communication of the Holy Ghost was such as gave

them a peculiar right and title unto their office, but not a right and power unto its exercise. 3. He *sealed*, as it were, *their commission*, which they had for the discharge of their office, containing the whole warranty they had to enter upon the world, and subdue it unto the obedience of the gospel; Matt. xxviii. 18—20. ‘Go teach, baptize, command.’ But yet, 4. all these things did not absolutely give them a present power for the exercise of that office whereunto they were called, or at least a limitation was put for a season upon it. For, under all this provision and furniture they are commanded to stay at Jerusalem, and not address themselves unto the discharge of their office, until that were fulfilled which gave it its completeness and perfection; Acts i. 4. 6. Wherefore it is said, that *after his ascension into heaven*, he gave ‘some to be apostles;’ Eph. iv. 8. 11. He gave not any *completely to be apostles* until then. He had before appointed the *office*, designed the *persons*, gave them their *commission* with the visible *pledge* of the power they should afterward receive. But there yet remained the communication of *extraordinary gifts* unto them to enable them unto the discharge of their office. And this was that, which *after the ascension* of Christ they received on the day of Pentecost, as it is related, Acts ii. And this was so essentially necessary unto their office, that the Lord Christ is said *therein* to give some to be apostles. For without these gifts they were not so, nor could discharge that office unto his honour and glory. And these things all concurred to the constitution of this office, with the call of any persons to the discharge of it. The *office* itself was instituted by Christ, the *designation* and call of the persons unto this office was an immediate act of Christ. So also was their *commission* and power, and the *extraordinary gifts* which he endowed them withal. And, whereas the Lord Christ is said to give this *office* and these *officers* after his ascension, namely, in the communication of the gifts of the Holy Ghost unto those *officers* for the discharge of that *office*, it is evident that all office-power depends on the communication of gifts whether extraordinary or ordinary. But where any of these is wanting, there is no apostle, nor any successor of one apostle. Therefore, when Paul was afterward added unto the twelve in the same power and office, he was careful to declare how he received both *call*, *commission*, and power

immediately from Jesus Christ. ‘Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised him from the dead;’ Gal i. 1. Whereas, those who pretend to be their successors, if they will speak the truth must say, that they are what they are, neither of Jesus Christ, nor God the Father, but of men and by men. However they neither dare nor will pretend so to be of God and Christ, as not to be called by the ministry of man, which evacuates the pretence of succession in this office.

Furthermore, unto the *office* described there belongs the *measure* and extent of its power *objectively*, and the power itself intensively or *subjectively*. For the first, the *object* of apostolical power was twofold: (1.) The *world* to be converted. (2.) The *churches* gathered of those that were converted, whether Jews or Gentiles. For the first; their commission extended to all the world; and every apostle had right, power, and authority to preach the gospel to ‘every creature under heaven,’ as he had opportunity so to do; Matt. xxviii. 18—20. Mark xvi. 15. Rom. x. 15—18. Now whereas it was impossible that any one person should pass through the whole world in the pursuit of this right and power; and, whereas, for that cause our Lord had ordained twelve to that purpose, that the work might the more effectually be carried on by their endeavours, it is highly probable that they did by agreement distribute the nations into certain lots and portions which they singly took upon them to instruct. So there was an agreement between Paul on the one hand with Barnabas, and Peter, James, and John on the other, that they should go to the Gentiles, and the other take more especial care of the Jews; Gal. ii. 7—9. And the same apostle afterward designed to avoid the *line or allotment* of others to preach the gospel where the people were not allotted unto the especial charge of any other; 2 Cor. x. 16. But yet this was not so appointed as if their power was limited thereby, or that any of them came short in his *apostolical* power in any other place in the world, as well as that wherein for conveniency he particularly exercised his ministry. For the power of every one still equally extended unto all nations, although they could not always exercise it in all places alike. Nor did that express agreement that was between Peter and Paul about the Gentiles and the circum-

cision, either discharge them of their duty, that the one should have more regard unto the circumcision, or the other unto the Gentiles; nor did it limit their power, or bound their apostolical authority; but only directed the exercise of it as unto the principal intention and design. Wherefore, as to the *right* and authority of preaching the gospel and converting persons unto the faith, the *whole world* fell equally under the care, and was in the commission of every apostle, although they applied themselves unto the discharge of this work in particular, according to their own wisdom and choice, under the guidance and disposal of the providence of God. And, as I will not deny but that it is the duty of every Christian, and much more of every minister of the gospel, to promote the knowledge of Christ unto all mankind, as they have opportunities and advantages so to do; yet I must say, if there be any who pretend to be successors of the apostles as to the extent of their office-power unto all nations; notwithstanding whatever they may pretend of such an agreement to take up with a portion accommodated unto their ease and interest, whilst so many nations of the earth lie unattempted as to the preaching of the gospel, they will one day be found transgressors of their own profession, and will be dealt withal accordingly.

(2.) Out of the world by the preaching of the gospel persons were called, converted, and thereon gathered into holy societies or *churches* for the celebration of gospel-worship, and their own mutual edification. All these churches wherever they were called and planted in the whole world, were equally under the authority of every apostle. Where any church was called and planted by any particular apostle, there was a peculiar relation between him and them, and so a peculiar mutual care and love: nor could it otherwise be. So the apostle Paul pleads an especial interest in the Corinthians and others, unto whom he had been a *spiritual father* in their conversion, and the instrument of forming Christ in them. Such churches, therefore, as were of their own peculiar calling and planting, it is probable they did every one take care of in a peculiar manner. But yet no limitation of the apostolical power ensued hereon. Every apostle had still the care of all the churches on him, and apostolical authority in every church in the world equally, which he might exercise as occasion did require. Thus Paul affirmeth, that

the ‘care of all the churches was upon him daily;’ 2 Cor. xi. 28. And it was the crime of Diotrephes, for which he is branded, that he opposed the apostolical power of John in that church where probably he was the teacher; 3 John 9, 10. But what power now over all churches, or authority in all churches, some may fancy or claim to themselves, I know not; but it were to be wished that men would reckon that care and labour are as extensive in this case as power and authority.

Again, the power of this extraordinary office may be considered intensively or formally what it was. And this in one word was *all the power that the Lord Christ hath given or thought meet to make use of for the edification of the church*. I shall give a brief description of it in some few general instances. (1.) It was a power of administering all the ordinances of Christ in the way and manner of his appointment. Every apostle in all places had power to preach the word, to administer the sacraments, to ordain elders, and to do whatever else belonged unto the worship of the gospel. But yet they had not power to do any of these things any otherwise but as the Lord Christ had appointed them to be done. They could not *baptize* any but believers and their seed; Acts viii. 36—38. xvi. 15. They could not administer the Lord’s supper to any but the church, and in the church; 1 Cor. x. 17. 20—24. They could not *ordain elders*, but by the suffrage and election of the people; Acts xiv. 23. Those indeed, who pretend to be their successors, plead for such a right in themselves unto some, if not all, gospel administrations, as that they may take liberty to dispose of them at their pleasure, by their sole authority, without any regard unto the rule of all holy duties in particular. (2.) It was a power of executing all the laws of Christ, with the penalties annexed unto their disobedience. ‘We have,’ saith the apostle, ‘in a readiness wherewith to revenge all disobedience;’ 2 Cor. x. 6. And this principally consisted in the power of *excommunication*, or the judiciary excision of any person or persons from the society of the faithful, and visible body of Christ in the world. Now, although this power were absolutely in each apostle towards all offenders in every church; whence Paul affirms that he had himself ‘delivered Hymeneus and Alexander unto Satan;’ 1 Tim. i. 20. Yet did they not exercise this power without the concurrence and consent of the

church from whence an offender was to be cut off; because that was the mind of Christ, and that which the nature of the ordinance did require; 1 Cor. v. 3—5. (3.) Their whole power was *spiritual* and not *carnal*. It respected the souls, minds, and consciences of men alone as its object, and not their bodies, or goods, or liberties in this world. Those extraordinary instances of Ananias and Sapphira in their sudden death, of Elymas in his blindness, were only miraculous operations of God in testifying against their sin, and proceeded not from any *apostolical power* in the discharge of their office. But as unto that kind of power which now hath devoured all other appearances of church authority, and in the sense of the most is only significant, namely, to *fine, punish, imprison, banish, kill, and destroy* men and women, Christians, believers, persons of an unblamable useful conversation, with the worst of carnal weapons and savage cruelty of mind, as they were never intrusted with it, nor any thing of the like kind, so they have sufficiently manifested how their holy souls did abhor the thoughts of such antichristian power and practices; though in others the mystery of iniquity began to work in their days.

The ministry of the *Seventy* also, which the Lord Christ sent forth afterward, to ‘go two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself would come,’ was in like manner *temporary*; that is, it was subservient and commensurate unto his own *personal ministry* in the flesh; Luke x. 1—3. These are commonly called *evangelists*, from the general nature of their work, but were not those extraordinary officers, which were afterward in the Christian church under that title and appellation. But there was some analogy and proportion between the one and the other. For as these first *seventy* seem to have had an inferior work, and subordinate unto that of the *twelve* in their ministry unto the church of the Jews, during the time of the Lord Christ’s converse among them; so those *evangelists* that afterward were appointed, were subordinate unto them in their *evangelical apostleship*. And these also as they were immediately called unto their employment by the Lord Jesus, so their *work* being *extraordinary*, they were endued with *extraordinary gifts* of the Holy Ghost, as ver. 9. 17. 19.

In the gospel church-state there were *evangelists* also as

they are mentioned, Eph. iv. 11. Acts xxi. 2. 2 Tim. iv. 5. Gospellers, preachers of the gospel, distinct from the ordinary teachers of the churches. Things, I confess, are but obscurely delivered concerning this sort of men in Scripture; their office being not designed unto a continuance. Probably the institution of it was traduced from the temporary ministry of the *seventy* beforementioned. That they were the same persons continued in their first office, as the apostles ~~were~~, is uncertain and improbable; though it be not that some of them might be called thereunto; as Philip, and Timothy, and Titus, were evangelists that were not of that first number. Their especial *call* is not mentioned, nor their *number* any where intimated. That their *call* was *extraordinary* is hence apparent, in that no rules are any where given or prescribed about their choice or ordination, no qualification of their persons expressed, nor any direction given the church as to its future proceeding about them, no more than about new or other apostles. They seem to have been *called by the apostles*, by the direction of a spirit of prophecy or immediate revelation from Christ. So it is said of Timothy, who is expressly called an evangelist, 2 Tim. iv. 5. that he received that gift ‘by prophecy;’ 1 Tim. iv. 14. that is, the gift of the office: as when Christ ascended, he ‘gave gifts unto men, some to be evangelists;’ Eph. iv. 8. 11. For this way did the Holy Ghost design men unto extraordinary offices and employments; Acts xiii. 1—3. And when they were so designed by prophecy, or immediate revelation from Christ by the Holy Ghost, then the church in compliance therewith both prayed for them, and laid their hands on them: so when the Holy Ghost had revealed his choosing of Paul and Barnabas unto an especial work, the prophets and teachers of the church of Antioch where they then were, ‘fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them,’ so sending them away; Acts xiii. 14. And when Timothy was called to be an *evangelist* by especial revelation or *prophecy*, the apostle *laid his hands* on him, whereby he received the Holy Ghost in his extraordinary gifts: ‘The gift of God which was in him by the putting on of his hands;’ 2 Tim. i. 6. And as it was usual with him to join others with himself in those epistles which he wrote by immediate divine inspiration, so in this act of *laying his hands* on an *evangelist*

as a sign of the communication of extraordinary gifts, he joined the ordinary presbytery of the church with him, that were present in the place where he was so called. It is evident therefore, that both their *call* and their *gifts* were extraordinary, and therefore, so also was their *office*. For although men who have only an *ordinary call* to office may have *extraordinary gifts*, and many had so in primitive times : and although some might have *extraordinary gifts*, who were never called unto office at all, as some of those who spake with *tongues*, and wrought *miracles* ; yet where there is a concurrence of an *extraordinary call* and *extraordinary gifts*, there the *office* is extraordinary.

The *power* that these officers in the church were intrusted with, was *extraordinary* : for this is a certain consequent of an extraordinary call, and extraordinary gifts. And this power respected *all churches* in the world equally ; yea, and all persons, as the apostles also did. But whereas their ministry was *subordinate* unto that of the apostles, they were by them guided as to the particular places wherein they were to exercise their power, and discharge their office for a season. This is evident from Paul's disposal of Titus as to his work and time ; Tit. i. 5. iii. 12. But yet their power did at no time depend on their relation unto any particular place or church, nor were they ever ordained to any one place or *see* more than another. But the extent of their employment was every way as large as that of the apostles, both as to the world and as to the churches ; only in their present particular disposal of themselves, they were, as it is probable, for the most part under the guidance of the apostles ; although sometimes they had particular revelations and directions from the Holy Ghost, or by the ministry of angels, for their especial employment, as Philip had ; Acts viii. 26.

And as for their work, it may be reduced unto three heads : 1. To *preach the gospel* in all places unto all persons, as they had occasion. So Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ ; Acts viii. 5. And when the apostle Paul chargeth Timothy to do the work of an evangelist ; 2 Tim. iv. 5. he prescribes unto him 'preaching the word in season and out of season ;' ver. 2. And whereas this was incumbent in like manner on the *ordinary teachers* of every

church ; the teaching of these *evangelists* differed from theirs in two things. (1.) In the *extent* of their work, which as we shewed before, was equal unto that of the apostles ; whereas *ordinary bishops*, pastors, or teachers, were to feed, teach, and take care of the especial flocks only which they were set over ; Acts xx. 17, 18. 1 Pet. v. 2. (2.) They were obliged to *labour in their work* in a more than ordinary manner ; as it should seem from 2 Tim. iv. 5. 2. The second part of their work was to confirm the doctrine of the gospel by *miraculous operations* as occasion did require. So Philip the evangelist wrought many miracles of sundry sorts at Samaria, in the confirmation of the doctrine which he taught ; Acts viii. 6, 7. 13. And in like manner there is no question, but that the rest of the evangelists had the power or gift of miraculous operations, to be exercised as occasion did require, and as they were guided by the Holy Ghost. (3.) They were employed in the settling and completing of those churches, whose foundations were laid by the apostles. For whereas they had the great work upon them, of ‘preaching the gospel unto all nations,’ they could not continue long or reside in any one place or church. And yet when persons were newly converted to the faith, and disposed only into an imperfect order, without any especial peculiar officers, guides, or rulers, of their own ; it was not safe leaving of them unto themselves, lest they should be too much at a loss as to gospel order and worship. Wherefore, in such places where any churches were planted, but not completed, nor would the design of the apostles suffer them to continue any longer there ; they left these *evangelists* among them for a season, who had power by virtue of their office to dispose of things in the churches, until they came unto completeness and perfection. When this end was attained, and the churches were settled under ordinary elders of their own, the evangelists removed into other places, according as they were directed or disposed. These things are evident from the instructions given by Paul unto Timothy and Titus, which have all of them respect unto this order.

Some there are who plead for the *continuance of this office* : some in express terms and under the same name : others for *successors* unto them, at least in that part of their work which consisteth in power over many churches. Some say that

bishops succeed to the apostles, and *presbyters* unto those evangelists: but this is scarce defensible in any tolerable manner by them whose interest it is to defend it. For Timothy, whom they would have to be a bishop, is expressly called an evangelist. That which is pleaded with most probability for their continuance, is the *necessity of the work* wherein they were employed in the rule and settlement of the churches: but the truth is, if their whole work as before described be consulted, as none can perform some parts of it, so it may be very few would over-earnestly press after a participation of their office. For to preach the word continually, and that with a peculiar labour and travail, and to move up and down according as the necessity of the edification of the churches doth require, doing nothing in them but according to the rule and appointment of Christ, are things that not many will earnestly covet to be engaged in. But there is an apprehension that there was something more than ordinary power belonging unto this office, that those who enjoyed it were not obliged always to labour in any particular church, but had the rule of many churches committed unto them. Now, whereas, this power is apt to draw other desirable things unto it, or carry them along with it; this is that which some pretend a succession unto: though they are neither *called* like them, nor *gifted* like them, nor *labour* like them, nor have the same *object* of their employment, much less the same *power of extraordinary operations* with them; yet as to the rule over sundry churches, they must needs be their successors. I shall, therefore, briefly do these two things: 1. Shew that there are *no such officers as these evangelists* continued by the will of Christ in the ordinary state and course of the church. 2. That there is no need of their continuance from any work applied unto them.

And, (1.) the things that are *essential* unto the office of an *evangelist*, are unattainable at present unto the church. For, where no command, no rule, no authority, no directions are given, for the calling of any officer, there that office must cease, as doth that of the apostles, who could not be called but by Jesus Christ. What is required unto the *call* of an *evangelist*, was before declared. And, unless it can be manifested either by institution or example, how any one may be *otherwise called* unto that office, no such office can be con-

tinued. For a *call* by prophecy or immediate revelation none now will pretend unto. And other call the *evangelists* of old had none.

Nor is there in the Scripture the least mention of the call or appointment of any one to be an *ecclesiastical officer* in an *ordinary stated church*, but with relation unto that church whereof he was, or was to be, an officer. But an *evangelist* as such, was not especially related unto any one church more than another, though as the apostles themselves, they might for a time attend unto the work in one place or church, rather or more than another. Wherefore, without a call from the Holy Ghost, either immediate by *prophecy* and revelation, or by the direction of persons infallibly inspired, as the apostles were, none can be called to be evangelists, nor yet *to succeed them* under any other name in that office. Wherefore, the primitive church after the apostles' time, never once took upon them to constitute or ordain an *evangelist*, as knowing it a thing beyond their rule, and out of their power. Men may invade an office when they please, but unless they be called unto it, they must account for their usurpation. And as for those who have erected an office in the church, or an *episcopacy*, principally if not solely out of what is ascribed unto these *evangelists*, namely, to Timothy and Titus, they may be farther attended unto in their claim, when they lay the least pretence unto the whole of what is ascribed unto them. But this *doing the work of an evangelist*, is that which few men care for, or delight in; only their power and authority in a new kind of managery, many would willingly possess themselves of.

(2.) The *evangelists* we read of had *extraordinary gifts* of the Holy Spirit, without which they could not warrantably undertake their office. This we have manifested before. Now these *extraordinary gifts*, differing not only in *degrees* but in *kind* from all those of the *ordinary ministry* of the church, are not at present by any pretended unto: and if any should make such a pretence, it would be an easy matter to convince them of their folly. But without these gifts, men must content themselves with such offices in the church as are stated with respect unto every particular congregation. Acts xiv. 23. xx. 28. Tit. i. 5. 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. Phil. i. 1.

Some indeed seem not satisfied, whether to derive their

claim from Timothy and Titus as *evangelists*, or from the *bishops* that were *ordained* by them, or *described* unto them. But whereas those *bishops* were no other but *elders* of particular churches, as is evident beyond a modest denial, from Acts xx. 28. Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2. 8. Tit. i. 4, 5. So certainly they cannot be of both sorts, the one being apparently superior unto the other. If they are *such bishops* as Titus and Timothy ordained, it is well enough known both what is their office, their work, and their duty: if such as they pretend Timothy and Titus to be, they must manifest it in the like *call, gifts, and employment*, as they had.

For, (3.) there are not any now, who do pretend unto their *principal employment* by virtue of office, nor can so do. For it is certain, that the principal work of the *evangelists* was to go up and down from one place and nation unto another, to *preach the gospel* unto Jews and Gentiles as yet unconverted, and their commission unto this purpose was as large and extensive as that of the apostles. But who shall now empower any one hereunto? What church, what persons, have received authority to *ordain* any one to be such an *evangelist*? Or what rules or directions are given as to their *qualifications*, power, or duty; or how they should be so ordained? It is true, those who are ordained ministers of the gospel, and others also that are the disciples of Christ, may and ought to preach the gospel to unconverted persons and nations as they have opportunity, and are particularly guided by the providence of God: but that any church or person has power or authority to ordain a person unto this office and work, cannot be proved.

2. Lastly, The *continuance of the employment* as unto the *settling of new planted churches*, is no way necessary. For every church being planted and settled, is intrusted with power for its own preservation and continuance in due order according to the mind of Christ, and is enabled to do all those things in itself, which at first were done under the guidance of the evangelists; nor can any one instance be given wherein they are defective. And where any church was called and gathered in the name of Christ, which had some things yet wanting unto its perfection and complete order, which the *evangelists* were to finish and settle; they did it not but in and by the power of the church itself; only

presiding and directing in the things to be done. And if any churches through their own default have lost that order and power which they were once established in, as they shall never want power in themselves to recover their pristine estate and condition, who will attend unto their duty according unto rule to that purpose : so this would rather prove a necessity of raising up *new evangelists*, of a new extraordinary ministry, on the defection of churches, than the continuance of them in the church rightly stated and settled.

Besides these *evangelists*, there were *prophets* also who had a *temporary, extraordinary ministry* in the church. Their grant from Christ or institution in the church is mentioned 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11. and the exercise of their ministry is declared Acts xiii. 1. But the names of *prophets*, and *prophecy*, are used variously in the New Testament. For, 1. sometimes an *extraordinary office* and *extraordinary gifts* are signified by them ; and, 2. Sometimes *extraordinary gifts* only ; sometimes an *ordinary office* with *ordinary gifts* ; and sometimes *ordinary gifts only*. And unto one of these heads may the use of the word be every where reduced : in the places mentioned, *extraordinary officers* endued with *extraordinary gifts* are intended. For they are said to be *set in the church* ; and are placed in the second rank of officers next to the apostles ; ‘first apostles, secondarily prophets ;’ 1 Cor. xii. 28. between them and evangelists ; Eph. iv. 11. And two things are ascribed unto them : (1.) That they *received immediate revelations* and directions from the Holy Ghost, in things that belonged unto the present duty of the church. Unto them it was that the Holy Ghost revealed his mind, and gave commands concerning the separation of Barnabas and Saul unto their work ; Acts xiii. 2. (2.) They foretold things to come by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, wherein the duty or edification of the church was concerned. So Agabus the prophet foretold the famine in the days of Claudius Cæsar, whereon provision was made for the poor saints at Jerusalem, that they might not suffer by it ; Acts xi. 28, 29. And the same person afterward, prophesied of the bonds and sufferings of Paul at Jerusalem ; Acts xxi. 10, 11. And the same thing, it being of the highest concernment unto the church, was (as it should seem) revealed unto the prophets that were in most churches ; for so himself gives an account

hereof. 'And now behold I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and afflictions abide me;' Acts xx. 21, 22. That is, in all the cities he passed through, where there were churches planted and prophets in them. These things the churches then stood in need of, for their confirmation, direction, and comfort; and were therefore, I suppose, most of them supplied with such officers for a season; that is, whilst they were needful. And unto this office, though expressly affirmed to be *set in the church*, and placed between the apostles and the evangelists, none that I know of do pretend a succession. All grant that they were extraordinary, because their gift and work was so; but so were those of *evangelists* also. But there is no mention of the *power and rule* of those prophets, or else undoubtedly we should have had on one pretence or other successors provided for them.

2. Sometimes an *extraordinary gift* without office is intended in this expression. So it is said that 'Philip the evangelist had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy;' Acts xxi. 9. It is not said that they were *prophetesses*, as there were some under the Old Testament; only that 'they did prophesy;' that is, they had revelations from the Holy Ghost occasionally for the use of the church. For to *prophesy* is nothing but to declare hidden and secret things by virtue of immediate revelation, be they of what nature they will; and so is the word commonly used; Matt. xxvi. 68. Luke xxii. 64. So an *extraordinary gift* without office is expressed, Acts xix. 6. 'And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.' Their prophesying, which was their declaration of spiritual things by immediate revelation, was of the same nature with their *speaking with tongues*; both extraordinary gifts and operations of the Holy Ghost. And of this sort were those *miracles, healings, and tongues*, which God for a time set in the church, which did not constitute distinct officers in the church, but they were only sundry persons in each church which were endued with these extraordinary gifts for its edification. And, therefore, are they placed after *teachers*, comprising both, which were the principal sort of the ordinary continuing officers of the

church; 1 Cor. xii. 28. And of this sort do I reckon those prophets to be who are treated of, 1 Cor. xiv. 29—33. For that they were neither stated officers in the churches, nor yet the brethren of the church promiscuously; but such as had received an especial *extraordinary gift*, is evident from the context; see ver. 30. 37.

3. Again, an *ordinary office* with *ordinary gifts* is intended by this expression; Rom. xii. 6. ‘Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.’ Prophecy here can intend nothing but *teaching*, or preaching, in the exposition and application of the word; for an *external rule* is given unto it, in that it must be done according to the *proportion of faith*, or the sound doctrine of faith revealed in the Scripture. And this ever was and will ever continue to be the work and duty of the ordinary teachers of the church, whereunto they are enabled by the gifts of Christ which they receive by the Holy Ghost; Eph. iv. 7. as we shall see more afterward. And hence also those who are not called unto office, who have yet received a gift enabling them to declare the mind of God in the Scripture unto the edification of others, may be said to *prophesy*.

And these things I thought meet to interpose, with a brief description of those *officers* which the Lord Jesus Christ granted unto his church *for a season*, at its first planting and establishment, with what belonged unto their office, and the necessity of their work. For the collation of them on the church, and their whole furniture with spiritual gifts, was the immediate work of the Holy Ghost, which we are in the declaration of; and withal it was my design to manifest how vain is the pretence of some unto a kind of *succession* unto these officers, who have neither an extraordinary call, nor extraordinary gifts, nor extraordinary employment, but only are pleased to assume an *extraordinary power* unto themselves, over the churches and disciples of Christ; and that such as neither evangelists, nor prophets, nor apostles, did ever claim or make use of. But this *matter of power* is fuel in itself unto the proud, ambitious minds of *Diotrephists*, and as now circumstanced with other advantages, is useful to the corrupt lusts of men; and, therefore, it is no wonder if it be pretended unto, and greedily reached after, by such

as really have neither call to the ministry, nor gifts for it, nor do employ themselves in it. And, therefore, as in these extraordinary officers and their gifts, did consist the original glory and honour of the churches in an especial manner, and by them was their edification carried on and perfected; so by an *empty pretence* unto their *power*, without their order and spirit, the churches have been stained and deformed, and brought to destruction. But we must return unto the consideration of extraordinary spiritual gifts, which is the especial work before us.

CHAP. IV.

Extraordinary spiritual gifts. 1 Cor. xii. 5—11.

EXTRAORDINARY *spiritual gifts* were of two sorts. First, Such as absolutely exceed the whole power and faculties of our minds and souls. These, therefore, did not consist in an *abiding principle* or faculty always resident in them that received them, so as that they could exercise them by virtue of any inherent power and ability. They were so granted unto some persons in the execution of their office, as that so often as was needful, they could produce their effects by virtue of an immediate *extraordinary* influence of Divine Power, transiently affecting their minds. Such was the *gift* of *miracles*, *healing*, and the like. There were no extraordinary officers, but they had these gifts. But yet they could work or operate, by virtue of them, only as the Holy Ghost gave them *especial direction* for the putting forth of his power in them. So it is said that ‘Paul and Barnabas preaching at Iconium, the Lord gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands;’ Acts xiv. 3. The workings of signs and miracles, is the immediate operation of the Spirit of God; nor can any power or faculty efficiently productive of such effects, abide in the souls or minds of men: these *miraculous operations* were the *witness of the Holy Ghost* sent down from heaven, which he gave to the truth of the gospel. See Heb. ii. 4. with our exposition thereon. Wherefore there was no more in these gifts which *absolutely exceed the whole faculties* of our natures,

but the designing of certain persons by the Holy Ghost, in and with whose ministry he would himself effect miraculous operations.

Secondly, They were such as consisted in *extraordinary endowments* and improvements of the faculties of the souls or minds of men; such as *wisdom, knowledge, utterance*, and the like. Now where these were bestowed on any in an *extraordinary manner*, as they were on the apostles and evangelists, they differed only in *degree* from them that are ordinary, and still continued; but are of the *same kind* with them; whereof we shall treat afterward. Now whereas all these gifts of both sorts, are expressly and distinctly enumerated and set down by our apostle in one place, I shall consider them as they are there proposed by him.

1 Cor. xii. 7—11. ‘But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit; dividing to every one severally as he will.’ The general concernments of this passage in the apostle were declared, and the context opened, at the beginning of our discourse on this subject. I shall only now consider the especial spiritual gifts that are here enumerated by the apostle, which are *nine* in number, laid down promiscuously without respect unto any order or dependance of one upon another; although it is probable that those *first placed*, were the principal, or of principal use in the church.

The first is *λόγος σοφίας*, the ‘word of wisdom.’ *Λόγος* here is of the same signification with *דבר* in the Hebrew; which often signifies a *thing* or matter. Wherefore the *word of wisdom*, is nothing but *wisdom itself*. And our inquiry is, What was that *wisdom* which was a peculiar and an especial gift (in those days) of the Holy Ghost. Our Lord Jesus Christ promised unto his disciples that he would give them a ‘mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries should not be able to gainsay nor resist;’ Luke xxi. 15. This will be

our rule in the declaration of the nature of this gift. That which he hath respect unto, is the *defence of the gospel*, and its truth, against powerful persecuting adversaries. For although they had the truth on their side, yet being men ignorant and unlearned, they might justly fear that when they were brought before *kings* and *rulers*, and *priests*, they should be baffled in their profession, and not be able to defend the truth. Wherefore this promise of a *mouth and wisdom* respects spiritual ability and utterance in the defence of the truth of the gospel, when they were called into question about it. Spiritual ability of mind is the *wisdom*, and utterance or freedom of speech is the *mouth* here promised. An eminent instance of the accomplishment hereof we have in Peter and John; Acts iv. For upon their making a *defence* of the resurrection of Christ, and the truth of the gospel therein, such as their *adversaries* were not able to gainsay nor resist, it is said, that when the *rulers and elders saw their παρρησίαν*, that is their *utterance* in defence of their cause with boldness, and so the wisdom wherewith it was accompanied, considering that they were unlearned and ignorant, they were astonished, and only considered, ‘that they had been with Jesus;’ ver. 13. And he it was, who, in the accomplishment of his promise, had given them that spiritual wisdom and utterance which they were not *able to resist*. So it is said expressly of Stephen, that his adversaries were not able to ‘resist the wisdom and spirit’ whereby he spake; Acts vi. 10. Wherefore this gift of wisdom in the first place was a *spiritual skill and ability* to defend the truths of the gospel, when questioned, opposed, or blasphemed. And this *gift* was eminent in those primitive times, when a company of unlearned men were able upon all occasions to *maintain* and defend the truth which they believed and professed before and against doctors, scribes, lawyers, rulers of synagogues, yea princes and kings, continually so confounding their adversaries, as that being obstinate in their unbelief, they were forced to cover their *shame* by betaking themselves unto *rage* and bestial fury; Acts vi. 10—14. chap. vii. 54. chap. xxii. 22, 23. As hath been the manner of all their successors ever since.

Now although this be an *especial kind of wisdom*, an eminent gift of the Holy Ghost, wherein the glory of Christ and

honour of the gospel is greatly concerned ; namely, an ability to manage and defend the truth in times of trial and danger, to the confusion of its adversaries ; yet I suppose the wisdom here intended, is not absolutely confined thereunto, though it be principally intended. Peter speaking of Paul's Epistles, affirms that they were written ' according to the wisdom given unto him ;' 2 Pet. iii. 15. That is, that *especial gift* of spiritual wisdom, for the management of gospel truths unto the edification of the church of Christ, which he had received. And he that would understand what this *wisdom* is, must be thoroughly conversant in the writings of that apostle. For indeed the *wisdom* that he useth in the management of the doctrine of the gospel, in the due consideration of all persons, occasions, circumstances, temptations of men and churches, of their state, condition, strength or weakness, growth or decays, obedience or failings, their capacities and progresses, with the holy accommodation of himself in what he teacheth or delivereth, in meekness, in vehemency, in tenderness, in sharpness, in severe arguings and *pathetical* expostulations, with all other ways and means suited unto his holy ends, in the propagation of the gospel, and edification of the church, are inexpressibly glorious and excellent. All this did he do according to the *singular gift of wisdom* that was bestowed on him. Wherefore I take the *word of wisdom* here mentioned, to be a peculiar spiritual skill and ability, *wisely* to manage the gospel in its administration unto the advantage and furtherance of the truth, especially in the defence of it when called unto the trial with its adversaries. This was an *eminent gift* of the Holy Ghost ; which considering the persons employed by him in the ministry for the most part, being known to be unlearned and ignorant, filled the world with amazement, and was an effectual means for the subduing of multitudes unto the obedience of faith. And so eminent was the apostle Paul in this gift, and so successful in the management of it, that his adversaries had nothing to say, but that he was subtle and took men by craft and guile ; 2 Cor. xii. 16. The sweetness, condescension, self-denial, holy compliance, with all which he made use of, mixed with truth, gravity, and authority, they would have had to be all craft and guile. And this *gift* when it is in any measure

continued unto any *minister of the gospel*, is of singular use unto the church of God. Yea, I doubt not but the apostle fixed it here in the *first place*, as that which was eminent above all the rest. And as where it is *too much wanting*, we see what woful mistakes and miscarriages, men, otherwise good and holy, will run themselves into, unto the great disadvantage of the gospel; so the real enjoyment and exercise of it in any competent measure, is the life and grace of the ministry. As God filled Bezaliel and Aholiah with *wisdom* for the building of the tabernacle of old, so unless he give this spiritual *wisdom* unto the ministers of the gospel, no *tabernacle* of his will be erected where it is fallen down, nor kept up where it stands. I intend not *secular wisdom*, or *civil wisdom*, much less *carual wisdom*; but a *spiritual ability* to discharge all our duties aright in the ministry committed unto us. And as was said, where this is wanting, we shall quickly see woful and shameful work made in churches themselves.

I cannot pass by the consideration of this *gift*, without offering something that may guide us either in the obtaining, or the due exercise of it. And hereunto the things ensuing may be subservient. As, 1. A sense of our own *insufficiency as of ourselves*, as unto any end for which this *wisdom* is requisite. As it is declared that we have *no sufficiency* in ourselves for any thing that is good, *all our sufficiency* being of God: so in particular, it is denied that we have any for the work of the ministry, in that *interrogation* containing a negative proposition, ‘and who is sufficient for these things?’ 2 Cor. ii. 16. A sense hereof is the first step towards this *wisdom*, as our apostle expressly declares. ‘Let no man deceive himself, if any among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise;’ 1 Cor. iii. 18. Until we discover and are sensible of our own *folly*, we are fit neither to receive nor to use this spiritual wisdom. And the want hereof proves the ruin of many that pretend unto the ministry: and it were to be wished that it were only their own. They come to the work of it full of *pride*, *self-conceit*, and foolish elation of mind, in an apprehension of their own abilities, which yet for the most part are mean and contemptible. This keeps them sufficiently estranged

from a sense of that *spiritual wisdom* we treat of. Hence there is nothing of a *gospel ministry* nor its work found among them, but an empty name. And as for those who have reduced all ecclesiastical administrations to *canons, laws, acts, courts, and legal processes* in them, they seem to do it with a design to cast off all use of spiritual gifts; yea, to exclude both them, and their author, name and thing, out of the church of God. Is this the wisdom given by the Holy Ghost for the due management of gospel administrations; namely, that men should get a little skill in some of the worst of human laws, and uncomely artifices of intriguing *secular courts*, which they pride themselves in, and terrify poor creatures with mulcts and penalties, that are any way obnoxious unto them? What use these things may be of in the world I know not, unto the church of God they do not belong.

2. Being sensible of our own insufficiency, *earnest prayers* for a supply of this *wisdom* are required in us. 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him;' James i. 5. There is both a precept and a promise to enforce this duty. That we all want wisdom in ourselves, is unquestionable; I mean, as to our concerns in the gospel, either to bear testimony unto it in difficulties, or to manage the truths of it unto edification: the way for our supply lies plain and open before us; neither is there any other that we can take one step in towards it. 'Let us ask it of God, who giveth liberally,' and we shall receive it. This was that which rendered Solomon so great and glorious; when he had his choice given him of all desirable things, he made his request for *wisdom* to the discharge of the office and duties of it that God had called him unto. Though it were a *whole kingdom* that he was to rule, yet was his work carnal and of this world, compared with the spiritual administrations of the gospel. And hereunto a worldly ministry is no less averse, than unto a sense of their own insufficiency. The fruits do sufficiently manifest how much this duty is contemned by them: but the neglect of it, I say, the neglect of *praying for wisdom* to be enabled unto the discharge of the work of the ministry, and the due management of the

truths of the gospel according as occasion do require, in them who pretend thereunto, is a fruit of unbelief, yea, of atheism and contempt of God.

3. *Due meditation* on our great *pattern*, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the apostles; being followers of them as they were of him, is also required hereunto. As in all other things, so in especial, in his ministry for the revelation of the truth, and giving testimony thereunto, the Lord Jesus was the great pattern and example; God in him representing unto us that *perfection in wisdom* which we ought to aim at. I shall not here in particular look into this heavenly treasury, but only say, that he who would be *really and truly wise in spiritual things*, who would either rightly receive, or duly improve this gift of the Holy Ghost, he ought continually to bear in his heart, his mind and affections, this great exemplar and *idea* of it, even the Lord Jesus Christ in his ministry; namely, what he did, what he spake, how on all occasions his condescension, meekness, and authority did manifest themselves; until he be changed into the same image and likeness by the Spirit of the Lord. The same is to be done in their place and sphere towards the *apostles* as the principal followers of Christ, and who do most lively represent his graces and wisdom unto us. Their writings, and what is written of them, are to be searched and studied unto this very end, that considering how they behaved themselves in all instances, on all occasions in their testimony, and all administrations of the truth, we may endeavour after a conformity unto them in the participation of the same Spirit with them. It would be no small stay and guidance unto us, if on all occasions we would diligently search and consider what the *apostles* did in such circumstances, or what they would have done in answer to what is recorded of their Spirit and actings. For although this *wisdom* be a gift of the Holy Spirit, yet as we now consider it, as it is continued in the church, it may be in part obtained and greatly improved, in the due use of the means which are subservient thereunto; provided that in all we depend solely on God for the giving of it, who hath also prescribed these means unto us for the same end.

4. Let them who design a participation of this *gift*, take heed it be not *stifled with such vicious habits of mind* as are ex-

pressly contrary unto it, and destructive of it: such are self-fulness, or confidence, hastiness of spirit, promptness to speak, and slowness to hear, which are the great means which make many abound in their own sense and folly; to be wise in their own conceits, and contemptible in the judgment of all that are truly so. *Ability of speech* in time and season, is an especial gift of God, and that eminently with respect unto the spiritual things of the gospel. But a *profluency of speech* venting itself on all occasions, and on no occasions, making men open their mouths wide, when indeed they should shut them, and open their ears; and to pour out all that they know, and what they do not know, making them angry if they are not heard, and impatient if they are contradicted, is an unconquerable fortification against all true spiritual wisdom.

5. Let those who would be sharers herein, follow after those *gifts* and *graces* which do *accompany it*, promote it, and are inseparable from it. Such are *humility, meekness, patience, constancy*, with boldness and confidence in profession, without which we shall be fools in every trial. *Wisdom* indeed is none of all these, but it is that which cannot be without them, nor will it thrive in any mind that is not cultivated by them. And he who thinks it is not worth his pains and travail, nor that it will quit cost to seek after this spiritual wisdom, by a constant watchfulness against the opposite vices mentioned, and attendance unto those concomitant duties and graces, must be content to go without it. This is the first instance given by our apostle of the spiritual gifts of the primitive times; to one is given by the Spirit *the word of wisdom*.

‘To another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.’ Λόγος γνώσεως. I shewed before, that λόγος may denote the *thing* itself; the ‘word of knowledge,’ that is knowledge. But if any shall suppose, that because this *knowledge* was to be expressed unto the church for its edification, it is therefore called a *word of knowledge*, as a word of exhortation, or a word of consolation; that is, exhortation and consolation administered by words, I shall not contend to the contrary. It is *knowledge* that is the gift peculiarly intended in this second place. And we must inquire, both *how* it is an especial gift, and of *what sort* it is. And it should seem that it cannot

have the nature of an *especial gift*, seeing it is that which was common to all. For, so saith the apostle, speaking unto the whole church of the Corinthians; ‘We know that we all have knowledge;’ 1 Cor. viii. 1. And not only so, but also adds, that this *knowledge* is a thing which either in its own nature tends unto an ill issue, or is very apt to be abused thereunto: for, saith he, ‘knowledge puffeth up,’ for which cause he frequently reflects upon it in other places. But yet we shall find that it is a *peculiar gift*, and in itself singularly useful: however it may be abused as the best things may be, yea, are most liable thereunto. The *knowledge* mentioned in that place by the apostle, which he ascribes in common unto all the church, was only that which concerned ‘things sacrificed unto idols;’ and if we should extend it farther, unto an understanding of the *mystery of the gospel* which was in the community of believers, yet is there place remaining for an *eminency*, therein by virtue of an especial spiritual gift. And as to what he adds about ‘knowledge puffing up,’ he expounds in the next words; if any man ‘thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know;’ ver. 2. It is not men’s knowledge, but the vain and proud conceit of ignorant men, supposing themselves *knowing and wise*, that so puffeth up and hindereth edification.

Wherefore, 1. By this *word of knowledge*, not *that degree of it* which is required in all Christians, in all the members of the church, is intended. Such a measure of knowledge there is necessary both unto faith and confession. Men can believe nothing of that whereof they know nothing, nor can they confess with their mouths what they apprehend not in their minds. But it is somewhat *singular, eminent, and not common* to all. Neither, 2. doth that *eminency* or singularity consist in this, that it is *saving* and sanctifying knowledge which is intended. That there is such a peculiar knowledge whereby ‘God shines into the hearts of believers,’ with a spiritual saving insight into spiritual things, transforming the mind into the likeness of them, I have at large elsewhere declared. For it is reckoned among *gifts*; whereas that other is a *saving grace*, whose difference hath been declared before. It is expressed by the apostle, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. by ‘understanding all mysteries and all knowledge;’ that is, having an understanding in, and the knowledge of all mysteries.

This knowledge he calleth a *gift*, which shall vanish away, ver. 8. and so not belonging absolutely unto that grace, which being a part of the image of God in us, shall go over into eternity. And ‘knowledge’ in ver. 2. is taken for the thing known; if ‘I understand all knowledge,’ which is the same with all mysteries. Wherefore the knowledge here intended, is such a peculiar and especial insight into the mysteries of the gospel, as whereby those in whom it was, were enabled to teach and instruct others. Thus the apostle Paul, who had received all these gifts in the highest degree and measure, affirms, that by his writing, those to whom he wrote might perceive his ‘skill and understanding in the mystery of Christ.’

And this was in an especial manner necessary unto those *first dispensers of the gospel*; for how else should the church have been instructed in the knowledge of it. This they prayed for them, namely, that they might be filled with the *knowledge* of the will of God, in all ‘wisdom and understanding;’ Col. i. 9. Eph. i. 18—20. iii. 18, 19. Col. ii. 2. The means whereby they might come hereunto, was by their instruction, who therefore were to be skilled in a peculiar manner in the knowledge of these mysteries, which they were to impart unto others, and to do it accordingly: and so it was with them; Acts xx. 27. Eph. iii. 8, 9. Col. iv. 2. Now, although this gift as to that excellent degree wherein it was in the apostles, and those who received the knowledge of Christ and the gospel by *immediate revelation*, be withheld, yet it is still communicated in such a measure unto the ministers of the church, as is necessary unto its edification. And for any one to undertake an office in the church, who hath not received this gift in some good measure of the knowledge of the mystery of God, and the gospel, is to impose himself on that service in the house of God, which he is neither called unto nor fitted for. And, whereas, we have lived to see all endeavours after an especial acquaintance with the mysteries of the gospel, despised or derided by some, it is an evidence of that fatal and fearful apostacy, whereinto the generality of Christians are fallen.

Faith is added in the third place; ‘To another faith by the same Spirit.’ That the saving grace of faith, which is common unto all true believers, is not here intended, is manifest

from the context. There is a *faith* in Scripture which is commonly called the ‘faith of miracles,’ mentioned by our apostle in this epistle, as a principal, extraordinary, spiritual gift, chap. xiii. 2. ‘Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains;’ that is, the highest degree of a faith of miracles, or such as would effect miraculous operations of the highest nature. This I should readily admit to be here intended, but that there is mention made of *working miracles* in the next verse, as a gift distinct from this faith. Yet, whereas this *working of miracles* is every where ascribed to *faith*, and could not be any where but where the peculiar faith from which those operations did proceed was first imparted, it is not unlikely but that by *faith* the principle of all miraculous operations may be intended, and by the other expressions the operations themselves. But if the distinction of these gifts be to be preserved, as I rather judge that it ought to be, considering the placing of *faith* immediately upon *wisdom* and *knowledge*, I should judge that a peculiar confidence, boldness, and assurance, of mind in the profession of the gospel, and the administration of its ordinances, is here intended. Faith, therefore, is that *παρρησία ἐν πίστει*, that *freedom*, confidence, and ‘boldness in the faith,’ or profession of the faith, which is in Christ Jesus, mentioned by the apostle; 1 Tim. iii. 13. That is, our *ὑπόστασις*, or confidence in profession, whose ‘beginning we are to hold fast and firm unto the end;’ Heb. iii. 14. And we do see how *excellent a gift* this is on all occasions. When troubles and trials do befall the church upon the account of its profession, many, even true believers, are very ready to faint and despond, and some to draw back at least for a season; as others do utterly, to the perdition of their souls. In this state the eminent usefulness of this *gift of boldness in the faith*, of an assured confidence in profession, of an especial faith to go through troubles and trials, is known unto all. Oft-times the eminence of it in one single person, hath been the means to preserve a whole church from coldness, backsliding, or sinful compliances with the world. And where God stirreth up any one unto some great or singular work in his church, he constantly endows them with this *gift of faith*. So was it with Luther, whose undaunted courage and resolution in profession, or boldness in the faith, was one of the principal

means of succeeding his great undertaking. And there is no more certain sign of churches being forsaken of Christ in a time of trial, than if this gift be withheld from them, and pusillanimity, fearfulness, with carnal wisdom, do spring up in the room of it. The work and effects of this faith are expressed, 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.' So also Eph. vi. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 1. And the especial way whereby it may be attained or improved, is by a diligent, careful discharge at all times of all the *duties of the places* we hold in the church; 1 Pet. iii. 13.

The *gifts of healing*, are nextly mentioned. *χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων*. 'To another the gifts of healings by the same Spirit.' So they are again expressed, ver. 28. in the *plural number*, because of their free communication unto *many persons*. These *healings* respected those that were sick, in their sudden and miraculous recovery from long or deadly distempers, by the imposition of hands in the name of the Lord Jesus. And as many of the *mighty works* of Christ himself, for the reasons that shall be mentioned, consisted in these *healings*, so it was one of the first things which he gave in commission to his apostles, and furnished them with power for, whilst they attended on him in his personal ministry; Matt. x. 1. So also did he to the *Seventy*, making it the principal sign of the approach of the kingdom of God; Luke x. 9. And the same power and virtue he promised to believers, namely, that they should 'lay hands on the sick and recover them' after his ascension. Of the accomplishment of this promise, and the exercise of this power, the story of the Acts of the Apostles giveth us many instances; Acts v. 15. iii. 7. ix. 33, 34. And two things are observed singular in the exercise of this gift. As, first, that many were cured by the shadow of Peter as he passed by; Acts v. 15. And again, many were so by handkerchiefs and aprons carried from the body of Paul; chap. xix. 12. And the reason of these extraordinary operations in extraordinary cases seems to have been the encouragement of that great faith which was then stirred up in them that beheld those miraculous operations, which was of singular advantage unto the propagation of the gospel; as the *magical* superstition of the Roman church sundry ways endeavouring to imitate these inimitable actings of sovereign *divine* power, hath been a dishonour to Christian religion.

But whereas these *healings* were *miraculous operations*, it may be inquired why the *gift of them* is constantly distinguished from *miracles*, and is placed as a distinct effect of the Holy Ghost by itself; for that so it is, is evident both in the commission of Christ granting this power unto his disciples, and in the annumeration of these gifts in this and other places. I answer, this seems to be done on a threefold account. 1. Because *miracles* absolutely were a sign unto them that *believed not*, as the apostle speaketh of *tongues*, they 'were a sign not unto them that believe, but unto them that believed not;' 1 Cor. xiv. 22. That is, which served for their conviction. But this work of *healing* was a *sign unto believers themselves*, and that on a double account. For, (1.) The pouring out of this gift of the Holy Ghost, was a peculiar sign and token of the coming of the kingdom of God. So saith our Saviour to his disciples, 'Heal the sick, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you;' Luke x. 9. This gift of healing being a token and pledge thereof. This sign did our Saviour give of it himself, when John sent his disciples unto him to inquire for their own satisfaction, not his, whether he were the Messiah or no; Matt. xi. 4, 5. 'Go,' saith he, 'and shew John these things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them:' which was the evidence of his own being the Messiah, and bringing in the kingdom of God. The Jews have an ancient tradition, that in the days of the Messiah all things should be *healed but the serpent*. And there is a truth in what they say; although for their parts they understand it not. For all are *healed by Christ* but the serpent and his seed; the wicked, unbelieving world. And hereof, namely, of the healing and recovery of all things by Christ, was this gift or sign unto the church. Wherefore he began his ministry after his first miracle, with 'healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases among the people;' Matt. iv. 23—25. (2.) It was a sign that Christ had *borne and taken away sin*, which was the cause, root, and spring of diseases and sicknesses, without which no one could have been miraculously cured. Hence that place of Isaiah, ch. liii. 4. 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:' which is

afterward interpreted, ‘by being wounded for our transgressions, and being bruised for our iniquities,’ ver. 5. as also by Peter, by his ‘bearing our sins in his own body on the tree,’ 1 Pet. ii. 24. is applied by Matthew unto the ‘curing of diseases and sicknesses;’ Matt. viii. 16, 17. Now this was for no other reason, but because this *healing of diseases* was a sign and effect of his *bearing our sins*, the causes of them, without a supposition whereof *healing* would have been a *false witness* unto men. It was, therefore, on these accounts a *sign* unto believers also.

2. Because it had a peculiar *goodness, relief, and benignity* towards mankind in it, which other miraculous operations had not; at least, not unto the same degree. Indeed this was one great difference between the *miraculous operations* that were wrought under the Old Testament, and those under the New; that the former generally consisted in dreadful and tremendous works, bringing astonishment and oft-times ruin to mankind; but those other were generally *useful and beneficial* unto all. But this of *healing* had a peculiar evidence of *love, kindness, compassion, benignity*, and was suited greatly to affect the minds of men with regard and gratitude. For long *afflictive distempers* or *violent pains*, such as were the diseases cured by this gift, do prepare the minds of men, and those concerned in them, greatly to value their deliverance. This, therefore, in an especial manner declared and evidenced the goodness, love, and compassion of him that was the Author of this gospel, and gave this sign of healing spiritual diseases by healing of bodily distempers. And, doubtless, many who were made partakers of the benefit hereof, were greatly affected with it; and that not only by ‘walking, and leaping, and praising God,’ as the cripple did who was cured by Peter and John; Acts iii. 8. but also unto faith and boldness in profession, as it was with the blind man healed by our Saviour himself; John viii. 31—33. 38, &c. But yet no outward effects of themselves can work upon the hearts of men, so as that all who are made partakers of them should be brought unto *faith, thankfulness, and obedience*. Hence did not only our Saviour himself observe that of *ten* at once cleansed by him from their leprosy, but *one* returned to give glory to God; Luke xvii. 7. but he whom he cured of a *disease* that he had suffered under

eight-and-thirty years, notwithstanding a following admonition given him by our blessed Saviour, turned *informers* against him, and endeavoured to betray him unto the Jews; John v. 5. 8. 13—15. It is effectual grace alone which can change the heart, without which it will continue obstinate and unbelieving, under not only the sight and consideration of the most miraculous outward operations, but also the participation in ourselves of the benefit and fruits of them. Men may have their *bodies* cured by miracles, when their *souls* are not cured by grace.

3. It is thus placed distinctly by itself, and not cast under the common head of miracles, because ordinarily there were some *outward means and tokens of it* that were to be made use of in the exercise of this gift. Such were, (1.) *Imposition of hands*. Our Saviour himself in healing of the sick did generally ‘lay his hands on them;’ Matt. vi. 5. Luke iv. 40. And he gave the same order unto his disciples, that they should ‘lay their hands on those that were sick, and heal them;’ which was practised by them accordingly. (2.) *Anointing with oil*: ‘They anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them;’ Mark vi. 13. And the *elders* of the church, with whom this gift was continued, were to come to him that was sick, and praying over him, ‘anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord,’ and he should be saved; James v. 14, 15. Some do contend for the continuance of this ceremony, or the *anointing* of them that are sick by the elders of the church, but without ground or warrant: for, although it be their duty *to pray in a particular manner* for those that are *sick*, of their flocks, and it be the duty of them who are *sick* to call for them unto that purpose; yet the application of the outward ceremony being instituted, not as a means of an *uncertain cure*, as all are which work naturally unto that end, but as a pledge and token of a *certain healing* and recovery, where there is not an infallible faith thereof, when the healing may not ensue; it is to turn an ordinance into a lie. For if a recovery follow *ten times* on this *anointing*, if it once fall out otherwise, the institution is rendered a lie, a false testimony; and the other recoveries manifested to have had no dependance on the observation of it. For these reasons, I judge, that this gift of *healing*, though belonging unto miraculous operations in general, is every where reckoned as a

distinct gift by itself. And from that place of James, I am apt to think that this gift was communicated in an especial manner unto the *elders of churches*, even that were ordinary and fixed; it being of so great use and such singular comfort unto them that were poor and persecuted, which was the condition of many churches, and their members, in those days.

Miracles ensue, in the fifth place, ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων ‘Effectual working of mighty powers, or powerful works.’ For the signification of this word here rendered *miracles*, the reader may consult our exposition on Heb. ii. 4. I shall not thence transcribe what is already declared, nor is any thing necessary to be added thereunto. Concerning this *gift of miracles* we have also spoken before in general; so that we shall not much farther here insist upon it; neither is it necessary that we should here treat of the nature, end, and use of miracles in general, which in part also hath been done before. Wherefore I shall only observe some few things as to the *gift* itself, and the use of it in the church, which alone are our present concernment. And, 1. as we before observed, this gift did not consist in any *inherent power* or faculty of the mind; so as that those who had received it should have an ability of their own to work or effect such miracles, when, and as they saw good. As this is disclaimed by the apostles; Acts iii. 12. so a supposition of it would overthrow the very nature of miracles; for a miracle is an immediate effect of *divine power* exceeding all created abilities; and what is not so, though it may be strange or wonderful, is no miracle. Only Jesus Christ had in his own person a power of working miracles when, and where, and how he pleased, because God was with him, or ‘the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily.’ 2. Unto the working of every miracle in particular, there was a *peculiar act of faith* required in them that wrought it. This is that faith which is called the *faith* of miracles, ‘have all faith, so that I could remove mountains;’ 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Now this faith was not a strong *fixing of the imagination* that such a thing should be done, as some have blasphemously dreamed; nor was it a faith resting merely on the promises of the word, making particular application of them unto times, seasons, and occasions, wherein it no way differs from the ordinary grace of faith: but this was the true nature of it, that as it

was in general resolved into the *promises of the word*, and power of Christ declared therein, that such and such things should be wrought in general; so it had always a *peculiar, immediate revelation* for its warranty and security in the working of any miracle. And without such an *immediate revelation* of divine impulse and impression, all attempts of miraculous operations are vain, and means only for Satan to insinuate his delusions by.

No man, therefore, could work any *miracle*, nor attempt in faith so to do, without an *immediate revelation* that divine power should be therein exerted, and put forth in its operation: yet do I not suppose that it was necessary that this inspiration and *revelation* should in *order of time* precede the acting of this faith, though it did the operation of the miracle itself. Yea, the inspiration itself consisted in the *elevation of faith* to apprehend divine power in such a case for such an end; which the Holy Ghost granted not to any, but when he designed so to work. Thus Paul at once acted faith, apprehended divine power, and at the same time struck Elymas the sorcerer blind by a miraculous operation; Acts xiii. 9—12. ‘Being filled with the Holy Ghost;’ ver. 9. That is, having received an impression and warranty from him, he put forth that act of faith, at whose presence the Holy Spirit would effect that miraculous operation which he believed. Wherefore this was the nature of this gift; some persons were by the Holy Ghost endowed with that *especial faith* which was prepared to receive impressions and intimations of his putting forth his power in this or that miraculous operation. Those who had this faith, could not work miracles *when*, and *where*, and *how* they pleased; only they could *infallibly signify* what the Holy Ghost would do, and so were the outward instruments of the execution of his power.

3. Although the *apostles* had all gifts of the Spirit in an eminent degree and manner above all others, as Paul saith, ‘I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;’ yet it appears that there were some *other persons* distinct from them, who had this gift of working miracles in a peculiar manner. For it is not only here reckoned as a peculiar, distinct gift of the Holy Ghost, but also the persons who had received it, are reckoned as distinct from the *apo-*

stles and other officers of the church ; 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. Not that I think this gift did constitute them officers in the church, enabling them to exercise power in gospel administrations therein ; only they were *brethren of the church*, made eminent by a participation of this gift, for the end whereunto it was ordained. By these persons' ministry did the Holy Spirit, on such occasions as seemed meet to his infinite wisdom, effect miraculous operations, besides what was done in the same kind by the apostles and evangelists, all the world over.

4. *The use of this gift* in the church at that time and season was manifold. For the principles which believers proceeded on, and the doctrines they professed, were *new and strange* to the world, and such as had mighty prejudices raised against them in the minds of men. The persons by whom they were maintained and asserted were generally as to their outward condition poor and contemptible in the world. The churches themselves, as to their members, few in number ; encompassed with multitudes of scoffers, and persecuting idolaters ; themselves also, newly converted, and many of them but weak in the faith. In this state of things, this *gift of miracles* was exceeding useful and necessary unto the propagation of the gospel, the vindication of the truth, and the establishment of them that did believe. For, (1.) By miracles occasionally wrought, the people round about who yet believed not, were called in, as it were, unto a due consideration of what was done, and what was designed thereby. Thus when the noise was first spread abroad of the 'apostles speaking with tongues, the multitude came together' and were confounded ; Acts ii. 6. So the multitude gathered together at Lystra upon the curing of the cripple by Paul and Barnabas, thinking them to have been gods ; Acts xiv. 11. When therefore any were so amazed with seeing the miracles that were wrought, hearing that they were so in the confirmation of the doctrine of the gospel, they could not but inquire with diligence into it, and cast out those prejudices which before they had entertained against it. (2.) They gave *authority* unto the ministers of the church. For whereas on outward accounts they were *despised* by the great, wise, and learned men of the world, it was made evident by these divine operations, that

their ministry was of God, and what they taught approved by him. And where these two things were effected, namely, that a sufficient, yea, an eminently cogent ground and reason was given, why men should impartially inquire into the doctrine of the gospel, and an evidence given that the *teachers* of it were approved of God, unless men were signally captivated under the power of Satan; 2 Cor. iv. 4. or given up of God judicially unto blindness and hardness of heart, it could not be, but that the prejudices which they had of themselves, or might receive from others against the gospel, must of necessity be prevailed against and conquered. And as many of the Jews were so hardened and blinded at that time; Rom. xi. 7—10. 1 Thes. ii. 14—16. so it is marvellous to consider with what *artifices* Satan bestirred himself among the *gentiles* by false and lying signs and wonders, with many other ways to take off from the testimony given unto the gospel by these miraculous operations.

And this was that which *miracles* were designed unto towards *unbelievers*; namely, to take away *prejudices* from the doctrine of the gospel, and the persons by whom it was taught, so disposing the minds of men unto an attendance unto it, and the reception of it. For they were never means instituted of God for the *ingenerating of faith* in any, but only to provoke and prevail with men, to attend unprejudicately unto that whereby it was to be wrought. ‘For faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;’ Rom. x. 17. And therefore, whatever miracles were wrought, if the word preached was not received, if that did not accompany them in its powerful operation, they were but despised. Thus whereas some upon hearing of the ‘apostles speak with tongues’ mocked and said, ‘These men are full of new wine;’ Acts ii. 13. yet upon preaching of the word which ensued, they were converted unto God. And the apostle Paul tells us, that if there were nothing but miraculous speaking with tongues in the church, an unbeliever coming in would say they ‘were all mad;’ 1 Cor. xiv. 23. who by the word of prophesy would be convinced, judged, and converted unto God, ver. 24, 25. (3.) They were of singular use to ‘confirm and establish in the faith’ those who were weak and newly converted. For whereas they were assaulted on every

hand by Satan, the world, and it may be their dearest relations, and that with contempt, scorn, and cruel mocking ; it was a singular confirmation and establishment to behold the *miraculous operations* which were wrought in the approbation of the doctrine which they did profess. Hereby was a sense of it more and more let into, and impressed on, their minds, until by an habitual experience of its goodness, power, and efficacy, they were established in the truth.

Prophecy is added in the sixth place. *ἄλλω δὲ προφητεία.* ‘To another prophecy;’ that is, is given by the same Spirit. Of this *gift of prophecy* we have sufficiently treated before. Only I take it here in its largest sense ; both as it signifies a *faculty of prediction*, or foretelling things future upon divine revelation, or an ability to declare the mind of God from the word by the especial and immediate revelation of the Holy Ghost. The first of these was more rare, the latter more ordinary and common. And it may be there were few churches, wherein besides their elders and teachers by virtue of their office, there were not some of these prophets ; so of those who had this gift of prophecy, enabling in an eminent manner to declare the mind of God from the Scriptures, unto the edification of the church. It is expressed that there were some of them in the church at Antioch ; Acts xiii. 1, 2. and many of them in the church at Corinth ; 1 Cor. xiv. For this gift was of singular use in the church ; and, therefore, as to the end of the edification thereof, is preferred by our apostle, above all other gifts of the Spirit whatever ; 1 Cor. xii. 31. chap. xiv. 1, 39. For it had a double use, 1. The *conviction and conversion* of such as came in occasionally into their church assemblies. Those unto whom the propagation of the gospel was principally committed, went up and down the world, laying hold on all occasions to preach it unto Jews and Gentiles, as yet unconverted. And where churches were gathered and settled, the principal work of their teachers was to *edify them* that did believe. But whereas some would come in among them into their church assemblies, perhaps out of curiosity, perhaps out of worse designs, the apostle declares that of all the ordinances of the church, *this of prophecy* was suited unto the conviction and conversion of all unbelievers, and is oft-times blessed thereunto, whereby *this and that man is born in Sion.* 2. This ex-

position and application of the word by many, and that by virtue of an extraordinary assistance of the Spirit of God, was of singular use in the church itself. For if all Scripture given by inspiration from God, so expounded and applied, be ‘profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,’ the more the church enjoyeth thereof, the more will its faith, love, obedience, and consolation be increased. Lastly, *the manner of the exercise* of this gift in the church unto edification, is prescribed and limited by our apostle; 1 Cor. xiv. 29—33. And first, he would not have the church burdened with the *most profitable gift* or its exercise, and therefore determines, that at one time not *above two or three* be suffered to speak; that is, one after another, that the church be neither wearied nor burdened, ver. 29. Secondly, Because it was possible that some of them who had this gift might *mix somewhat of their own spirits* in their word and ministry, and therein mistake and err from the truth; he requires that the *other who had* the like gift, and so were understanding in the mind of God, should *judge* of what was spoken by them, so as the church might not be led into any error by them; *let the other judge*. Thirdly, That order be observed in their exercise; and especially that way be given unto any *immediate revelation*, and no confusion be brought into the church by many speaking at the same time. And this direction manifests that the gift was *extraordinary*, and is now ceased; though there be a continuance of ordinary gifts of the same kind, and to the same end in the church, as we shall see afterward, ver. 30. Fourthly, By the observation of this *order*, the apostle shews, that *all the prophets might exercise their gift* unto the instruction and consolation of the church in a proper season; such as their *frequent assemblies* would afford them, ver. 31. And whereas it may be objected, that these things coming in an *extraordinary immediate manner* from the Holy Ghost, it was not in the power of them who received them to confine them unto the order prescribed, which would seem to limit the Holy Spirit in his operations, whereas they were all to speak as the Spirit gave them ability and utterance, let what would ensue, the apostle assures them by a general principle that no such thing would follow on a due use and exercise of this gift. ‘For God,’ saith he, ‘is not the author

of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints,' ver. 33. As if he should have said; if such a course should be taken, that any one should speak and prophesy as he pretended himself to be moved by the Spirit, and to have none to judge of what he said, all *confusion*, tumult, and disorder, would ensue thereon. But *God is the author* of no such thing, gives no such gifts, appoints no such exercise of them, as would tend thereunto. But how shall this be prevented, seeing these things are *extraordinary*, and not in our own power; yea, saith he, 'The spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets,' ver. 32. By the 'spirit of the prophets' that their spiritual gift and ability for its exercise is intended, none do question. And whereas the apostle had taught two things concerning the exercise of this gift: (1.) That it ought to be *orderly* to avoid confusion. (2.) That what proceedeth from it ought to be *judged by others*; he manifests that both these may be observed, 'because the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets;' that is, both their spiritual gift is so in their own power, as that they might dispose themselves unto its exercise with choice and judgment, so as to preserve order and peace, not being acted as with an *enthusiastical afflation*, and carried out of their own power; this gift in its exercise was subject unto their own judgment, choice, and understanding; so what they expressed by virtue of their spiritual gift, was subject to be *judged of* by the other *prophets* that were in the church. Thus was the peace and order of the church to be preserved, and the edification of it to be promoted.

Discerning of spirits is the next gift of the Spirit here enumerated, ἄλλη δὲ διακρίσεις πνευμάτων. 'To another the discernings of spirits;' the ability and faculty of judging of spirits. The *dijudication of spirits*. This gift I have upon another occasion formerly given an account of, and therefore shall here but briefly touch upon it. All gospel administrations were in those days avowedly executed by virtue of *spiritual gifts*. No man then durst set his hand unto this work, but such as either really had, or highly pretended unto, a participation of the Holy Ghost. For the administration of the gospel is the *dispensation of the spirit*. This, therefore, was pleaded by all in the preaching of the word, whether in private assemblies, or publicly to the world. But

it came also then to pass, as it did in all ages of the church, that where God gave unto any the extraordinary gifts of his Spirit, for the reformation or edification of the church, there Satan suborned some to make a pretence thereunto, unto its trouble and destruction: so was it under the Old Testament, and so was it foretold that it should be under the New. So the apostle Peter having declared the nature and excellency, use and certainty of that prophecy which was of old; 2 Pet. i. 19—21. adds thereunto, ‘But there were false prophets also among the people;’ chap. ii. 1. That is, when God granted that signal privilege unto the church, of the immediate revelation of his will unto them, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which constituted men *true prophets* of the Lord; Satan stirred up others to pretend unto the same *spirit of prophecy* for his own malicious ends, whereby ‘there were false prophets also among the people.’ But it may be it will be otherwise now under the gospel church state. No, saith he; ‘There shall be false teachers among you;’ that is, persons pretending to the same *spiritual gift* that the apostles and evangelists had, yet bringing in thereby damnable heresies. Now all their damnable opinions they fathered upon immediate *revelations* of the Spirit. This gave occasion to the holy apostle John to give that caution, with his reason of it, which is expressed; 1 John iv. 1—3. which words we have opened before. And this false pretence unto *extraordinary spiritual gifts*, the church was tried and pestered withal, so long as there was any occasion to give it countenance; namely, whilst such gifts were really continued unto any therein. What way then had God ordained for the preservation and safety of the church, that it should not be imposed upon by any of these *delusions*? I answer, There was a *standing rule* in the church, whereby whatsoever was or could be offered *doctrinally* unto it, might certainly and infallibly be tried, judged, and determined on. And this was the *rule of the written word*; according to that everlasting ordinance, ‘To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them;’ Isa. viii. 20. This in all ages was sufficient for the preservation of the church from all errors and heresies, or damnable doctrines, which it never fell into, nor shall do so, but in the sinful neglect and contempt hereof. Moreover,

the apostle farther directs the application of this rule unto present occasions, by advising us to fix on *some fundamental principles* which are likely to be opposed, and if they are not owned and avowed, to avoid such *teachers*, whatever spiritual gift they pretend unto; 1 John iv. 2, 3. 2 John 9—11. But yet, because many in those days were *weak* in the faith, and might be surprised with such pretences, God had graciously provided and bestowed the gift here mentioned on *some*, it may be, in every church, namely, of *discerning of spirits*. They could by virtue of the extraordinary gift, and aid therein, of the Holy Ghost, make a true judgment of the *spirits* that men pretended to act, and to be acted by, whether they were of God or no. And this was of singular use and benefit unto the church in those days. For as *spiritual gifts* abounded, so did a *pretence* unto them, which was always accompanied with pernicious designs. Herein, therefore, did God grant relief for them who were either less skilful, or less wary, or less able on any account to make a right judgment between those who were really endowed with extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and those who falsely pretended thereunto. For these persons *received this gift*, and were placed in the church for this very end, that they might guide and help them in making a right judgment in this matter. And whereas the communication of these *gifts* is ceased, and consequently all pretences unto them, unless by some persons *phrenetical* and *enthusiastical*, whose madness is manifest to all, there is no need of the continuance of this gift of *discerning of spirits*, that standing infallible rule of the *word*, and ordinary assistance of the Spirit, being every way sufficient for our preservation in the truth; unless we give up ourselves to the conduct of corrupt lusts, pride, self-conceit, carnal interest, passions, and temptations, which ruin the souls of men.

The two spiritual gifts here remaining, are *speaking with tongues, and their interpretation*. The first communication of this ‘gift of tongues’ unto the apostles, is particularly described; Acts ii. 1—4, &c. And although they were at that time endued with all other gifts of the Holy Ghost, called ‘power from above;’ Acts i. 8. yet was this ‘gift of tongues’ signalized by the *visible pledge* of it, the joint participation of the same gift by all, and the notoriety of the matter there-

on, as in that place of the Acts is at large described. And God seems to have laid the foundation of preaching the gospel in this gift, for two reasons: 1. To signify that the grace and mercy of the covenant was now no longer to be *confined unto one nation, language, or people*, but to be extended unto all nations, tongues, and languages of people under heaven. 2. To testify by *what means* he would subdue the souls and consciences of men unto the obedience of Christ and the gospel, and by *what means* he would maintain his kingdom in the world. Now this was not by force and might, by external power or armies, but by the preaching of the word, whereof the *tongue* is the only instrument. And the outward sign of this gift in *tongues of fire* evidenced the *light* and *efficacy* wherewith the Holy Ghost designed to accompany the dispensation of the gospel. Wherefore, although this gift began with the apostles, yet was it afterward very much *diffused* unto the generality of them that did believe. See Acts x. 46. xix. 6. 1 Cor. xiv. And some few things we may observe concerning this gift: as, (1.) The especial matter that was expressed by this gift, seems to have been the praises of God for his wonderful works of grace by Christ. Although, I doubt not, but that the apostles were enabled by virtue of this gift to *declare the gospel* unto any people unto whom they came in their own language, yet ordinarily they did not preach nor instruct the people by virtue of this gift, but only *spake forth the praises of God* to the admiration and astonishment of them who were yet strangers to the faith. So when they first received the gift, they were heard ‘speaking the wonderful works of God;’ Acts ii. 11. And the Gentiles who first believed ‘spake with tongues, and magnified God;’ Acts x. 46. (2.) These *tongues* were so given for ‘a sign unto them that believed not;’ 1 Cor. xiv. 22. that sometimes those that spake with tongues, understood not the sense and meaning of the words delivered by themselves, nor were they understood by the church itself wherein they were uttered; 1 Cor. xiv. 6—10, &c. But this I suppose was only *sometimes*; and that, it may be mostly, when this gift was unnecessarily used. For, I doubt not, but the apostles understood full well the things delivered by themselves in divers tongues. And all who had this gift, though they might not apprehend the meaning of what themselves

spake and uttered, yet were so absolutely in the exercise of it under the conduct of the Holy Spirit, that they neither did nor could speak any thing by virtue thereof, but what was according unto the mind of God, and tended unto his praise; 1 Cor. xiv. 2. 14. 17. (3.) Although this gift were excellent in itself, and singularly effectual in the propagation of the gospel unto unbelievers, yet in the *assemblies of the church* it was of little or no use, but only with respect unto the things themselves that were uttered. For, as to the principal end of it, to be a *sign* unto unbelievers, it was finished and accomplished towards them, so as they had no farther need nor use of it. But now, wherefore, as many *unbelievers* came occasionally into the assemblies of the church, especially at some freer seasons, for whose conviction the Holy Ghost would for a season continue this gift among believers; that the church might not be disadvantaged thereby, he added the other gift here mentioned, namely, ‘The interpretation of tongues.’ He endowed either those persons themselves who spake with tongues, or some others in the same assembly, with an ability to *interpret* and declare to the church the things that were spoken and uttered in that miraculous manner; which is the last gift here mentioned. But the nature, use, and abuse, of these gifts is so largely and distinctly spoken unto by the apostle, 1 Cor. xiv. that as I need not insist on them, so I cannot fully do it without an entire exposition of that whole chapter, which the nature of my design will not permit.

CHAP. V.

The original, duration, use, and end, of extraordinary spiritual gifts.

THIS summary account doth the apostle give of these *extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost* which then flourished in the church, and were the life of its extraordinary ministry. It may be mention may occur of some such gifts under other names, but they are such as may be reduced unto some one of those here expressed. Wherefore this may be admitted as a perfect *catalogue* of them, and comprehensive of that *power* from above, which the Lord Christ promised unto his apostles and disciples upon his ascension into heaven; Acts i. 8. For he 'ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things;' Eph. iv. 10. that is, the church with *officers* and *gifts*, unto the 'perfection of the saints, by the work of the ministry, and the edification of his body;' ver. 12. For being 'by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he shed forth, or abundantly poured out these things whereof we speak;' Acts ii. 33. And as they were the great evidence of his acceptance with God, and exaltation, seeing in them the Spirit 'convinced the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment;' so they were the great means whereby he carried on his work amongst men, as shall afterward be declared.

There was no *certain limited* time for the cessation of these gifts. Those peculiar unto the apostles, were commensurate unto their lives. None after their decease had either apostolical office, power, or gifts. The like may be said of evangelists. Nor have we any undoubted testimony, that any of those gifts which were truly *miraculous*, and every way above the faculties of men, were communicated unto any after the expiration of the generation of them who conversed with 'Christ in the flesh,' or those who received the Holy Ghost by their ministry. It is not unlikely, but that God might on some occasions for a longer season, put forth his power in some miraculous operations, and so he yet may do, and perhaps doth sometimes. But the *superstition* and folly of some ensuing ages inventing and divulging innumerable

miracles false and foolish, proved a most disadvantageous prejudice unto the gospel, and a means to open a way unto Satan to impose endless delusions upon Christians. For as true and real miracles, with becoming circumstances, were the great means that won and reconciled a regard and honour unto Christian religion in the world; so the pretence of such as either were absolutely false, or such as whose occasions, ends, matter, or manner, were unbecoming the greatness and holiness of him who is the true author of all miraculous operations, is the greatest dishonour unto religion that any one can invent. But although all these gifts and operations *ceased* in some respect, some of them absolutely, and some of them as to the immediate manner of communication and degree of excellency; yet so far as the edification of the church was concerned in them, something that is *analogous* unto them, was and is continued. He who gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, gave also some ‘pastors and teachers.’ And as he furnished the former with *extraordinary gifts*; so as far as any thing of the like kind is needful for the continual edification of the church, he bestows it on the latter also, as shall be declared.

And these gifts of the Spirit added unto his grace in real holiness, were the glory, honour, and beauty, of the church of old. Men have but deceived themselves and others, when they have feigned a glory and beauty of the church in other things. And whatever any think or say, where these gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are the ornaments of the church, her ‘clothing of wrought gold,’ and her ‘raiment of needle-work,’ being neglected and lost, and they think to adorn her with the *meritricious paint of pompous ceremonies*, with outward grandeur, wealth, and power, she is utterly fallen from her chastity, purity, and integrity. But it is evident that this is the state of many churches in the world, which are therefore worldly and carnal, not spiritual or evangelical. Power, and force, and wealth, the *gifts* in this case of *another spirit*, under various pretences and names, are their life and glory, indeed their death and shame. I deny not but that it is lawful for ministers of the gospel to enjoy *earthly possessions*, which they do attain by any commendable way among other men. Neither are they required, unless in extraordinary cases, to part with the right and use of their temporal goods,

because they are so, ministers of Christ; though those who are so indeed, will not deny but that they ought to use them in a peculiar manner unto the glory of Christ, and honour of the gospel, beyond other men. Neither shall I ever question, that, wherein the Scripture is so express, namely, that those who ‘labour in the word and doctrine,’ should have a convenient, yea, an honourable subsistence provided for them according to the best ability of the church, for their work’s sake. It is in like manner also granted, that the Lord Christ hath committed all that *power* which, with respect unto the edification of the church, he will exercise in this world unto the church itself; as it cannot, without a virtual renunciation of the gospel and faith in Christ Jesus as the Head and King of the church, be supposed that this power is any other but spiritual, over the souls and consciences of men. And, therefore, cannot this *power be exercised*, or be any ways made effectual, but by virtue of the spiritual gifts we treat of. But for men to turn this *spiritual power*, to be exercised only by virtue of *spiritual gifts*, into an external coercive power over the persons, bodies, liberties, and lives, of men, to be exercised by law-courts, in ways, forms, manners, utterly foreign to the gospel, and all evangelical administrations, without the least pretence unto, or appearance of the exercise of the gifts of the Holy Ghost therein; yea, and by persons by whom they are hated and derided, acting with pride, scorn, and contempt of the disciples of Christ, and over them, being utterly ignorant of the true nature and use of all gospel administrations, this is to disorder the church, and instead of a house of spiritual worship, in some instances, to turn it into a den of thieves. Where, hereunto, there are moreover annexed earthly revenues, containing all food and fuel of corrupt lusts, with all things satisfactory unto the minds of worldly, sensual men, as a meet reward of these carnal administrations, as it is at this day in the *church of Rome*, there all use of the gifts of the Holy Ghost is excluded, and the church is brought into extreme desolation. And, although these things are as contrary to the gospel as darkness to light, yet the world for many reasons, not now to be insisted on, being *willing to be deceived* in this matter, it is generally apprehended that there is nothing so pernicious unto the church, so justly to be watched against and rooted out, as a

dislike of their horrible apostacies in the corrupt depravation of all evangelical administrations. This was not the state, this was not the condition of the primitive churches; their *life* consisted in the *grace* of the Spirit, and their *glory* in his *gifts*. None of their leaders once dreamed of that new kind of beauty, glory, and power, consisting in numberless superstitious ceremonies, instead of religious worship: worldly grandeur, instead of humility and self-denial; and open *tyranny* over the consciences and persons of men, in the room of spiritual authority, effectual in the power of Christ, and by virtue of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

There are many sore *divisions* at this day in the world among and between the professors of Christian religion, both about the doctrine and worship of the gospel, as also the discipline thereof. That these *divisions* are evil in themselves, and the cause of great evils, hinderances of the gospel, and all the effects thereof in the world, is acknowledged by all; and it is a thing doubtless to be greatly lamented, that the generality of them who are called Christians, are departed from the great rule of 'keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' He who doth not pray always, who is not ready with his utmost endeavour to remedy this evil, to remove this great obstruction of the benefit of the gospel, is scarce worthy the name of a Christian. The *common way* insisted on unto this end is, that those who have most force and power, should set up *standards* and *measures* of agreement, compelling others by all ways of severity and violence to a compliance therewith; judging them the highest offenders who shall refuse so to do; because the determining and settling of this matter is committed unto them. This is the way of antichrist, and those who follow him therein. Others, with more moderation and wisdom, but with as little *success*, do or have endeavoured the *reconciliation* of the parties at variance, some, more or all of them, by certain middle ways of mutual condescension which they have found out. Some things they *blame*, and some things they *commend* in all; some things they would have them do, and some things omit; all for the sake of peace and love. And this design carries with it so fair and pleadable a pretence, that those who are once engaged in it, are apt to think that *they alone* are the true lovers of Christianity in

general, the only sober and indifferent persons, fit to *unpire* all the differences in the world, in a few propositions which they have framed. And so wedded are some wise and holy men unto these apprehensions of reconciling Christians by their *conceived methods*, that no experience of endless disappointments, and of increasing new differences and digladiations, of forming new parties, of reviving old animosities, all which roll in upon them continually, will discourage them in their design. What, then, will some say, would you have these *divisions* and *differences* that are among us continued and perpetuated, when you acknowledge them so evil and pernicious? I say, God forbid: yea, we pray for, and always will endeavour their removal and taking away. But yet this I say, on the other hand, whether men will hear, or they will forbear, there is but *one way* of effecting this so blessed and desirable a work, which until it be engaged in, let men talk what they please of *reconciliation*, the worst of men will be reviling and persecuting those who are better than themselves unto the end of the world. And this way is, that all churches should endeavour to reduce themselves unto the *primitive pattern*. Let us all but consider what was the life and spirit of those churches, wherein their honour, glory, and order, did consist, making it our joint design to walk in the principle of that grace of the Spirit wherein they walked, in the exercise and use of those *gifts* of the Spirit which were the spring of, and gave virtue unto, all their administrations, renouncing whatever is foreign unto, and inconsistent with, these things, and that grace and unity will quickly enter into professors, which Christ hath purchased for them. But these things are here only occasionally mentioned; and are not farther to be pursued.

These spiritual gifts the apostle calls, the ‘powers of the world to come;’ Heb. vi. 4, 5. that is, those effectual powerful principles and operations, which peculiarly belong unto the kingdom of Christ and administration of the gospel, whereby they were to be set up, planted, advanced, and propagated in the world. The Lord Christ came and wrought out the mighty work of our salvation in his *own person*, and thereon laid the foundation of his church on himself, by the confession of him as the Son of God. Con-

cerning himself and his work, he preached, and caused to be preached, a doctrine that was opposed by all the world, because of its truth, mystery, and holiness; yet was it the design of God to break through all those oppositions, to cause this doctrine to be received and submitted unto, and Jesus Christ to be believed in, unto the ruin and destruction of the kingdom of Satan in the world. Now this was a work that could not be wrought without the putting forth and exercise of mighty power, concerning which nothing remains to be inquired into, but of what sort it ought to be. Now the conquest that the Lord Christ aimed at was spiritual, over the souls and consciences of men; the enemies he had to conflict withal were spiritual, even principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places; the God of this world, the prince of it, which ruled in the children of disobedience: the kingdom which he had to erect, was spiritual, and not of this world; all the laws and rulers of it, with their administrations and ends, were spiritual and heavenly. The gospel that was to be propagated was a doctrine not concerning this world, nor the things of it, nor of any thing natural or political, but as they were merely subordinate unto other ends, but heavenly and mysterious, directing men only in a tendency according to the mind of God unto the eternal enjoyment of him. Hereon it will easily appear what kind of power is necessary unto this work, and for the attaining of these ends. He that at the speaking of one word could have engaged 'more than twelve legions of angels' in his work, and unto his assistance, could have easily by outward force and arms have subdued the whole world into an external observance of him and his commands, and thereon have ruled men at his pleasure. As this he could have done, and may do when he pleaseth, so if he had done it, it had tended nothing unto the ends which he designed. He might indeed have had a glorious empire in the world, comprehensive of all dominions that ever were or can be on the earth; but yet it would have been of the same kind and nature with that which Nero had, the greatest monster of villany in nature. Neither had it been any great matter for the Son of God to have out-done the Romans or the Turks, or such like conspiracies of wicked oppressors. And all those who yet think meet to use external force over

the persons, lives, and bodies of men, in order unto the reducing of them unto the obedience of Christ and the gospel, do put the greatest dishonour upon him imaginable, and change the whole nature of his design and kingdom. He will neither own nor accept of any subject, but whose obedience is a free act of his own will, and who is so made willing by himself in the day of his power. His design, and his only design, in this world unto the glory of God, is to erect a kingdom, throne, and rule in the souls and consciences of men, to have an obedience from them in faith, love, and spiritual delight, proceeding from their own choice, understandings, wills, and affections; an obedience that should be internal, spiritual, mystical, heavenly, with respect solely unto things unseen and eternal, wherein himself and his laws should be infinitely preferred before all earthly things and considerations. Now this is a matter that all earthly powers and empires could never desire, design, or put a hand unto, and that which renders the kingdom of Christ as of another nature, so more excellent and better than all earthly kingdoms, as liberty is better than bondage, the mind more excellent than the outward carcass, spiritual and eternal things than things carnal and temporary, as the wisdom and holiness of God are more excellent than the folly and lusts of men.

Seeing, therefore, this was the design of Christ, this was the nature and work of the gospel which was to be propagated, wherein carnal power and outward force could be of no use, yea, whose exercise was inconsistent with, dishonourable unto, and destructive of, the whole design; and, wherein the work to be accomplished on the minds and souls of men is incomparably greater than the conquering of worlds with force and arms, it is inquired what power the Lord Christ did employ herein, what means and instruments he used for the accomplishment of his design, and the erecting of that kingdom or church-state, which being promised of old, was called the *world to come*, or, the *new world*, the *new heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness*: and, I say, it was these gifts of the Holy Ghost whereof we have treated, which were those *powers* of this *world to come*. By them it was, or in their exercise, that the Lord Christ erected his empire over the souls and consciences of men, destroying

both the work and kingdom of the devil. It is true, it is the word of the gospel itself, that is, the rod of his strength which is sent out of Sion to erect and dispense his rule : but that hidden power which made the word effectual in the dispensation of it, consisted in these gifts of the Holy Ghost. Men may despise them, or think light of them whilst they please, they are those powers which the Lord Christ, in his wisdom, thought meet alone to engage in the propagation of the gospel, and the setting up of his kingdom in the world.

The recovery and return of the people from the captivity of Babylon, was a type of the spiritual redemption of the church by Jesus Christ : and how God effected that as a type hereof, he declares, Zech. iv. 6. ‘Not by army, nor by power, but my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts;’ so, much more, was this work to be effected. So after his resurrection the Lord Christ tells his apostles that they were to be his ‘witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth,’ that is, all the world over ; Acts i. 8. But how shall they be able so to bear testimony unto them, as that their witness shall be received and become effectual ? Saith he, ye shall receive power for this end ; I have given you authority to preach the word before, and now I will give you such an ability for it, as none shall be able to withstand or resist ; and this is after the Holy Ghost is come upon you, that is in the communication of these gifts whereby you may be enabled unto your work. In them consisted that ‘mouth and wisdom’ which he promised he would give them, ‘which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist;’ Luke xxi. 15. Wherefore, that which I shall close this discourse withal, shall be a brief endeavour to declare how these gifts were the spiritual powers of the gospel unto all the ends we have before mentioned as designed by Jesus Christ ; whence it will appear how little there was of the wisdom, skill, power, or authority of men in the whole work of propagating the gospel, and planting the church of Christ, as we shall afterward manifest, how, by the dispensation of the other more ordinary gifts of the Spirit, both the gospel and the church are continued and preserved in the world.

First, The persons whom the Lord Christ chose, called, and designed unto this work, were by these gifts enabled

thereunto. As no mortal men had of themselves any sufficiency for such a work, so the persons particularly called unto it by Jesus Christ, lay under all the disadvantages that any persons could possibly be liable unto in such an undertaking. For, 1. They were all of them unlearned and ignorant, which the Jews took notice of, Acts iv. 13. and which the Gentiles despised them for. 2. They were poor and of no reputation in the world, which made them contemned by all sorts of persons. And, 3. They seem in many instances to have been pusillanimous and fearful, which they all manifested when they so shamefully fled and left their master in his distresses, the chief of them also swearing that he knew him not. Now it is easily understood what great disadvantages these were unto the undertaking of so great a work as they were called unto; yea, how impossible it was for them under these qualifications to do any thing in the pursuit of it. Wherefore, by the communication of these gifts unto them, all these impediments arising from themselves were removed, and they were furnished with endowments of quite another nature, whereby they were eminently fitted with that spiritual wisdom, knowledge, and understanding which surpassed all the wisdom that was of the world or in it, by what ways or means soever it were attained. (1.) They both had and declared a wisdom which none of the princes of this world were acquainted withal; 1 Cor. ii. Those who, during the abode of Christ in the flesh with them, could not understand a plain parable, and were ever and anon at no small loss about the sense and meaning of their Master, having very low and carnal apprehensions about his person, work, and office, were now filled with a knowledge of all heavenly mysteries, and with wisdom to declare, manage, and maintain them against all opposers. Kings, princes, rulers of synagogues, were now all one to them; they had a mouth and wisdom given them which none of their adversaries could resist. Wherever they came, in all nations, to all sorts of people, of all languages, they were now enabled in their own tongue and speech to declare and preach the gospel unto them, being always filled with a treasure of wisdom and spiritual mysteries, whence they could draw forth as every occasion did require. (2.) Whereas they were poor, the difficulties wherewith such a condition is attended were

also by this means utterly taken away. For, although they had neither silver nor gold by their work or employment, but their outward wants and distresses were rather increased thereby ; yet their minds and souls were by this communication of the Spirit so raised above the world, and filled with such a contempt of all the desirable things in it, and of all the pride of men upon their account, as that their want of possessions and outward enjoyments made them only the more ready and expedite for their work, whence also such of them as had possessions sold them, gave their price to the poor, that they might be no hinderance unto them in their design. And hence also it was, that those who even after the resurrection of Christ were inquiring after a temporal kingdom, wherein no doubt a good part of its glory, power, and advantages would fall to their share, as most do who yet continue to dream of such a kingdom in this world, immediately upon the communication of these gifts rejoiced that they were counted worthy of shame for the name of Christ, when they were imprisoned, whipped, and despitefully used ; Acts iv. (3) They had boldness, courage, and constancy given unto them in the room of that pusillanimity and fear which before they had discovered. This the Jews took notice of, and were astonished at ; Acts iv. 13. And they had reason so to be, if we consider the power and authority of that work wherein they were then assaulted, with the speech of Peter unto them, ver. 8—12. which he spake as filled with the Holy Ghost. See also Acts v. 28—32. And in the whole course of their ministry throughout the world, the like undaunted courage, resolution, and constancy did always and in all things accompany them. Wherefore, these gifts, in the first place, may be esteemed the ‘powers of the world to come,’ inasmuch as by them those unto whom the work of preaching the gospel, propagating the mystery of it, the conversion of nations, the planting of churches, and in all the erection of the kingdom of Christ was committed, were enabled by them unto the utmost capacity of human nature to discharge, effect, and accomplish the work committed unto them. By virtue and in the strength of these spiritual abilities, did they set upon the whole kingdom of Satan and darkness in the world, contending with the gates of hell, and all the powers of the earth, attempting the wis-

dom of the Greeks, and the religion of the Jews, with success against both. They went not forth with force and arms, or carnal power; they threatened no man, menaced no man with the carnal weapons of force or penalties; they had no baits or allurements of wealth, power, or honour to inveigle the minds of corrupt and sensual men, but as was said in the warrant and power of these spiritual gifts, they both attempted and accomplished this work. And things continue still in the same condition according unto their proportion. Such as is the furniture of men with spiritual abilities and gifts of the Holy Ghost, such is their fitness for the work of the ministry, and no other. And if any shall undertake this work without this provision of abilities for it, they will neither ever be owned by Christ, nor be of the least use in the employment they take upon them. A ministry devoid of spiritual gifts is a sufficient evidence of a church under a degenerating apostacy. But these things will be farther spoken unto afterward.

Secondly, By these gifts were all their administrations, especially their preaching the gospel, rendered effectual unto their proper end. The preaching of the word, which is the *sword of the Spirit*, was the great instrument whereby they wrought out and accomplished their designed work in the conviction and conversion of the souls of men. It may, therefore, be inquired, what it was that gave efficacy and success unto the word as preached or dispensed by them. Now this, as it should seem, must be either that the subject matter of it was so suited unto the reasons and understandings of men, as that they could not but admit of it upon its proposal; or that the manner whereby they declared it was with such persuasive artifices as were meet to prevail with the minds of men unto an assent, or to impose upon them against the best of their defences. But the apostle declares that it was utterly otherwise in both these regards. For the matter of the doctrine of the gospel unto the minds of carnal men, such as all men are until renewed by the gospel itself, is folly, and that which is every way meet to be despised; 1 Cor. i. And for the manner of its declaration, they did not therein, neither would they, use the enticing words of human wisdom, any arts of oratory, or dresses of rhetoric or eloquence, lest the effects which were wrought by the word

should have seemed in any measure to have proceeded from them; 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. Wherefore, not to mention that internal efficacious power of grace which God secretly puts forth for the conversion of his elect, the consideration whereof belongs not unto our present design, and I say that it was by virtue of those gifts that the administration of the gospel was so efficacious and successful. For, 1. From them proceedeth that authority over the minds of men wherewith the word was accompanied. When the Lord Christ was anointed by the Spirit to preach the gospel, it is said, 'He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes;' Matt. vii. 29. Whatever was his outward appearance in the flesh, the word as administered by him, was attended with such an authority over the minds and consciences of men, as they could not but be sensible of. And so was it with the primitive dispensers of the gospel; by virtue of these spiritual gifts they preached the word 'in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power;' 1 Cor. ii. 4. There was accompanying of their preaching an evidence or demonstration of a power and authority that was from God and his Spirit. Men could not but conclude that there was something in it which was over them or above them, and which they must yield or submit unto as that which was not for them to contend withal. It is true, the power of the gospel was hid unto them that were to perish, whose minds the God of this world had effectually blinded, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into them; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Whence it came to pass that the word was rejected by many; yet wherever God was pleased to make it effectual, it was by a sense of a divine authority accompanying its administration by virtue of those spiritual gifts. And, therefore, our apostle shews, that when men prophesied or declared the mind of God from the word by the gift of prophesy, unbelievers did fall down, and worshipping God reported, that 'God was in them of a truth;' 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. They were sensible of a divine authority which they could not stand before or withstand. 2. From hence also proceeded that life and power for conviction, which the word was accompanied with in their dispensation of it. It became shortly to be the arrows of Christ, which were sharp in the hearts of men. As men found an authority in the dispensation of the word, so they felt and experienced

an efficacy in the truths dispensed. By it were their minds enlightened, their consciences awakened, their minds convinced, their lives judged, the secrets of their hearts made manifest, as 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. until they cried out in multitudes, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Hereby did the Lord Christ, in his kingdom and majesty, ride prosperously conquering, and to conquer, with the word of truth, meekness, and righteousness, subduing the souls of men unto his obedience, making them free, ready, willing, in the day of his power. These were the forces and weapons that he used in the establishing of his kingdom, ‘which were mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down of imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;’ 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. So doth the apostle describe the success of these administrations as an absolute conquest, wherein all opposition is broken, all strong holds and fortifications are demolished, and the whole reduced unto due obedience. For by this means were all things effected; all the strong holds of sin in the minds of men in their natural darkness, blindness, and obstinacy; all the high fortifications of prejudices, and vain, proud, lofty imaginations raised in them by Satan, were all cast down by, and before, gospel administrations, managed by virtue and authority of these spiritual gifts which the Lord Christ ordained to be the powers of his kingdom.

Thirdly, Those of them which consisted in miraculous operations were suited to fill the world with an apprehension of a divine power accompanying the word, and them by whom it was administered. And sundry things unto the furtherance of the gospel depended hereon. As, 1. The world, which was stupid, asleep in sin and security, satisfied with their lusts and idolatries, regardless of any thing but present enjoyments, was awakened hereby to an attendance unto, and inquiry into, this new doctrine that was proposed unto them. They could not but take notice that there was something more than ordinary in that sermon which they were summoned unto by a miracle. And this was the first and principal use of these miraculous operations. They awakened the dull, stupid world, unto a consideration of the

doctrine of the gospel, which otherwise they would have securely neglected and despised. 2. They weakened and took off those mighty prejudices which their minds were possessed with by tradition and secular enjoyments; what these prejudices were, I shall not here declare, I have done it elsewhere. It is enough to observe, that they were as great, as many, as effectual, as human nature in any case is capable of. But yet although they were sufficiently of proof against all other means of conviction, yet they could not but sink and weaken before the manifest evidence of present divine power; such as these miraculous operations were accompanied withal. For although all the things which they cleaved unto, and intended to do so inseparably, were, as they thought, to be preferred above any thing that could be offered unto them, yet when the divine power appeared against them, they were not able to give them defence. Hence upon these operations one of these two effects ensued. (1.) Those that were shut up under their obstinacy and unbelief, were filled with tormenting convictions, and knew not what to do to relieve themselves. The evidence of miracles they could not withstand, and yet would not admit of what they tendered and confirmed; whence they were filled with disquietments and perplexities. So the rulers of the Jews manifested themselves to have been upon the curing of the impotent person at the gate of the temple. ‘What shall we do,’ say they, ‘to these men, for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them?’ Acts iv. 16. (2.) The minds of others were exceedingly prepared for the reception of the truth; the advantages unto that purpose being too many to be here insisted on. 3. They were a great means of taking off the scandal of the cross. That this was that which the world was principally offended at in the gospel, is sufficiently known. ‘Christ crucified was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.’ Nothing could possibly be, or have been, a matter of so high offence unto the Jews, as to offer them a crucified Messiah, whom they expected as a glorious king to subdue all their enemies; nor ever will they receive him, in the mind wherein they are, upon any other terms. And it seemed a part of the extremest folly unto the Grecians, to propose such great and immortal things in the name of one that was himself crucified as a

malefactor. And a shame it was thought on all hands for any wise man to profess or own such a religion as came from the cross. But yet after all this blustering of weakness and folly, when they saw this doctrine of the cross owned by God, and witnessed unto by manifest effects of divine power, they could not but begin to think, that men need not be much ashamed of that which God so openly avowed. And all these things made way to let in the word into the minds and consciences of men, where by its own efficacy it gave them satisfying experience of its truth and power.

From these few instances, whereunto many of an alike nature might be added, it is manifest how these spiritual gifts were the powers of the world to come, the means, weapons, arms that the Lord Christ made use of, for the subduing of the world, destruction of the kingdom of Satan and darkness, with the planting and establishment of his own church on the earth. And as they were alone suited unto his design, so his accomplishment of it by them is a glorious evidence of his divine power and wisdom, as might easily be demonstrated.

CHAP. VI.

OF ORDINARY GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT.

The grant, institution, use, benefit, end, and continuance of the ministry.

THE consideration of those ordinary gifts of the Spirit which are annexed unto the ordinary powers and duties of the church, doth, in the next place, lie before us. And they are called ordinary, not as if they were absolutely common unto all, or were not much to be esteemed, or as if that were any way a diminishing term: but we call them so upon a double account: 1. In distinction from those gifts which, being absolutely extraordinary, did exceed the whole power and faculties of the souls of men, as healings, tongues, and miracles. For otherwise they are of the same nature with most of those gifts which were bestowed on the apostles and evangelists, differing only in degree. Every true gospel ministry hath now gifts of the same kind with the apostles in a degree and measure sufficient to their work, excepting those mentioned. 2. Because of their continuance in the ordinary state of the church, which also they shall do unto the consummation of all things. Now, my design is to treat peculiarly of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But because there is a gift of Christ, which is the foundation and subject of them, something must be spoken briefly unto that in the first place. And this gift of Christ is that of the ministry of the church, the nature of which office I shall not consider at large, but only speak unto it as it is a gift of Christ. And this I shall do by some little illustration given unto that passage of the apostle, where this gift and the communication of it is declared; Eph. iv. 7—16. ‘But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that

ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things), and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according unto the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.'

There is no other place of Scripture wherein at one view the grant, institution, use, benefit, end, and continuance of the ministry is so clearly and fully represented. And the end of this whole discourse is to declare that the gift and grant of the ministry and ministers, of the office, and the persons to discharge it, is an eminent, most useful fruit and effect of the mediatory power of Christ, with his love and care towards his church. And those of whom the apostle speaks ('unto every one of us') are the officers or ministers whom he doth afterward enumerate, although the words may in some sense be extended unto all believers. But principally the ministry and ministers of the church are intended. And it is said, unto them is grace given. It is evident that by grace here, not sanctifying, saving grace is intended, but a participation of a gracious favour with respect to an especial end: so the word is frequently used in this case by our apostle; Rom. xv. 15. Gal. ii. 9. Eph. iii. 8. This gracious favour we are made partakers of; this trust is freely, in a way of grace committed unto us. And that according to the measure of the gift of Christ, unto every one according as the Lord Christ doth measure the gift of it freely out unto them. Thus in general was the ministry granted unto the church, the particular account whereof is given in the ensuing verses. And,

First, it is declared to be a gift of Christ. *Καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκε,*

‘And he himself gave,’ ver. 11. It is the great fundamental of all church order, power, and worship, that the gift and grant of Christ is the original of the ministry. If it had not been so given of Christ, it had not been lawful for any of the sons of men to institute such an office, or appoint such officers. If any had attempted so to do, as there would have been a nullity in what they did, so their attempt would have been expressly against the headship of Christ, or his supreme authority over the church. Wherefore, that he would thus give ministers of the church was promised of old ; Jer. iii. 15. as well as signally foretold in the psalm from whence these words are taken. And as his doing of it is an act of his mediatory power, as it is declared in this place, and Matt. xxviii. 18. so it was a fruit of his care, love, and bounty ; 1 Cor. ii. 21, 22. And it will hence follow not only that offices in the church, which are not of Christ’s giving by institution, and officers that are not of gift, grant, by provision and furnishment, have indeed no place therein, but also that they are set up in opposition unto his authority, and in contempt of his care and bounty. For the doing so ariseth out of an apprehension, that both men have a power in the church which is not derived from Christ, and that to impose servants upon him in his house without his consent, as also that they have more care of the church than he had, who made not such provision for them. And if an examination might be admitted by this rule, as it will one day come on whether men will or no, some great names now in the church would scarce be able to preserve their station ; popes, cardinals, metropolitans, diocesan prelates, archdeacons, commissaries, officials, and I know not what other monstrous products of an incestuous conjunction between secular pride and ecclesiastical degeneracy, would think themselves severely treated to be tried by this rule : but so it must be at last, and that unavoidably. Yea, and that no man shall be so hardy, as once to dare attempt the setting up of officers in the church without the authority of Christ ; the eminency of this gift and grant of his is declared in sundry particular instances, wherein neither the wisdom, nor skill, nor power of any, or all of the sons of men, can have the least interest, or in any thing alike unto them.

And this appears, 1. From the grandeur of its introduc-

tion, or the great and solemn preparation that was made for the giving out of this gift. It was given by Christ when 'he ascended up on high, and led captivity captive,' ver. 8. The words are taken from Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18. 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.' In the first place, the glorious appearance of God on mount Sinai in giving of the law, his descending and ascending unto that purpose, is intended. But they are applied here unto Christ, because all the glorious works of God in and towards the church of old, were either representatory, or gradually introductory of Christ and the gospel. Thus the glorious ascending of God from mount Sinai after the giving of the law, was a representation of his ascending far above all heavens 'to fill all things,' as ver. 10. And as God then 'led captivity captive' in the destruction of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, who had long held his people in captivity, and under cruel bondage; so dealt the Lord Christ now in the destruction and captivity of Satan and all his powers; Col. ii. 15. Only whereas it is said in the psalm, 'that he received gifts for men;' here it is said, that 'he gave gifts to men,' wherein no small mystery is couched. For although Christ is God, and is so gloriously represented in the psalm, yet an intimation is given that he should act what is here mentioned in a condition wherein he was capable to receive from another, as he did in this matter; Acts ii. 2, 3. And so the phrase in the original doth more than insinuate לָקַח מִתְּנוּת בְּאָדָם, 'Thou hast received gifts in Adam, in the man or human nature.' And לָקַח signifies as well to *give* as to *receive*, especially when any thing is received to be given. Christ received this gift in the human nature to give it unto others. Now to what end is this glorious theatre, as it were, prepared, and all this preparation made, all men being called to the preparation of it? It was to set out the greatness of the gift he would bestow, and the glory of the work which he would effect. And this was to furnish the church with ministers, and ministers with gifts for the discharge of their office and duty. And it will one day appear, that there is more glory,

more excellency in giving one poor minister unto a congregation, by furnishing him with spiritual gifts for the discharge of his duty, than in the pompous instalment of a thousand popes, cardinals, or metropolitans. The worst of men in the observance of a few outward rites and ceremonies can do the latter ; Christ only can do the former, and that as he is ascended up on high to that purpose.

2. It appears to be such an eminent gift from its original acquisition. There was a power acquired by Christ for this great donation, which the apostle declares, ver. 9. ‘ Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth.’ Having mentioned the ascension of Christ as the immediate cause or fountain of the communication of this gift, ver. 8. he found it necessary to trace it unto its first original. He doth not therefore make mention of the descending into the lower parts of the earth occasionally upon that of his ascending, as if he caught at an advantage of a word : nor doth he speak of the humiliation of Christ absolutely in itself, which he had no occasion for ; but he introduceth it, to shew what respect this gift of the ministry and ministers, of the office, gifts, and persons, had thereunto. And Christ’s descending into the lower parts of the earth may be taken two ways, according as that expression, the ‘ lower parts of the earth,’ may be diversly understood. For he τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς, ‘ The lower parts of the earth,’ are either the whole earth, that is, those lower parts of the world, or some part of it. For the word *lower* includes a comparison either with the whole creation, or with some part of itself. In the first sense, Christ’s state of humiliation is intended, wherein he came down from heaven into these lower parts of God’s creation, conversing on the earth. In the latter, his grave and burial are intended ; for the grave is the lowest part of the earth into which mankind doth descend. And both of these, or his humiliation as it ended in his death and burial, may be respected in the words. And that which the apostle designs to manifest, is, that the deep humiliation, and the death of Christ, is the fountain and original of the ministry of the church, by way of acquisition and procurement. It is a fruit whose root is in the grave of Christ. For in those things, in the humiliation and death of Christ lay the foun-

dation of his mediatory authority, whereof the ministry is an effect; Phil. ii. 6—10. And it was appointed by him to be the ministry of that peace between God and man, which was made therein and thereby; Eph. ii. 14. 16, 17. For when he had made this peace by the blood of the cross, he preached it in the giving these gifts unto men for its solemn declaration. See 2 Cor. v. 18—21. Wherefore, because the authority from whence this gift proceeded, was granted unto Christ upon his descending into the lower parts of the earth, and the end of the gift is to declare and preach the peace which he made between God and man by his so doing, this gift relates thereunto also. Hereon doth the honour and excellency of the ministry depend, with respect hereunto is it to be esteemed and valued; namely, its relation unto the spiritual humiliation of Christ, and not from the carnal or secular exaltation of those that take it upon them.

3. It appears to be an eminent and signal gift from the immediate cause of its actual communication, or the present qualification of the Lord Christ for the bestowing of it; and this was his glorious exaltation upon his ascension. A right unto it was acquired by him in his death, but his actual investiture with all glorious power, was to precede its communication; ver. 8. 10. He was first to ascend up on high, to triumph over all his and our adversaries, put now under him into absolute and eternal captivity, before he gave out this gift. And he is said here to ‘ascend far above all heavens,’ that is, these visible and aspectable heavens, which he passed through when he went into the glorious presence of God, or unto the right hand of the majesty on high. See Heb. iv. 14. with our exposition thereon. It is also added, why he was thus gloriously exalted; and this was, that he might fill up all things, not *φυσικῶς* but *ἐνεργητικῶς*: not in the essence of his nature, but in the exercise of his power. He had laid the foundation of his church on himself in his death and resurrection; but now the whole fabric of it was to be filled with its utensils, and beautified with its ornaments. This he ascended to accomplish, and did it principally in the collation of this gift of the ministry upon it. This was the first exercise of that glorious power, which the Lord Christ was vested withal upon his exaltation; the first effect of his wisdom and love, in filling all things unto the glory

of God, and the salvation of his elect. And these things are mentioned, that in the contemplation of their greatness and order we may learn and judge how excellent this donation of Christ is. And it will also appear from hence, how contemptible a thing the most pompous ministry in the world is, which doth not proceed from this original.

4. The same is manifest from the nature of the gift itself: for this gift consisteth in gifts. 'He gave gifts.' There is an active giving expressed; 'he gave:' and the thing given, that is, 'gifts' Wherefore, the ministry is a gift of Christ, not only because freely and bountifully given by him to the church; but also because spiritual gifts do essentially belong unto it, are indeed its life, and inseparable from its being. A ministry without gifts, is no ministry of Christ's giving; nor is of any other use in the church but to deceive the souls of men. To set up such a ministry, is both to despise Christ, and utterly to frustrate the ends of the ministry; those for which Christ gave it, and which are here expressed. For, (1.) Ministerial gifts and graces are the great evidence that the Lord Christ takes care of his church and provides for it, as called into the order and into the duties of a church. To set up a ministry which may be continued by outward forms and orders of men only, without any communication of gifts from Christ, is to despise his authority and care. Neither is it his mind that any church should continue in order any longer, or otherwise, than as he bestows these gifts for the ministry. (2.) That these gifts are the only means and instruments whereby the work of the ministry may be performed, and the end of the ministry attained, shall be farther declared immediately. The ends of the ministry here mentioned, called its work, are the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come unto a perfect man. Hereof nothing at all can be done without these spiritual gifts. And, therefore, a ministry devoid of them, is a mock-ministry, and no ordinance of Christ.

5. The eminency of this gift appears in the variety and diversity of the offices and officers which Christ gave in giving of the ministry. He knew there would, and had appointed there should be a twofold estate of the church; ver.

10. (1.) Of its first election and foundation. (2.) Of its building and edification; and different both offices and gifts

were necessary unto these different states. For, (1.) Two things were extraordinary in the first erection of his church. [1.] An extraordinary aggression was to be made upon the kingdom of Satan in the world, as upheld by all the potentates of the earth, the concurrent suffrage of mankind, with the interest of sin and prejudices in them. [2.] The casting of men into a new order, under a new rule and law, for the worship of God, that is, the planting and erecting of churches all the world over. With respect unto these ends extraordinary officers with extraordinary authority, power, and abilities were requisite. Unto this end, therefore, he gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, of the nature of whose offices and their gifts we have spoken before. I shall here only add, that it was necessary that these officers should have their immediate call and authority from Christ, antecedent unto all order and power in the church. For the very being of the church depended on their power of office: but this without such an immediate power from Christ no man can pretend unto. And what was done originally by their persons, is now done by their word and doctrine: for the church is built on the 'foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone;' Eph. ii. 20. (2.) There was a state of the church in its edification, which was to be carried on according to the rules and laws given by Christ in the ordinary administration of all the ordinances and institutions of the gospel. To this end Christ gives ordinary officers, pastors, and teachers, who by his direction were ordained in every church; Acts xiv. 23, 24. And these are all the teaching officers that he hath given unto his church. Or, if any shall think that in the enumeration of them in this place, as also, 1 Cor. xii. our apostle forgot popes and diocesan bishops, with some others, who certainly cannot but laugh to themselves, that they should be admitted in the world as church officers, he must speak for himself.

1. But, whereas the other sort of officers was given by Christ, by his immediate call and communication of power unto them, it doth not appear how he gives these ordinary officers or ministers unto it. I answer, he did it originally, and continueth to do it by the ways and means ensuing. 1. He doth it by the law and rule of the gospel, where-

in he hath appointed this office of the ministry in his church, and so always to be continued. Were there not such a standing ordinance and institution of his, it were not in the power of all the churches in the world to appoint any such among them, whatever appearance there may be of a necessity thereof. And if any should have attempted any such thing, no blessing from God would have accompanied their endeavour, so that they would but set up an idol of their own. Hereon we lay the continuance of the ministry in the church. If there be not an ordinance and institution of Christ unto this purpose; or if such being granted, yet the force of it be now expired, we must and will readily confess, that the whole office is a mere usurpation. But if he have given pastors and teachers unto his church to continue until all his saints in all ages ‘come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;’ Eph. iv. 11—13. and hath promised to be with them as such, unto the consummation of all things; Matt. xxviii. 18—20. If the apostles by his authority ordained elders in every church and city; Acts xiv. 23. Tit. i. 5. and who therein were made overseers of the flocks by the Holy Ghost; Acts xx. 28. having the charge of feeding and overseeing the flock that is among them always, until the chief shepherd shall appear; 1 Pet. v. 1—5. If believers, or the disciples of Christ, are obliged by him always to yield obedience unto them; Heb. xiii. 7. 17. with other such plain declarations of the will of the Lord Christ in the constitution and continuance of this office, this foundation standeth firm and unshaken as the ordinances of heaven that shall not be changed. And whereas there is not in the Scripture the least intimation of any such time, state, or condition, of the church, as wherein the disciples of Christ may or ought to live from under the orderly conduct and guidance of the ministers, it is vain to imagine that any defect in other men, any apostacy of the greatest part of any, or all visible churches, should cast them into an incapacity of erecting a regular ministry among them, and over them. For, whereas the warranty and authority of the ministry depends on this institution of Christ, which is accompanied with a command for its observance; Matt. xxviii. 18. all his disciples being obliged to yield obedience thereunto, their doing so in the order and manner also by him approved,

is sufficient to constitute a lawful ministry among them. To suppose, that because the church of Rome, and those adhering unto it, have by their apostacy utterly lost an evangelical ministry among them, that therefore others unto whom the word of God is come, and hath been effectual unto their conversion, have not sufficient warranty from the word to yield obedience unto all the commands of Christ (which, when we have talked of power and authority whilst we please, is all that is left unto us in this world), or that in so doing he will not accept them, and approve of what they have done, is an assertion fit for men to maintain, who have a trade to drive in religion unto their own especial advantage.

2. The Lord Christ giveth and continueth this office by giving spiritual gifts and abilities unto men to enable them to discharge the duties, and perform the work of it. This is that which I principally design to confirm in its proper place, which will immediately ensue. All I shall say at present is, that spiritual gifts of themselves make no man actually a minister, yet no man can be made a minister according to the mind of Christ, who is not partaker of them. Wherefore, supposing the continuance of the law and institution mentioned, if the Lord Christ doth at any time, or in any place, cease to give out spiritual gifts unto men, enabling them in some good measure unto the discharge of the ministry, then and in that place the ministry itself must cease and come to an end. To erect a ministry by virtue of outward order, rites, and ceremonies, without gifts for the edification of the church, is but to hew a block with axes, and smoothen it with planes, and set it up for an image to be adored. To make a man a minister who can do nothing of the proper peculiar work of the ministry, nothing towards the only end of it in the church, is to set up a dead carcass, fastening it to a post, and expecting it should do you work and service.

3. He doth it by giving power unto his church in all ages to call and separate unto the work of the ministry such as he hath fitted and gifted for it. The things before mentioned are essentially constituent of the ministry; this belongs unto the outward order of their entrance into the ministry who are by him called thereunto. And concerning this, we may observe the things following. (1.) That this power in the church is not despotical or lordly, but consists in a faculty,

right, and ability, to act in this matter obedientially unto the commands of Christ. Hence, all the acting of the church in this matter, is nothing but an instituted means of conveying authority and office from Christ unto persons called thereunto. The church doth not give them any authority of its own, or resident in itself, but only in a way of obedience unto Christ do transmit power from him unto them who are called. Hence do they become the ministers of Christ, and not of the bishops, or churches, or men, holding their office and authority from Christ himself, by the law and rule of the gospel; so that whosoever despiseth them, despiseth him also in them. Some would have ministers of the gospel to receive all their authority from the people that choose them, and some from the bishops who ordain them, and whence they have theirs I know not. But this is to make them ministers of men, and servants of men, and to constitute other masters between them and Christ. And whereas all church power is originally and absolutely vested in Christ, and in him solely; so that none can be partaker of the least interest in it, or share of it, without a communication of it from him unto them, neither popes, nor prelates, nor people, are able to produce any such grant or concession of power unto them from him, as that they should have an authority residing in them, and in their power, to dispose unto others as they see cause, so as they should hold it from them, as a part or efflux of the power vested in them. It is obedience unto the law of Christ, and following the guidance of his previous communication of gifts as a means to communicate his power unto them who are called to the ministry, that is the whole of what is committed unto any in this kind. (2.) The church hath no power to call any unto the office of the ministry, where the Lord Christ hath not gone before it in the designation of him by an endowment with spiritual gifts. For, if the whole authority of the ministry be from Christ, and he never gives it but where he bestows these gifts with it for its discharge, as in Eph. iv. 7, 8, &c. then to call any to the ministry whom he hath not so previously gifted, is to set him aside, and to act in our own names and authority. And by reason of these things the Holy Ghost is said to make men overseers of the flocks who are thus called thereunto, because both the communication of power in the constitution of the law, and of spiritual gifts by

internal effectual operation, are from him alone; Acts xx. 28.

(3.) The outward way and order whereby a church may call any person unto the office of the ministry among them and over them, is by their joint solemn submission unto him in the Lord, as unto all the powers and duties of this office, testified by their choice and election of him. It is concerning this outward order that all the world is filled with disputes about the call of men unto the ministry, which yet in truth is of the least concernment therein. For whatever manner or order be observed herein, if the things before mentioned be not premised thereunto, it is of no validity or authority. On the other hand, grant that the authority of the ministry dependeth on the law, ordinance, and institution of Christ, that he calls men unto this office by the collation of spiritual gifts unto them, and that the actings of the church herein is but an instituted moral means of communicating office-power from Christ himself unto any; and let but such other things be observed as the light and law of nature requireth in cases of an alike kind, and the outward mode of the churches acting herein need not much be contended about. It may be proved to be a beam of truth from the light of nature, that no man should be imposed on a church for their minister against their wills, or without their express consent; considering that his whole work is to be conversant about their understandings, judgments, wills, and affections; and that this should be done by their choice and election, as the Scripture doth manifestly declare; Numb. viii. 9, 10. Acts i. 23. 26. vi. 35. xiv. 23. so that it was for some ages observed sacredly in the primitive churches, cannot modestly be denied. But how far any people or church may commit over this power of declaring their consent and acquiescency unto others to act for them, and as it were in their stead, so as that the call to office should yet be valid, provided the former rules be observed, I will not much dispute with any, though I approve only of what maketh the nearest approaches to the primitive pattern that the circumstances of things are capable of. (4.) The Lord Christ continueth his bestowing of this gift, by the solemn ordinance of setting apart those who are called in the manner declared, by 'fasting and prayer, and imposition of hands;' Acts xiv. 23. xiii. 2. 1 Tim. iv. 14. By these means, I say, doth the Lord

Christ continue to declare, that he accounts men faithful, and puts them into the ministry, as the apostle speaks; 1 Tim. i. 12.

There are yet remaining sundry things in the passage of the apostle, which we now insist on, that declare the eminency of this gift of Christ, which may yet be farther briefly considered. As,

6. The end why it is bestowed; and this is expressed, (1.) Positively, as to the good and advantage of the church thereby; ver. 12. (2.) Negatively, as to its prohibition and hinderance of evil; ver. 14. In the end of it as positively expressed, three things may be considered. [1.] That it is *πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων*, that is, for the gathering of the saints into complete church order. The subject matter of this part of their duty is the saints, that is, by calling and profession; such as are all the disciples of Christ. And that which is effected towards them is *καταρτισμὸς*, their coagmentation, jointing or compacting into order. So the word signifies, Gal. vi. 1. And this effect is here declared; ver. 16. It is true, the saints mentioned may come together into some initial church order, by their consent and agreement to walk together in all the ways of Christ, and in obedience unto all his institutions, and so become a church essentially before they have any ordinary pastor or teacher, either by the conduct of extraordinary officers, as at first, or through obedience unto their word; whence elders were ordained among those who were in church-state, that is, thus far before; Acts xiv. 23. but they cannot come to that perfection and completeness which is designed unto them. That which renders a church completely organical, the proper seat and subject of all gospel worship and ordinances, is this gift of Christ in the ministry.

But it may be asked, Whether a church before it come unto this *καταρτισμὸς*, or *completeness*, before it hath any minister in office, or have by any means lost the ministry among them, may not delegate and appoint some one or more from among themselves for to administer all the ordinances of the gospel among them, and unto them, and by that means make up their own perfection?

[2.] The church being so completed, these officers are given unto it ‘for the work of the ministry:’ this expression is comprehensive, and the particulars included in it are not

in this place to be inquired into. It may suffice unto our present purpose to consider that it is a work, not a preferment; and a work they shall find it, who design to give up a comfortable account of what is committed unto them. It is usually observed, that all the words whereby the work of the ministry is expressed in the Scripture, do denote a peculiar industrious kind of labour: though some have found out ways of honour and ease to be signified by them. And, [3.] both these are directed unto one general issue. It is all *εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, ‘Unto the edification of the body of Christ.’ Not to insist on the metaphors that are in this expression, the excellency of the ministry is declared in that, the object of its duty and work is no other but the body of Christ himself; and its end, the edification of this body, or its increase in faith and obedience, in all the graces and gifts of the Spirit, until it comes unto conformity unto him, and the enjoyment of him. And a ministry which hath not this object and end, is not of the giving or grant of Christ.

(2.) The end of the ministry is expressed negatively, or with respect unto the evils which it is ordained for our deliverance from, ver. 14. [1.] The evil which we are hereby delivered from, is the danger of being perniciously and destructively deceived by false doctrines, errors, and heresies, which then began, and have ever since in all ages continued to infest the churches of God. These the apostle describes, 1st. From the design of their authors, which is ‘to deceive.’ 2dly. Their diligence in that design, ‘They lay in wait to accomplish it.’ 3dly. The means they use to compass their end, which are, ‘sleights and cunning craftiness,’ managed sometimes with impetuous violence, and thence called a ‘wind of doctrine;’ and, [2.] The means hereof is our deliverance out of a child-like state, accompanied with, 1st. Weakness; 2dly. Instability; and, 3dly. Wilfulness. And sad is the condition of those churches which either have such ministers as will themselves toss them up and down by false and pernicious doctrines, or are not able by sound instructions to deliver them from such a condition of weakness and instability, as wherein they are not able to preserve themselves from being in these things imposed on by the ‘cunning sleights of men that lie in wait to deceive.’ And as this ministry is

always to continue in the church, ver. 13. so it is the great means of influencing the whole body, and every member of it into a due discharge of their duty, unto their edification in love; ver. 15, 16.

Designing to treat of the spiritual gifts bestowed on the ministry of the church, I have thus far diverted into the consideration of the ministry itself, as it is a gift of Christ, and shall shut it up with a few corollaries. As, 1. Where there is any office erected in the church, that is not in particular of the gift and institution of Christ, there is a nullity in the whole office, and in all administrations by virtue of it. 2. Where the office is appointed, but gifts are not communicated unto the person called unto it, there is a nullity as to his person, and a disorder in the church. 3. It is the duty of the church to look on the ministry as an eminent grant of Christ, with valuation, thankfulness, and improvement. 4. Those who are called unto this office in due order, labour to approve themselves as a gift of Christ; which it is a shameless impudence for some to own who go under that name. 5. This they may do in labouring to be furnished, [1.] with gracious qualifications. [2.] Useful endowments. [3.] Diligence and laborious travail in this work. [4.] By an exemplary conversation; in, [1.] Love. [2.] Meekness. [3.] Self-denial. [4.] Readiness for the cross, &c.

CHAP. VII.

Of spiritual gifts enabling the ministry to the exercise and discharge of their trust and office.

UNTO the ministry so given unto the church, as hath been declared, the Holy Ghost gives spiritual gifts enabling them unto the exercise and discharge of the power, trust, and office committed unto them. Now, although I am not thoroughly satisfied what men will grant or allow in these days, such uncouth and bold principles are continually advanced among us, yet I suppose it will not, in words at least, be denied by many, but that ministers have, or ought to have, gifts for the due discharge of their office. To some, indeed, the very name and word is a derision, because it is a name and notion peculiar to the Scripture. Nothing is more contemptible unto them than the very mention of the gifts of the Holy Ghost; at present I deal not with such directly, though what we shall prove will be sufficient for their rebuke, though not for their conviction. Wherefore, our inquiry is, whether the Spirit of God doth effectually collate on the ministers of the gospel, spiritual gifts, enabling them to perform and effect evangelical administrations, according to the power committed unto them, and duly required of them, unto the glory of Christ and edification of the church. It is moreover inquired whether the endowment of men with these spiritual gifts in a degree and measure suited unto public edification, be not that which doth materially constitute them ministers of the gospel, as being antecedently necessary unto their call unto their office. These things, I say, are to be inquired into, because in opposition unto the first it is affirmed, that these supposed gifts are nothing but mere natural abilities attained by diligence, and improved by exercise, without any especial respect unto the working of the Holy Ghost, at least otherwise than what is necessary unto the attaining of skill and ability in any human art or science, which is the ordinary blessing of God on man's honest endeavours. And to the other it is opposed, that a lawful ordinary outward call is sufficient to constitute any man a lawful minister, whether he have received any such gifts as those inquired after or no. Where-

fore, the substance of what we have to declare and confirm is, that there is an especial dispensation and work of the Holy Ghost in providing able ministers of the New Testament for the edification of the church, wherein the continuance of the ministry, and being of the church, as to its outward order, doth depend; and that herein he doth exert his power, and exercise his authority in the communication of spiritual gifts unto men, without a participation whereof no man hath *de jure*, any lot or portion in this ministration. Herein consists no small part of that work of the Spirit which belongs unto his promised dispensation in all ages, which to deny is to renounce all faith in the promise of Christ, all regard unto his continued love and care towards the church in the world, or at least the principal pleadable testimony given thereunto, and under pretence of exalting and preserving the church, totally to overthrow it. Now the evidence which we shall give unto this truth, is contained in the ensuing assertions with their confirmation.

First, The Lord Jesus Christ hath faithfully promised to be present with his church unto the ‘end of the world.’ It is his temple and his tabernacle, wherein he will dwell and walk continually. And this presence of Christ is that which makes the church to be what it is, a congregation essentially distinct from all other societies and assemblies of men. Let men be formed into what order you please, according unto any outward rules and measures that are either given in the Scripture, or found out by themselves, let them derive power and authority by what claim soever they shall think fit, yet if Christ be not present with them, they are no church, nor can all the powers under heaven make them so to be. And where any church loseth the especial presence of Christ, it ceaseth so to be. It is, I suppose, confessed with and among whom Christ is thus present, or it may be easily proved. See his promises to this purpose, Matt. xviii. 20. Rev. xxi. 3. And those churches do exceedingly mistake their interest who are solicitous about other things, but make little inquiry after the evidences of the presence of Christ among them. Some walk as if they supposed they had him sure enough, as it were immured in their walls, whilst they keep up the name of a church, and an outward order that pleaseth and advantageth themselves. But outward order, be it what it will, is so far from being the only evidence of the presence of Christ in

a church, that where it is alone, or when it is principally required, it is none at all. And, therefore, whereas preaching of the word, and the right administration of the sacraments are assigned as the notes of a true church, if the outward acts and order of them only be regarded, there is nothing of evidence unto this purpose in them.

Secondly, This promised presence of Christ is by his Spirit. This I have sufficiently proved formerly, so that here I shall be brief in its rehearsal, though it be the next foundation of what we have farther to offer in this case. We speak not of the essential presence of Christ with respect unto the immensity of his divine nature, whereby he is equally present in, or equally indistant from, all places, manifesting his glory when, where, and how, he pleaseth. Nor doth it respect his human nature; for when he promised this his presence, he told his disciples that therein he must leave and depart from them, John xvi. 5—8. whereon they were filled with sorrow and trouble, until they knew how he would make good the promise of his presence with them; and who or what it was that should unto their advantage supply his bodily absence. And this he did in his visible ascension, when ‘he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight,’ Acts i. 9. when also it was given in charge unto them not to expect his return until his ‘coming unto judgment;’ ver. 11. And accordingly Peter tells us, that the ‘heavens must receive him unto the restitution of all things,’ Acts iii. 21. when he will ‘appear again in the glory of his Father,’ Matt. xvi. 27. even that glory which the ‘Father gave him upon his exaltation,’ 2 Pet. i. 17. joined unto that glory which he had with him ‘before the world was;’ John xvii. 5. In and upon this his departure from them he taught his disciples how they should understand his promise of being present, and abiding ‘with them unto the end of the world.’ And this was by sending of his Holy Spirit in his name, place, and stead, to do all to them, and for them, which he had yet to do with them and for them. See John xiv. 16—18. 26—28. xv. 26. xvi. 7—14. And other vicar in the church Christ hath none, nor doth stand in need of any; nor can any mortal man supply that charge and office. Nor was any such ever thought of in the world, until men grew weary of the conduct and rule of the Holy Spirit,

by various ways taking his work out of his hand, leaving him nothing to do in that which they called the church. But I suppose I need not handle this principle as a thing in dispute or controversy. If I greatly mistake not, this presence of Christ in his church by his Spirit, is an article of faith unto the catholic church, and such a fundamental truth as whoever denies it, overthrows the whole gospel. And I have so confirmed it in our former discourses concerning the dispensation and operations of the Holy Ghost, as that I fear not, nor expect any direct opposition thereunto. But yet I acknowledge that some begin to talk as if they owned no other presence of Christ but by the word and sacraments. Whatever else remains to be done lies wholly in ourselves. It is acknowledged that the Lord Christ is present in and by his word and ordinances; but if he be no otherwise present, or be present only by their external administration, there will no more church-state among men ensue thereon, than there is among the Jews, who enjoy the letter of the Old Testament and the institutions of Moses. But when men rise up in express contradiction unto the promises of Christ, and the faith of the Catholic church in all ages, we shall not contend with them. But,

Thirdly, This presence of the Spirit is secured unto the church by an everlasting unchangeable covenant; Isa. lix. 21. 'As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.' This is God's covenant with the gospel church, to be erected then when 'the Redeemer should come out of Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob;' ver. 20. This is a part of the covenant that God hath made in Christ the Redeemer. And as the continuance of the word unto the church in all ages is by this promise secured, without which it would cease and come to nothing, seeing it is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Eph. ii. 20. so is the presence of the Spirit in like manner secured unto it, and that on the same terms with the word, so as that if he be not present with it, all covenant relation between God and it doth cease; where this promise doth not take place,

there is no church, no ordinance, no acceptable worship, because no covenant-relation. In brief then, where there is no participation of the promise of Christ to send the Spirit to abide with us always, no interest in that covenant, wherein God engageth that his Spirit shall not depart from us for ever; and so no presence of Christ to make the word and ordinances of worship living, useful, effectual in their administration unto their proper ends, there is no church-state, whatever outward order there may be. And hereon,

Fourthly, The gospel is called the ministration of the Spirit, and the ministers of it the ministers of the Spirit; 2 Cor. iii. 6. 'Who hath also made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit;' not the ministration of death, but that of the Spirit, which is glorious; ver. 7, 8. There never was, nor ever shall be, any, but these two ministrations in the church; that of the letter and of death; and that of the Spirit and of life. If there be a ministration in any church, it must belong to one of these, and all ministers must be so, either of the letter or of the Spirit. If there be a ministry pretended unto, that is neither of the letter nor of the Spirit, it is antichristian. The ministry which was carnal, of the letter and death, was a true ministry, and in its place glorious, because it was appointed of God, and was efficacious as unto its proper end. That of the gospel is of the Spirit, and much more glorious. But if there be a ministration that hath the outward form of either, but indeed is neither of them, it is no ministration at all. And where it is so, there is really no ministration but that of the Bible; that is, God by his providence continuing the Bible among them, maketh use of it as he seeth good for the conviction and conversion of sinners, wherein there is a secret manifestation of the Spirit also. We may, therefore, inquire in what sense the ministration of the gospel is called the ministry of the Spirit. Now this cannot be, because the laws, institutions, and ordinances of its worship were revealed by the Spirit, for so were all the ordinances and institutions of the Old Testament, as hath been proved before, and yet the ministration of them was the ministration of the letter and of death, in a worldly sanctuary by carnal ordinances. Wherefore it must be so called in one of these respects. Either, 1. Because it is the peculiar aid and assist-

ance of the Spirit, whereby any are enabled to administer the gospel, and its institutions of worship, according to the mind of God, unto the edification of the church. In this sense, men are said to be made able ministers of the New Testament, that is, ministers able to administer the gospel in due order. Thus in that expression ‘ministers of the Spirit,’ the Spirit denotes the efficient cause of the ministry, and he that quickeneth it; ver. 6, 7. Or 2. It may be said to be the ministration of the Spirit, because in and by the ministry of the gospel, the Spirit is in all ages administered and communicated unto the disciples of Christ, unto all the ends for which he is promised. So Gal. iii. 2. the Spirit is received by the ‘preaching of faith.’ Take it either way, and the whole of what we plead for is confirmed. That he alone enableth men unto the discharge of the work of the ministry, by the spiritual gifts which he communicateth unto them, is the first sense, and expressly that which we contend for; and if in and by the ministration of the gospel in all ages, the Spirit is communicated and administered unto men, then doth he abide with the church for ever; and for what ends we must farther inquire.

Fifthly, The great end for which the Spirit is thus promised, administered, and communicated under the gospel, is, the continuance and preservation of the church in the world. God hath promised unto the Lord Christ that his kingdom in this world should endure unto all generations with the course of the sun and moon, Psal. lxxii. 5. and that of the increase of the government there should be no end; Isa. ix. 7. And the Lord Christ himself hath declared his preservation of his church, so as that ‘the gates of hell should not prevail against it;’ Matt. xvi. It may therefore be inquired whereon the infallible accomplishment of these promises, and others innumerable unto the same end, doth depend; or what is that means whereby they shall be certainly executed. Now this must be either some work of God or man. If it be of men, and it consist of their wills and obedience, then that which is said amounts hereunto; namely, that where men have once received the gospel, and professed subjection thereunto, they will infallibly abide therein in a succession from one generation unto another. But besides, that it must be granted that what so depends on the wills of men,

can have no more certainty than the undetermined wills of men can give security of, which indeed is none at all; so there are confessed instances without number, of such persons and places, as have lost the gospel, and the profession thereof. And what hath fallen out in one place may do so in another, and consequently in all places where the reasons and causes of things are the same. On this supposition, therefore, there is no security that the promises mentioned shall be infallibly accomplished. Wherefore the event must depend on some work of God and Christ. Now this is no other but the dispensation and communication of the Spirit. Hereon alone doth the continuance of the church and of the kingdom of Christ in the world depend. And whereas the church falls under a double consideration, namely, of its internal and external form, of its internal spiritual union with Christ, and its outward profession of obedience unto him; the calling, gathering, preservation, and edification of it in both respects belong unto the Holy Spirit. The first he doth, as hath been proved at large, by his communicating effectual saving grace unto the elect; the latter, by the communication of gifts unto the guides, rulers, officers, and ministers of it, with all its members, according unto its place and capacity. Suppose then his communication of internal saving grace to cease, and the church must absolutely cease, as to its internal form. For we are united unto the Lord Christ as our mystical head by the Spirit, the one and self-same Spirit dwelling in him and them that do believe. Union unto Christ without saving grace, or saving grace without the Holy Spirit, are strangers unto the gospel and Christian religion. So is it to have a church that is holy and Catholic, which is not united unto Christ as a mystical head. Wherefore the very being of the church, as unto its internal form, depends on the Spirit in his dispensation of grace, which, if you suppose an intercision of the church, must cease. It hath the same dependance on him, as to its outward form and profession, upon his communication of gifts. For ‘no man can call Jesus Lord,’ or profess subjection and obedience unto him in a due manner, ‘but by the Holy Ghost;’ 1 Cor. xii. 3. Suppose this work of his to cease, and there can be no professing church. Let men mould and cast themselves into what order and form they

please, and let them pretend that their right and title unto their church, power, and station, is derived unto them from their progenitors, or predecessors, if they are not furnished with the gifts of the Spirit, to enable their guides unto gospel administrations, they are no orderly gospel church. Wherefore,

Sixthly, The communication of such gifts unto the ordinary ministry of the church in all ages, is plainly asserted in sundry places of the Scripture ; somewhereof may be briefly considered. The whole nature of this work is declared in the parable of the talents ; Matt. xxv. from ver. 13 to 31. The state of the church from the ascension of Christ unto his coming again unto judgment, that is, in its whole course on the earth, is represented in this parable. In this season he hath servants whom he intrusteth in the affairs of his kingdom, in the care of his church, and the propagation of the gospel. That they may in their several generations, places, and circumstances, be enabled hereunto, he giving them in various distributions talents to trade withal, the least whereof was sufficient to encourage them who received them unto their use and exercise. The trade they had to drive, was that of the administration of the gospel, its doctrine, worship, and ordinances to others. Talents are abilities to trade, which may also comprise opportunities and other advantages ; but abilities are chiefly intended. These were the gifts whereof we speak. Nor did it ever enter into the minds of any to apprehend otherwise of them. And they are abilities which Christ, as the king and head of his church, giveth unto men in an especial manner, as they are employed under him in the service of his house and work of the gospel. The servants mentioned are such as are called, appointed, and employed in the service of the house of Christ, that is, all ministers of the gospel from first to last. And their talents are the gifts which he endows them withal by his own immediate power and authority for their work. And hence these three things follow : 1. That where-ever there is a ministry that the Lord Christ setteth up, appointeth or owneth, he furnisheth all those whom he employs therein with gifts and abilities suitable to their work, which he doth by the Holy Spirit. He will never fail to own his institutions with gracious supplies to render them

effectual. 2. That where any have not received talents to trade withal, it is the highest presumption in them, and casts the greatest dishonour on the Lord Christ, as though he requires work where he gave no strength, or trade where he gave no stock, for any one to undertake the work of the ministry. Where the Lord Christ gives no gifts he hath no work to do. He will require of none any especial duty where he doth not give an especial ability. And for any to think themselves meet for this work and service, in the strength of their own natural parts and endowments, however acquired, is to despise both his authority and his work. 3. For those who have received of these talents, either not to trade at all, or to pretend the managing of their trade on another stock, that is, either not sedulously and duly to exercise their ministerial gifts, or to discharge their ministry by other helps and means, is to set up their own wisdom in opposition unto his and his authority. In brief, that which the whole parable teacheth, is, that wherever there is a ministry in the church that Christ owneth or regardeth as used and employed by him, there persons are furnished with spiritual gifts from Christ by the Spirit, enabling them unto the discharge of that ministry; and where there are no such spiritual gifts dispensed by him, there is no ministry that he either accepteth or approveth.

Rom. xii. 1. 4—8. ‘As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having, therefore, gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us, whether prophecy,’ &c. It is indifferent as to our present purpose, whether the apostle treat here of offices or of duties only. The things ensuing which are plain and obvious in the text, are sufficient unto the confirmation of what we plead for. 1. It is the ordinary state of the church, its continuance being planted, its preservation and edification that the apostle discourseth about; wherefore what he speaks, is necessary unto the church in all ages and conditions. To suppose a church devoid of the gifts here mentioned, is to overthrow the whole nature and end of a gospel church. 2. That the principle of all administrations in the church-state described, is gifts received from Jesus Christ by his Spirit. For declaring the way

whereby the church may be edified, he layeth the foundation of it in this, that to every one of us is grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. For the apostle exhorts those unto whom he speaks, to attend unto those duties whereby the church may be edified, and that by virtue of the gifts which they had received. All the whole duty of any one in the church lies in this, that he act according to the *χάρισμα* that he is made partaker of. And what these *χαρίσματα* are, as also by whom they are bestowed, hath been already fully declared. 3. That these gifts give not only ability for duty, but rule and measure unto all works of service that are to be performed in the church. Every one is to act therein according to his gift, and no otherwise. To say that this state of the church is now ceased, and that another state is introduced, wherein all gospel administrations may be managed without spiritual gifts, or not by virtue of them, is to say that which, *de facto*, is true in most places; but whether the true nature of the church is not overthrown thereby, is left unto consideration. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. is a parallel testimony hereunto, and many others to the same purpose might be pleaded, together with that which is the foundation of this whole discourse; Eph. iv. 5—11, &c. Only let it be remembered, that in this whole discourse by gifts I do understand those *χαρίσματα πνευματικά*, those spiritual largesses which are neither absolutely natural endowments, nor attainable by our own industry and diligence.

Seventhly, These gifts, as they are bestowed unto that end, so they are indispensably necessary unto gospel administrations. For as we have proved, they are spiritual, and not legal or carnal; and spiritual administrations cannot be exercised in a due manner without spiritual gifts: yea, one reason why they are spiritual, and so called, is because they cannot be performed without the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit in and by these gifts of his. Had the Lord Christ appointed administrations of another nature, such as were every way suited unto the reason of men, and to be exercised by the powers thereof, there had been no need of these spiritual gifts. For the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man, and will both guide and act him therein. And whereas these administrations are in their nature, use,

signification, and efficacy spiritual, it is by spiritual gifts alone that they may be managed. Hence these things do live and die together. Where the one is not, there neither will the other be. Thus when many, perhaps the most who were outwardly called unto office in the church, began to be carnal in their hearts and lives, and to neglect the use of these gifts, neither applying themselves unto the attaining of them, nor endeavouring to excite or increase what they had received, by diligence or constant exercise, refusing to trade with the talent committed unto them, they quickly began to wax weary of spiritual administrations also. Hereon in compliance with many corrupt affections, they betook themselves unto an outward, carnal, ceremonious worship and administration of ordinances, which they might discharge and perform without the least aid or assistance of the Holy Ghost, or supply of spiritual gifts. So in the neglect of these gifts, and the loss of them which ensued thereon, lay the beginning of the apostacy of the Christian church as to its outward profession, which was quickly completed by the neglect of the grace of the Spirit, whereby it lost both truth and holiness. Nor could it be otherwise. For as we have proved, the outward form and being of the church as to its visible profession, depends on the reception and use of them : on their decay, therefore, the church must decay as to its profession, and in their loss is its ruin. And we have an instance in the church of Rome, what various, extravagant, and endless inventions the minds of men will put them upon to keep up a show of worship, when by the loss of spiritual gifts spiritual administrations are lost also. This is that which their innumerable forms, modes, sets of rites, and ceremonies, seasons of worship are invented to supply, but to no purpose at all ; but only the aggravation of their sin and folly.

In the last place we plead the event even in the days wherein we live. For the Holy Ghost doth continue to dispense spiritual gifts for gospel administrations in great variety, unto those ministers of the gospel who are called unto their office according unto his mind and will. The opposition that is made hereunto by profane scoffers, is not to be valued. The experience of those who are humble and wise, who fearing God do inquire into those things, is appealed

unto. Have they not an experiment of this administration? Do they not find the presence of the Spirit himself by his various gifts in them by whom spiritual things are administered unto them? Have they not a proof of Christ speaking in them by the assistance of his Spirit, making the word mighty unto all its proper ends? And as the thing itself, so variety of his dispensations manifest themselves also unto the experience of believers. Who see not how different are the gifts of men, the Holy Ghost dividing unto every one as he will? And the experience which they have themselves who have received these gifts, of the especial assistance which they receive in the exercise of them, may also be pleaded. Indeed the profaneness of a contrary apprehension, is intolerable among such as profess themselves to be Christians. For any to boast themselves, they are sufficient of themselves for the stewardly dispensation of the mysteries of the gospel, by their own endowments natural or acquired, and the exercise of them, without a participation of any peculiar spiritual gift from the Holy Ghost, is a presumption which contains in it a renunciation of all or any interest in the promises of Christ made unto the church, or the continuance of his presence therein. Let men be never so well persuaded of their own abilities, let them pride themselves in their performances, in reflection of applauses from persons unacquainted with the mystery of these things; let them frame to themselves such a work of the ministry as whose discharge stands in little or no need of these gifts, yet it will at length appear, that where the gifts of the Holy Ghost are excluded from their administration, the Lord Christ is so, and the Spirit himself is so, and all true edification of the church is so, and so are all the real concerns of the gospel: and so have we, as I hope, confirmed the second part of the work of the Holy Ghost with respect unto spiritual gifts; namely, his continuance to distribute and communicate unto the church to the end of the world, according unto the powers and duties, which he hath erected in it, or required of it.

CHAP. VIII.

*Of the gifts of the Spirit, with respect unto doctrine, rule, and worship ;
how attained, and improved.*

THERE remain yet two things to be spoken unto, with respect unto the gifts which the Holy Ghost bestows on the ministers of the gospel, to qualify them unto their office, and to enable them unto their work. And these are,

I. What they are.

II. How they are to be attained and improved.

In our inquiry after the first ; or what are the gifts whereby men are fitted and enabled for the ministry, we wholly set aside the consideration of all those gracious qualifications of faith, love, zeal, compassion, careful tender watchfulness, and the like, whereon the holy use of their ministry doth depend. For our inquiry is only after those gifts whereon depends the very being of the ministry. There may be a true ministry in some cases where there is no sanctifying grace ; but where there are no spiritual gifts, there is no ministry at all. They are in general abilities for the due management of the spiritual administrations of the gospel in its doctrine, worship, and discipline, unto the edification of the church. It is not easy, nay, it may be unto us, it is not possible to enumerate in particular all the various gifts which the Holy Ghost endows the ministers of the gospel withal. But whereas all the concerns of the church may be referred unto these three heads, of doctrine, worship, and rule, we may inquire what are the principal spiritual gifts of the Holy Ghost with respect unto them distinctly.

The first great duty of the ministry with reference unto the church is, the dispensation of the doctrine of the gospel unto it, for its edification. As this is the duty of the church continually to attend unto, Acts ii. 42. so it is the principal work of the ministry, the foundation of all other duties, which the apostles themselves gave themselves unto in an especial manner ; Acts vi. 4. Hence is it given in charge unto all ministers of the gospel ; Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2. 1 Tim. i. 3. v. 17. iv. 13, 14. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 1—3. For

this is the principal means appointed by Christ for the edification of his church ; that whereby spiritual life is begotten and preserved. Where this work is neglected or carelessly attended unto, there the whole work of the ministry is despised. And with respect unto this ministerial duty, there are three spiritual gifts that the Holy Ghost endoweth men withal, which must be considered.

1. The first is wisdom or knowledge, or understanding in the mysteries of the gospel, the revelation of the mystery of God in Christ, with his mind and will towards us therein. These things may be distinguished, and they seem to be so in the Scripture sometimes. I put them together, as all of them denote that acquaintance with, and comprehension of, the doctrine of the gospel which is indispensably necessary unto them who are called to preach it unto the church. This some imagine an easy matter to be attained ; at least that there is no more, nor the use of any other means required thereunto, than what is necessary to the acquisition of skill in any other art or science. And it were well if some, otherwise concerned in point of duty, would but lay out so much of their strength and time in the obtaining of this knowledge, as they do about other things which will not turn much unto their account. But the cursory perusal of a few books is thought sufficient to make any man wise enough to be a minister. And not a few undertake ordinarily to be teachers of others, who would scarcely be admitted as tolerable disciples in a well ordered church. But there belongeth more unto this wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, than most men are aware of. Were the nature of it duly considered, and withal the necessity of it unto the ministry of the gospel, probably some would not so rush on that work as they do, which they have no provision of ability for the performance of. It is in brief such a comprehension of the scope and end of the Scripture, of the revelation of God therein, such an acquaintance with the systems of particular doctrinal truths, in their rise, tendency, and use, such a habit of mind in judging of spiritual things, and comparing them one with another, such a distinct insight into the springs and course of the mystery of the love, grace, and will of God in Christ, as enables them, in whom it is to declare the counsel of God, to make known the way of life.

of faith and obedience unto others, and to instruct them in their whole duty to God and man thereon. This the apostle calls his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which he manifested in his writings; Eph. iii. 4. For as the gospel, the dispensation and declaration whereof is committed unto the ministers of the church, is the 'wisdom of God in a mystery;' 1 Cor. ii. 7. so their principal duty is to become so wise and understanding in that mystery, as that they may be able to declare it unto others, without which they have no ministry committed unto them by Jesus Christ. See Eph. i. 9. iii. 3. 6. 19. Col. iv. 3. The sole inquiry is, whence we may have this wisdom, seeing it is abundantly evident that we have it not of ourselves? That in general it is from God, that it is to be asked of him, the Scripture every where declares. See Col. i. 9. ii. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 7. James i. 5. 1 John v. 20. And in particular it is plainly affirmed to be the especial gift of the Holy Ghost. He gives the 'word of wisdom;' 1 Cor. xii. 8. which place hath been opened before. And it is the first ministerial gift that he bestows on any. Where this is not in some measure, to look for a ministry is to look for the living among the dead. And they will deceive their own souls in the end, as they do those of others in the meantime, who on any other grounds do undertake to be preachers of the gospel. But I shall not here divert unto the full description of this spiritual gift, because I have discoursed concerning it elsewhere.

2. With respect unto the doctrine of the gospel, there is required unto the ministry of the church, skill to divide the word aright, which is also a peculiar gift of the Holy Ghost; 2 Tim. ii. 15. 'Study to approve thyself unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' Both the former clauses depend on the latter. If a minister would be accepted with God in his work, if he would be found at the last day a workman that needs not to be ashamed, that is, such a builder of the house of God, as whose work is meet, proper, and useful, he must take care to divide the word of truth, which is committed unto his dispensation, aright, or in a due manner. Ministers are stewards in the house of God, and dispensers of the mysteries thereof. And, therefore, it is required of them, that they give unto all the servants that are in the house,

or do belong unto it, a meet portion according unto their wants, occasions, and services, suitable unto the will and wisdom of their Lord and Master; Luke xii. 42, 43. ‘Who is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?’ For this giving of provision, and a portion of meat unto the household of Christ, consists principally in the right dividing and distribution of the word of truth. It is the taking out from those great stores of it in the Scripture, and as it were cutting off a portion suitable unto the various conditions of those in the family. Herein consists the principal skill of a scribe furnished for the kingdom of heaven, with the wisdom before described. And without this, a common course of dispensing or preaching the word, without differencing of persons and truths, however it may be gilded over with a flourish of words and oratory, is shameful work in the house of God. Now unto this skill, sundry things are required. (1.) A sound judgment in general concerning the state and condition of those unto whom any one is so dispensing the word. It is the duty of a shepherd to know the state of his flock; and unless he do so, he will never feed them profitably. He must know whether they are babes, or young men, or old; whether they need milk or strong meat; whether they are skilful or unskilful in the word of righteousness; whether they have their senses exercised to discern good and evil, or not; or whether their hearers are mixed with all these sorts. Whether in the judgment of charity they are converted unto God, or are yet in an unregenerate condition. What probably are their principal temptations, their hinderances, and furtherances; what is their growth or decay in religion? He that is not able to make a competent judgment concerning these things, and the other circumstances of the flock, so as to be steered thereby in his work, will never evidence himself to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. (2.) An acquaintance with the ways and methods of the work of God’s grace on the minds and hearts of men, that he may pursue and comply with its design in the ministry of the word. Nothing is by many more despised, than an understanding hereof; yet is nothing more necessary to the work of the ministry. The word of the gospel as preached is *vehiculum*

gratiæ, and ought to be ordered so as it may comply with its design in its whole work on the souls of men. He, therefore, who is unacquainted with the ordinary methods of the operation of grace, fights uncertainly in his preaching of the word like a man beating of the air. It is true, God can, and often doth, direct a word of truth, spoken as it were at random, unto a proper effect of grace, on some or other, as it was when the man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness. But ordinarily a man is not like to hit a joint, who knows not how to take his aim. (3.) An acquaintance with the nature of temptation, with the especial hinderances of faith and obedience, which may befall those unto whom the word is dispensed, is in like manner required hereunto. Many things might be added on this head, seeing a principal part of ministerial skill doth consist herein. (4.) A right understanding of the nature of spiritual diseases, distempers, and sicknesses, with their proper cures and remedies, belongeth hereunto. For the want hereof the hearts of the wicked are oftentimes made glad in the preaching of the word, and those of the righteous filled with sorrow; the hands of sinners are strengthened, and those who are looking towards God are discouraged or turned out of the way. And where men either know not these things, or do not, or cannot apply themselves skilfully to distribute the word according to this variety of occasion, they cannot give the household its portion of meat in season. And he that wants this spiritual gift, will never divide the word aright unto its proper ends; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. And it is lamentable to consider what shameful work is made for want hereof in the preaching of some men; yea, how the whole gift is lost, as to its power, use, and benefit.

3. The gift of utterance also belongeth unto this part of the ministerial duty in the dispensation of the doctrine of the gospel. This is particularly reckoned by the apostle among the gifts of the Spirit; 1 Cor. i. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 5. And he desires the prayers of the church that the gift 'may abide with himself, and abound in him;' Eph. vi. 19. And he there declares, that the nature of it consists in the opening of the 'mouth boldly to make known the mysteries of the gospel;' as also Col. iv. 3. Now this utterance doth not consist in

a natural volubility of speech, which, taken alone by itself, is so far from being a gift of the Spirit, or a thing to be earnestly prayed for, as that it is usually a snare to them that have it, and a trouble to them that hear them. Nor doth it consist in a rhetorical ability to set off discourses with a flourish of words, be they never so plausible or enticing; much less in a bold corrupting of the ordinance of preaching by a foolish affectation of words in supposed elegancies of speech, quaint expressions, and the like effects of wit, that is fancy and vanity. But four things do concur hereunto. (1.) Παρρησία, or *dicendi libertas*. The word we translate utterance is *λογος*, that is speech. But that not speech in general, but a certain kind of speech is intended, is evident from the places mentioned, and the application of them. And it is such a speech as is elsewhere called *παρρησία*, that is, a freedom and liberty in the declaration of the truth conceived. This a man hath when he is not, from any internal defect, or from any outward consideration, straitened in the declaration of those things which he ought to speak. This frame and ability the apostle expresseth in himself; 2 Cor. vi. 11. ‘O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.’ A free enlarged spirit, attended with an ability of speech suited unto the matter in hand, with its occasions, belong to this gift. (2.) So also doth boldness and holy confidence. So we often render *παρρησία*, wherein this utterance doth much consist. When the Spirit of God in the midst of difficulties, oppositions, and discouragements, strengtheneth the minds of ministers, so as that they are not terrified with any amazement, but discharge their work freely, as considering whose word and message it is that they do deliver, belongs to this gift of utterance. (3.) So also doth gravity in expression, becoming the sacred majesty of Christ and his truths in the delivery of them. He that speaks, is to speak as the oracles of God; 1 Pet. iv. 11. That is, not only as to truth, preaching the word of God and nothing else, but doing it with that gravity and soundness of speech, which becomes them who speak the oracles of God. For as we are to deliver sound doctrine and nothing else, Tit. i. 9. so we are to use sound speech that cannot be condemned; Tit. ii. 7, 8. (4.) Hereunto also belongs that authority which accompanieth the delivery of the

word when preached in demonstration of these spiritual abilities. For all these things are necessary, that the hearers may receive the word, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the word of God.

These are the principal spiritual gifts wherewith the Holy Ghost endows the ministers of the church, with respect unto the effectual dispensation of the word, or the doctrine of the gospel, which is committed unto them. And where they are communicated in any such degree as is necessary unto the due discharge of that office, they will evidence themselves to the consciences of them that do believe. The dispensation of the word by virtue of them, though under great variety from the various degrees wherein they are communicated, and the different natural abilities of them that do receive them, will be sufficiently distinguished and remote from that empty, wordy, sapless way of discoursing spiritual things, which is the mere effect of the wit, fancy, invention, and projection of men destitute of the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the mysteries of the gospel.

The second head of duties belonging unto the ministerial office, respects the worship of God. By the worship of God, here I understand only that especial part thereof, whereof himself is the immediate object. For, absolutely the preaching and hearing of the word is a part of sacred worship, as that wherein we act the obedience of faith unto the commands of God, and submit ourselves unto his institution. And, indeed, as unto those that hear, it is God declaring himself by his word, that is the immediate object of their worship. But the dispensation of the word which we have considered, is the acting of men upon the authority and command of God towards others. But as was said, by that we inquire into, I intend that alone whereof God himself was the immediate object. Such are all the remaining offices and duties of the church, those only excepted which belong to its rule. And this worship hath various acts, according to the variety of Christ's institutions and the church's occasions. Yet as to the manner of its performance, it is comprised in prayer. For by prayer we understand all confessions, supplications, thanksgivings, and praises, that are made unto God in the church, whether absolutely, or in the

administration of other ordinances, as the sacraments. Wherefore, in this duty, as comprehensive of all the sacred offices of public worship, as the glory of God is greatly concerned, so it is the principal act of obedience in the church. This then, as to the performance of it, depends either on the natural abilities of men, or on the aids and operation of the Holy Ghost. By the natural abilities of men, I understand not only what they are able of themselves in every instance to perform; but also whatever assistance they may make use of, either of their own finding out, or of others. And by the aids of the Holy Ghost I intend an especial spiritual gift bestowed on men to this purpose. Now, to suppose that the whole duty of the church herein should consist in the actings of men in their own strength and power, without any especial assistance of the Holy Spirit, is to exclude the consideration of him from those things, with respect whereunto he is principally promised by our Lord Jesus Christ. But what concerneth this gift of the Holy Ghost hath been at large handled by itself already, and must not here be again insisted on: taking for granted what is therein sufficiently confirmed, I shall only add, that those who have not received this gift, are utterly unfit to undertake the office of the ministry, wherein it is their duty to go before the church in the administration of all ordinances by virtue of these abilities. In things civil or secular, it would be esteemed an intolerable solecism to call and choose a man to the discharge of an office or duty, whose execution depended solely on such a peculiar faculty or skill, as he who is so called hath no interest in, or acquaintance with: and it will one day appear to be so also in things sacred and religious, yea, much more.

Thirdly, The rule of the church belongeth unto the ministers of it. God hath established rule in the church; Rom. xii. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 28. 1 Tim. v. 17. 1 Thess. v. 12. Heb. xiii. 17. I dispute not now of what sort this ministry is, nor whether the rule belong unto one sort alone. It is enough unto my present design, that it is committed by Christ unto the ministers of the church, which are its guides, rulers, and overseers. Nor shall I at present inquire into the particular powers, acts, and duties, of this rule. I have done it elsewhere. I am only now to consider it so far as

its exercise requireth an especial ministerial gift to be communicated by the Holy Ghost. And in order thereunto the things ensuing must be premised : 1. That this rule is spiritual, and hath nothing in common with the administration of the powers of the world. It hath, I say, no agreement with secular power and its exercise, unless it be in some natural circumstances that inseparably attend rulers and ruled in any kind. It belongs unto the kingdom of Christ, and the administration of it, which are not of this world. And as this is well pleaded by some against those who would erect a kingdom for him in the world, and, as far as I can understand, of this world, framed in their own imaginations unto a fancied interest of their own ; so it is as pleadable against them who pretend to exercise the rule and power of his present kingdom after the manner of the potestative administrations of the world. When our Saviour forbade all rule unto his disciples after the manner of the Gentiles, who then possessed all sovereign power in the world, and told them, that it should not be so with them, that some should be great and exercise dominion over others, but that they should serve one another in love, the greatest condescension unto service being required of them who are otherwise most eminent ; he did not intend to take from them, or divest them of, that spiritual power and authority in the government of the church which he intended to commit unto them. His design, therefore, was to declare, what that authority was not, and how it should not be exercised. A lordly or despotical power it was not to be, nor was it to be exercised by penal laws, courts, and coercive jurisdiction, which was the way of the administration of all power among the Gentiles. And if that kind of power and rule in the church, which is for the most part exercised in the world, be not forbidden by our Saviour, no man living can tell what is so. For as to meekness, moderation, patience, equity, righteousness, they were more easy to be found in the legal administrations of power among the Gentiles, than in those used in many churches. But such a rule is signified unto them, the authority whereof, from whence it proceedeth, was spiritual ; its object the minds and souls of men only, and the way of whose administration was to consist in a humble, holy, spiritual application of the word of God,

or rules of the gospel unto them. 2. The end of this rule is merely and solely the edification of the church. All the power that the apostles themselves had, either in or over the church, was but unto their edification; 2 Cor. x. 8. And the edification of the church consists in the increase of faith and obedience in all the members thereof, in the subduing and mortifying of sin, in fruitfulness in good works, in the confirmation and consolation of them that stand, in the raising up them that are fallen, and the recovery of them that wander, in the growth and flourishing of mutual love and peace; and whatever rule is exercised in the church unto any other end, is foreign to the gospel, and tends only to the destruction of the church itself. 3. In the way and manner of the administration of this rule and government, two things may be considered: (1.) What is internal in the qualifications of the minds of them by whom it is to be exercised. Such are wisdom, diligence, love, meekness, patience, and the like evangelical endowments. (2.) What is external, or what is the outward rule of it, and this is the word and law of Christ alone, as we have elsewhere declared.

From these things it may appear what is the nature, in general, of that skill in the rule of the church, which we assert to be a peculiar gift of the Holy Ghost. If it were only an ability or skill in the canon or civil law, or rules of men; if only an acquaintance with the nature and course of some courts proceeding litigiously by citations, processes, legal pleadings, issuing in pecuniary mulcts, outward coercions, or imprisonments; I should willingly acknowledge that there is no peculiar gift of the Spirit of God required thereunto. But the nature of it being as we have declared, it is impossible it should be exercised aright without especial assistance of the Holy Ghost. Is any man of himself sufficient for these things? Will any man undertake of himself to know the mind of Christ in all the occasions of the church, and to administer the power of Christ in them and about them? Wherefore the apostle in many places teacheth that wisdom, skill, and understanding to administer the authority of Christ in the church unto its edification with faithfulness and diligence, are an especial gift of the Holy Ghost; Rom. xii. 6. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 28. It is the Holy Ghost which makes the elders of the church its bishops or overseers, by calling

them to their office; Acts xx. 28. And what he calls any man unto, that he furnisheth him with abilities for the discharge of. And so have we given a brief account of these ordinary gifts which the Holy Ghost communicates unto the constant ministry of the church, and will do so unto the consummation of all things; having moreover in our passage manifested the dependance of the ministry on this work of his; so that we need no addition of pains to demonstrate, that where he goeth not before in the communication of them, no outward order, call or constitution is sufficient to make any one a minister of the gospel.

There are gifts which respect duties only. Such are those which the Holy Ghost continues to communicate unto all the members of the church in a great variety of degrees, according to the places and conditions which they are in, unto their own and the church's edification. There is no need that we should insist upon them in particular, seeing they are of the same nature with them which are continued unto the ministers of the church, who are required to excel in them, so as to be able to go before the whole church in their exercise. The Spirit of the gospel was promised by Christ unto all his disciples, unto all believers, unto the whole church, and not unto the guides of it only. To them he is so in an especial manner, with respect unto their office, power, and duty, but not absolutely or only. As he is the Spirit of grace, he quickens, animates, and unites, the whole body of the church, and all the members of it, in and unto Christ Jesus; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. And as he is the administrator of all supernatural gifts, he furnisheth the whole body and all its members with spiritual abilities unto its edification; Eph. iv. 15, 16. Col. ii. 19. And without them, in some measure or degree ordinarily, we are not able to discharge our duty unto the glory of God. For,

1. These gifts are a great means and help to excite and exercise grace itself, without which it will be lifeless, and apt to decay. Men grow in grace by the due exercise of their own gifts in duties. Wherefore, every individual person on his own account doth stand in need of them with respect unto the exercise and improvement of grace; Zech. xii. 10. 2. Most men have, it may be, such duties incumbent on them with respect unto others, as they cannot dis-

charge aright without the especial aid of the Spirit of God in this kind. So is it with all them who have families to take care of and provide for. For ordinarily they are bound to instruct their children and servants in the knowledge of the Lord, and to go before them in that worship which God requires of them, as Abraham did, the ‘father of the faithful.’ And hereunto some spiritual abilities are requisite: for none can teach others more than they know themselves, nor perform spiritual worship without some spiritual gifts, unless they will betake themselves unto such shifts as we have before on good grounds rejected. 3. Every member of a church in order according to the mind of Christ, possesseth some place, use, and office, in the body, which it cannot fill up unto the benefit and ornament of the whole, without some spiritual gift. These places are various, some of greater use than others, and of more necessity unto the edification of the church, but all are useful in their kind. This our apostle disputes at large, 1 Cor. xii. 12—20, &c. All believers in due order do become one body by the participation of the same Spirit, and union unto the same head. Those who do not so partake of the one Spirit, who are not united unto the head, do not properly belong to the body, whatever place they seem to hold therein. Of those that do so, some are as it were an eye, some as a hand, and some as a foot: all these useful in their several places, and needful unto one another. None of them is so highly exalted as to have the least occasion of being lifted up, as though he had no need of the rest; for the Spirit distributeth unto every one severally as he will, not all unto any one, save only unto the head, our Lord Jesus, from whom we all receive grace according to the measure of his gift. Nor is any so depressed or useless as to say, it is not of the body, nor that the body hath no need of it. But every one in his place and station concurs to the unity, strength, beauty, and growth, of the body, which things our apostle disputes at large in the place mentioned. 4. Hereby are supplies communicated unto the whole from the head; Eph. iv. 15, 16. Col. ii. 19. It is of the body, that is, of the church, under the conduct of its officers, that the apostle discourseth in those places. And the duty of the whole it is to speak the truth in love, every one in his several place and station.

And herein God hath so ordered the union of the whole church in itself, unto and in dependance on its head, as that through and by not only the supply of every joint, which may express either the officers, or more eminent members of it; but the effectual working of every part, in the exercise of the graces and gifts of the Spirit, doth impart to the whole, the body may edify itself, and be increased. Wherefore, 5. the Scripture is express, that the Holy Ghost doth communicate of those gifts unto private believers, and directs them in that duty wherein they are to be exercised; 1 Pet. iv. 10. Every one, that is, every believer, walking in the order and fellowship of the gospel, is to attend unto the discharge of his duty, according as he hath received spiritual ability. So was it in the church of Corinth; 1 Cor. i. 5—7. and in that of the Romans; chap. xv. 14. as they all of them knew that it was their duty to covet the best gifts, which they did with success; 1 Cor. xii. 31. And hereon depend the commands for the exercise of those duties, which in the ability of these gifts received they were to perform. So were they all to admonish one another, to exhort one another, to build up one another in their most holy faith. And it is the loss of those spiritual gifts which hath introduced amongst many an utter neglect of these duties, so as they are scarce heard of among the generality of them that are called Christians. But blessed be God, we have large and full experience of the continuance of this dispensation of the Spirit in the eminent abilities of a multitude of private Christians, however they may be despised by them who know them not. By some, I confess, they have been abused, some have presumed on them beyond the line and measure which they have received; some have been puffed up with them; some have used them disorderly in churches, and to their hurt; some have boasted of what they have not received; all which miscarriages also befel the primitive churches. And I had rather have the order, rule, spirit, and practice, of those churches that were planted by the apostles, with all their troubles and disadvantages, than the carnal peace of others in their open degeneracy from all those things.

II. It remains only that we inquire how men may come unto, or attain a participation of these gifts, whether ministerial or more private. And unto this end we may observe, 1.

That they are not communicated unto any by a sudden *afflatus*, or extraordinary infusion, as were the gifts of miracles and tongues, which were bestowed on the apostles and many of the first converts. That dispensation of the Spirit is long since ceased, and where it is now pretended unto by any, it may justly be suspected as an enthusiastic delusion. For as the end of those gifts which in their own nature exceed the whole power of all our faculties, is ceased, so is their communication, and the manner of it also. Yet this I must say, that the infusion of spiritual light into the mind, which is the foundation of all gifts, as hath been proved, being wrought sometimes suddenly, or in a short season, the concomitancy of gifts in some good measure is oftentimes sudden, with an appearance of something extraordinary, as might be manifested in instances of several sorts. 2. These gifts are not absolutely attainable by our own diligence and endeavours in the use of means, without respect unto the sovereign will and pleasure of the Holy Ghost. Suppose there are such means of the attainment and improvement of them, and that several persons do, with the same measures of natural abilities and diligence, use those means for that end, yet it will not follow that all must be equally partakers of them. They are not the immediate product of our own endeavours, no not as under an ordinary blessing upon them. For they are *χαρίσματα*, arbitrary largesses or gifts, which the Holy Spirit worketh in all persons severally as he will. Hence we see the different events that are among them who are exercised in the same studies and endeavours; some are endued with eminent gifts; some scarce attain unto any that are useful, and some despise them, name and thing. There is, therefore, an immediate operation of the Spirit of God in the collation of these spiritual abilities, which is unaccountable by the measures of natural parts and industry. Yet I say, 3. That ordinarily they are both attained and increased by the due use of means suited thereunto, as grace is also, which none but Pelagians affirm to be absolutely in the power of our own wills. And the naming of these means, shall put an issue unto this discourse.

Among them, in the first place, is required, a due preparation of soul by humility, meekness, and teachableness. The Holy Spirit taketh no delight to impart of his especial

gifts unto proud, self-conceited men, to men vainly puffed up in their own fleshly minds. The same must be said concerning other vicious and depraved habits of mind, by which moreover, they are oft-times expelled and cast out after they have been in some measure received. And in this case I need not mention those by whom all these gifts are despised: it would be a wonder indeed, if they should be made partakers of them, or at least, if they should abide with them.

Secondly, Prayer is a principal means for their attainment. This the apostle directs unto, when he enjoins us earnestly to desire the best gifts. For this desire is to be acted by prayer, and no otherwise.

Thirdly, Diligence in the things about which these gifts are conversant. Study and meditation on the word of God, by the due use of means for the attaining a right understanding of his mind and will therein, is that which I intend. For in this course, conscientiously attended unto, it is, that for the most part the Holy Spirit comes in, and joins his aid and assistance for furnishing of the mind with those spiritual endowments.

Fourthly, The growth, increase, and improvement of these gifts depend on their faithful use according as our duty doth require. It is trade alone that increaseth talents, and exercise in a way of duty that improveth gifts. Without this, they will first wither and then perish. And by a neglect hereof are they lost every day, in some partially, in some totally, and in some to a contempt, hatred, and blasphemy of what themselves had received.

Lastly, Men's natural endowments, with elocution, memory, judgment, and the like, improved by reading, learning, and diligent study, do enlarge, set off, and adorn these gifts, where they are received.