



SERMON XII.*

IT is Christ's will that His bairns get their fill and that they grow. Christ never had an hungry house, nor His Father before Him. There is bread and drink in His Father's house: eat and drink: much good may it do you, for ye get it with Christ's good-will, and with His heartsome blessing. Now in the strength of it work a good work to Christ, your Master. He gives His servants meat and drink with a good house in a new city.

Who is this that hath His garments dipped in blood, yea, in red blood? Know ye Him, beloved? But He kens you full well. Come near Him, and stand not afar off. Christ says not, "Look by† Me," but, "Look on Me, Whom you have pierced with your sins." Ye must not turn your shoulder to Him, but set your face toward Him. Love your new Husband well, and let all the old go and play themselves. Rent‡ your contract, that was betwixt you and your hearts' lusts; and now Christ says, you shall have a better life than ever you had in your old husband's time. Provide much plenishing§ against the time ye and He take up house in heaven together. Christ is dressing all the

* Properly, this should be called, Notes of an Address to a Scots congregation in London at the Communion table. It was given about the year 1643, during the sitting of the Westminster Assembly.

† Look past Me.

‡ Tear in pieces.

§ Furniture.

chambers and the hall for you up in your Father's house. Make away as fast as ye can. Take home your writs with you: Christ hath subscribed them. Take home the King's pardon with you, written with your Lord's own heart-blood, and the King's great seal at it: and stamp upon the seal Christ's arms, even the slain Son of God, hanging upon the Cross, subscribing a large dispensation to you.

Now remember before witnesses ye are His. Have ye not reason to think that Christ is heartsome in His own house? He has made His wife a great feast to-day. Lie not down to sleep after your meat. Christ has fed you to run a race, even a race to heaven. Awake therefore! In the Word and Sacraments Christ now takes you into the chariot with Himself, and draws your hearts after Him. Be Satan's and the world's footmen no longer, for it is a wearisome life. But ride with Christ in His chariot, for it is all paved with love. The bottom of it is the love of slain Christ: ye must sit there upon love. Love is a soft cushion: but the devil and the world make you sweat at the sore work of sin, and run upon your own feet too. But it is better to be Christ's horsemen and ride, than to be Satan's trogged* footmen, and to travel upon clay. Christ says, He has washen you to-day; sin no more. Keep yourselves clean, go not to Satan's sooty houses; but take you to your Husband, The Fairest among ten thousand, that your lovely Husband may make your robes clean in the blood of the Lamb. Ye are going into a clean heaven and an undefiled city; take not filthy clayey hands, and clatty† feet with you. What say ye of your new Husband? Please‡ ye your new Husband well? May not His

* Fatigued. † Dirty. ‡ Perhaps it should be, "Pleases you?"

servants say in His name that ye are heartily welcome to Him? And may they not say in your name that He is heartily welcome to you? A plain answer? Ye cannot well want an half-marrow;* no soul liveth well a single life. Now, seeing ye must marry, marry Christ. Ye will never get a better Husband. Take Him, and His Father's blessing. Be holy, and get a good name, and Christ will not want you. It is many a day since ye were invited to this banquet, why should you bide from it? Ye are come not uncalled. Christ both sitteth and eateth with you, and standeth and serveth you. Christ both said the grace, and blessed the meat, and says it to-day, and prays, "My Father's blessing be on the banquet." Your Father cries, "Divorce, divorce all other lovers; go and agree with Christ, your Cautioner,† and purchase a discharge if ye can." It is better holding than drawing; better to say, "Here He is," than, "Here He was;" and, "Slippery-fingered‡ I held Him, and would not let Him go." Rive§ all His clothes, and He will not be angry at you. In death, He held a strait grip of you. Hell, devils, the wrath of God, the curse of the law, could not all loose His grips of you. Christ got a claught|| of you in the water, and He brought all with Him. Look up by faith to Christ. Ye could never have been set up by angels. May not Christ say, The law took such a cleek¶ of Me, and drew Me here amongst thieves, for your cause? And was not that strong love, that humble Christ cared not what they did to Him, so being He might get you?

In that night wherein our Lord was betrayed, He ordained the Supper for you upon His death-bed. He

* Companion. † Surety. ‡ I, who am so slippery.
§ Rend. || Seizure. ¶ Seizure.

made His Testament, and left it in legacy to you. In death He had more mind of you, His wife, than He had of Himself. In the garden, on the cross, in the grave, His silly lost sheep was aye in His mind. Love has a brave memory, and cannot forget. He has graven you upon the palms of His hands; and when He looks to His hands and says, "My sheep I cannot forget. Yea, in my death, *My Sister, My Spouse*, was aye in my mind. She took my night's sleep from Me, that night I was sweating in the garden for her."

When Christ was dead, and sleeping on the cross, and His side broken with a spear, until blood and water came out, the Lord was forming a wife for the second Adam, your Husband. In death He was doing and working what no wedded man could do, even blessing and embracing His beloved. Come near, and kiss dead Jesus. O but slain Christ has a sweet smell, even when He is dead! What think ye of the smell of His love? What think ye of itself? What of these feet, that went up and down the world to seek His Father's lost sheep, pierced with nails? He that healed the diseases of the lame and the blind, He is now blind Himself. The eyes that were oft lift up to heaven unto God in prayer, wearied with tears? His head pierced with thorns? The face that is fairer than the sun, the dearest beloved, is now all maimed with blood, and the hair pulled out of His cheeks! Could love be painted then? Christ was pained, and Christ panted on the cross; so pained mercy and justice set* God in His loveliness towards man. Who comes with outstretched arms to meet and embrace Him? When Christ was black and blaef† upon the cross, and pale with death, He was then fairest and

* Turned God.

† Blue.

pleasantest ; God, the Father, was reconciled, and looked sweetly upon slain Christ. And then mercy and peace were proclaimed to all believing sinners. The law and justice gloomed* still, until Christ's life was put forth ; and now they smile upon believers, and say, "Come into heaven, pulled open by Christ's holy arm from the cross, when it was shut by the strong iron bar that held to† the door of heaven, until He hurt His arm, and took it by." And now Christ says, "Be not afraid, come away." But ye will say, "We are weak, we dow‡ not put up§ Christ's door." "Well then," says Christ, "I am strong enough for you ; and now seeing it is already open, get up quickly, and enter into it, and there abide." Ye are Christ's brethren and sisters. When ye were under hell and condemnation, He pleaded the law for you. It was no bought plea|| to His hand that Christ snapped¶ on when He fought with your enemies. Christ is "*flesh of your flesh, and bone of your bone.*" He tired Himself in paying the law, and in getting the inheritance for you ; and, God be thanked, He won the plea, but it was great charges to Him. Take to you now free purchased redemption, your Brother's new forgiveness of sins, peace, joy, and a kingdom. And more, take Him to be your Lord, and much good may you have of your new Master, Jesus Christ.

Of all wonders that ever were read in a printed book this is the first : Christ made an exchange ; Christ would coss** lives with you, and make a niffer.†† He never beguiled you, for He took shame, and gave you glory. He took the curse, and gave you the blessing,

* Frowned all along. † Kept fast. ‡ Dare. § Open.

|| No fictitious quarrel. ¶ Stumbled.

** Barter ; often so used in his sermon on Song ii. 14.

†† Exchange.

He took death, and gave you life. The fairest Candle that ever was lighted is blown out. The Head of the Church is dead, and the Lord of Life is laid down in the grave! No wonder that the sun, that did shew^o part of his labours, be shut down; because the great Sun of Righteousness was shut down in the grave, and a stone laid above Him. Good right have ye to Christ, accept of His niffer, and change with Him, and take His best blessing and purchased redemption.

What a sight is our Lord Jesus going out of the gates of Jerusalem, and His cross upon His back! He went like to fall under it, He was so weak in body and weary in soul, when He went to the top of Mount Calvary. And all the time He saw black death before Him, and a curse. He was even then bearing God's curse upon His back, and that was heavier than the cross. Look on Him, and follow Him, He will not bid you lend Him a lift.† Give Him obedience, and give Him love, for it is better to Him than if you had been crucified for Him. Look upon Him, and look for Him. "*Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.*" Christ this day lets you see all the footsteps in your way to heaven. In His death and blood He made a new way to heaven. He went in an hard way Himself, through God's curse, and painful sufferings. He bids you not follow Him that way, but believe in Him, and love one another. And stick fast by Christ. The old gate‡ ye dought§ never have gone; but Christ's market-gate is a sweet and easy way. If ye will bear Christ's yoke, and so love Him, ye and He will come in each others' hands together to heaven. And ye will be the welcomer that He is with you—"A little

* Perhaps, "Share," i. e. suffer along with Him.

† Offer any help.

‡ Way.

§ Could.

while," says Christ, "*and I will come again.*" Take you here Christ's flesh in token that He will come again to you, and marry you to Himself for ever. Your new Husband hath said, within a little while He will come again and see you; and see that ye keep yourselves for Him; abide in Him. Christ says to you, "My dearest ones, weary not, fight on, I shall be at you your fray-hour.* Be true to Me, as I was aye true to you."

Indeed, when our salvation was in Christ's hand, it was between the tyning† and winning. But our Lord Jesus played us not a slip, He was aye to be lippeded‡ in. What think ye of Christ? Is not He fair, and lovely? Has not His wife good cause to say, "He is altogether lovely?" (Cant. v. 16). His breast is all made of love. If ye had but Him once in your arms, ye would thrust Him into your heart; yea, and beyond it, if it could be gotten done. Christ took a hearty grip of you upon the cross; He let you not slip out of His fingers again.

"*Many waters cannot quench love.*"—Christ was the Lamb, roasted with fire for you. He suffered hot fire for you. He got a toast and a heat that made Him sweat blood, but yet His soul was not burnt away with love. Oh! Christ would fain have you; are ye not burning with love to be at Him? Dow ye§ find in your hearts to want Him? Oh! thrice sweet death—to die of love for Him that died of love for you! Christ in the garden, on the cross, in the grave, under the pursuing of His Father's wrath and anger, speired||, aye for His beloved, His Kirk. He sought you in all these places, and He sought aye till He found you.

* Your hour of battle; "fray" has this sense in Gawin Douglas.

† Losing. ‡ To be trusted. § Are ye able to? || Asked.

He would not want His errand for the seeking. He went triumphing and rejoicing, and His wife in His hand. Christ rueth* nothing that He has done for you. He thinks it all well wared.†

Christ loves you better than His life, for He gave away His life to get your love. He spared neither cost nor expense. Christ, who was without sin, gave Himself a ransom for you, sinners. His Father laid a cross on Him. He bought you with His Father's curse! Was not that a dear wife to Him? Then let Christ be dear to you. Pilate scourged Christ, and brought Him forth to the people, to see if they would rue‡ on Him when they saw His bloody shoulders. They might have said, "Poor Man, thou art ill enough handled else, for aught that thou hast done!" But these hell's hounds would have His heart's blood, and His life, or nothing. And your Husband said, "*Amen*," to it, for the love He did bear to you, and for all that God had done to Him—"Be it so, *Amen, Father.*"

What a sight was innocent and harmless Jesus when He stood before the Governor, and had not one word to say! They laid thieves' bands on our Saviour's hands, that had never stolen, that had never shed blood. Bands bound His hands, but love, mercy, and grace bound His tender heart with stronger bands and cords, to loose us out of the bands of sin. He cried in the Spirit, "Father, bind Me, and loose them; slay Me, and save them. All their ill be upon Me." *So be it, dear Jesus!*

Christ cried with a loud voice in death, "*Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit.*" Then our Lord

* Repents.

† Ventured; spent.

‡ Repent of their treatment of Him.

died ; because it was His will. Death could not bind Him, but love to His wife bound Him. Love is stronger than death ; nay, love was as strong as Christ. The law was weak now, for Christ satisfied it ; and now it has no power over you. Ye are *in Christ* ; and He is a better Master than the law. Change not with any Master again. Follow Him all the way to heaven. Christ's new love got a wissil* in His blessed manhood.

How do ye since ye married Christ last ? Tell your mind of Christ. Let faith speak, let love speak of slain Christ Jesus ; of His kissing you. Ye are now at Christ's pierced side ; get heaven and mercy when Christ has the cross on His back.

Was not Christ's love-tocher† good enough. O ! what is sewed‡ and covered up in Christ's love ! Come, and press His love, and get heaven and glory out of it. Live on His love, and you are wholly fed. Lie on His love, and that is a sweet bed. Ride on His love, and it shall carry you through hell and death, and every evil way. That which Christ has dear bought, He will not want. Ye are sold over to a Lord that will not want you, but will have you. Make no merchandise with any other. He rues not : why should ye rue ?

Mount Calvary, since God laid the first stone of it, did never bear such a weight as when the Lord of Glory was hanging upon a tree there—O ! it was made a fair tree when such an Apple grew on it ! It was a green orchard ! It was our summer, but death's winter ! Darkness was in all Judea when our Lord suffered. And why ? Because the Candle that lighted the sun and the moon was blown out. The God-

* Wistle, or wissil, means "Exchange"—a Dutch word.

† Marriage dowry.

‡ Shewed, in some copies.

head was eclipsed ; and the world's eye was put out. He took away the sun with Him, as it were, to another world, when He that was the world's sun was put out. When He went out of the earth, the sun would not stay behind Him. Sun, what ails thee? "I have not will to shine when my Lord is going to another world." As if the sun had said to Jesus, "Lord, if Thou be going to another world, take me with You." The dead come out of the grave to welcome Christ's death. Life itself was coming to the grave, and therefore the graves opened, the dead lived ; the bairns sprang and started in their mother's belly. Why? Because the Lord of Life was coming to the grave. The dead wondered, to see Life coming down among them. He went before-hand, to sponge* death and corruption for you.

Jesus cried with a loud voice, with such a shout as never before went to heaven. The Son, crying to the Father, shouting with tears and strong cries, "Father, Father, God's mercy!" O what a cry would all believers have made in hell, if Christ had not cried. Ye had been always crying. But O what a fray† was there! God weeping, God sobbing under the water! Never was there such a fray in heaven, and earth, either before, or shall be after. Angels might have quaked, if they be capable of such passion. They might have said, "Alas! What ails our dear Lord and Master to cry so hideously?" Christ worried‡ on a piece of tree! He who takes up the isles of the sea as a little thing ; yea, He who can take up heaven and earth with a touch of His little finger! He who can weigh the mountains in a balance! O what a set§ was it to

* Wipe out completely. † Conflict. ‡ Harassed and torn.
 § Onset.

Christ's back and His fillets!^o No wonder; there was more than a tree upon His back. The curse of the law of God was above the tree; and that was heavier than ten thousand mountains of iron. Ah! A wonder His back brake not in twa, and all His bones were not crushed with it!

Christ cries, "*I thirst,*"

"*I thirst.*"—No wonder; there was a fire in His soul. Such a furnace, that would have dried up the sea, and all the waters of it. Cast a coal of God's wrath in the midst of the sea, and it would soon suck it all up if there were as much water as might lie betwixt the bottom of the sea, and the heaven of heavens: between the east point of heaven, and the west point of heaven. The pure unmixed wrath of God would drink it all dry in a moment. All the wells in the earth set to Christ's mouth could not have quenched His thirst. A drink of His Father's well was that which cooled His burnt and dried soul. Christ cried, "*My soul is heavy unto death.* Sorrow is like to kill Me! Fear and horror is like to break My heart!" "What, dear Lord Jesus, art Thou ruing the voyage? Wouldst Thou cast Thy bargain?" "No, no, but it is a bargain of sorrow to Me. It's a sad cup." O! I see an ugly sight! I see the Lord covered with wrath! I see a fire, greater than if you put all the fires in hell in one! And the Lord has made Me, poor Me, greeting,† weak Me, His contrary party.‡ The Lord is running upon Me like a giant. My martyrs and My servants sing and rejoice at the gibbet and fire; but I weep, I lie sad and dreary, mine alone§—Why? Because My Lord is away.

* "Fillets," his thighs or loins.
Has dealt with me as an enemy.

† Weeping me.
‡ I being all alone.

O wells! O lochs! O running streams! Where were you all when my Lord could not get a drink? Oh fie on all Jerusalem! For there was wine enough in Jerusalem, and yet their King, Jesus, is burnt like a keel-stick.* O wells, what ails you at your Lord Jesus? The wells and lochs answer, "Alas! We dare not know Him; the Lord hath laid a fence† upon us; we are arrested;‡ we dare not serve our Master." Is there any cooling in all Judea? Or is there any room? Yea, there are tables full of vomit; but our Lord was forced to take a good-night of the creature, with a nay-say.§ Oh! to hear the wells say, "We will give Herod and Pilate a drink, but we will give Christ none." Yea, give me leave to say there is none on earth brewen for Christ; nothing but a drink of gall and vinegar! The wells say, "We will give oxen and horses drink; but never a drop for the Lord of glory." For all His service done at Jerusalem; for all His good preaching; for all His glorious miracles—not so much as a drop of cold water! Fie on you, famous Jerusalem! Is your stipend this? Is this your reward to your great High Priest? No, not so much as the beggar's courtesy, a drink of cold water, to your dear Redeemer, Jesus! But by this, Christ has bought drink for all believers.

Jesus "*gave up the ghost.*"

O Life! wouldst thou bear that blessed Body no longer company? O Life of Life! wouldst thou be death's taken prisoner? Oh! to see that blessed Head fall to the one side! Oh! to see Life wanting life! To see Life lying dead! To see that blessed mouth silent! To see that fair corpse rolled in linen, and

* Cabbage stock.

† Authoritatively forbidden.

‡ Stopped by warrant.

§ Denial.

laid in a tomb! Oh! to see sweet Jesus, that blessed Body in Joseph's arms! Come hither, come hither, believers, and see a sight that ye never saw the like of! Oh, what would the disciples say, but that, "We are beguiled men! We thought that He should have restored the kingdom to Israel; and now He is gone away; and now He is dead, that raised Lazarus from the grave." Oh, angels would think "Our Master is dead." Meikle* scant of life in the world (might one say), before He should have died for want! The whole guard about Christ might say, "Oh what evil hath He done?" O sun! why wouldest not thou lend Him light? He never angered thee, but gave thee light! O floods, O rivers, O running streams! what has thus angered you at your Creator, that ye would not send your Lord a drink? O bread! why art thou gall to Him? O drink! why to Him vinegar? O worldly pomp and glory, what ails you at Him—that He is so ashamed? O Life, where goest thou? Why leavest thou the Lord of Life! O joys! why would ye not cheer Him? O disciples, why left ye Him, and forsook Him? O Father, what ails Thee at Thy dear and only Son? O what evil way went these feet, that they are pierced? What evil have these hands done that they are pierced? O what evil, and what vanity did these eyes behold, that death has closed them? O what sin hath that fair face done, that it is spitted on? O what did these hands steal, that they are bound? O what evil has that blessed Head done, that it is crowned with thorns?

* Much scarcity of life.