

A CHRISTIAN'S PORTION;

OR,

THE CHRISTIAN'S CHARTER.

A CHRISTIAN'S PORTION; OR, THE CHRISTIAN'S CHARTER.

NOTE.

'The Christian's Portion' was published originally in 1637, and forms a tiny volume of 67 pages. It is very imperfect. Its title-page is given below.* This, the *first* edition, was superseded in the following year, by a much 'enlarged' and 'corrected' one, from evidently fuller and more accurate 'notes.' The latter is followed in our reprint. Its title-page will also be found below.† Prefixed to it is Marshall's smaller portrait of Sibbs.

G.

* The

Christians

Portion.

Wherein is unfolded the
unsearchable *Riches* he hath by
his interest in *Christ*. Whom in-
joying hee possesseth all
things else.

By *R. Sibbs* D.D. and Preacher
to the Honorable Society of *Grayes-*
Inne, and Master of *Catherine*
Hall in *Cambridge*.

Published by
T. G. and P. N.

London.

Printed by John Norton
for John Rothwell, and
are to be sold at the Sunne in *Pauls*
Church-yard. 1637.

† The Christians

Portion, or,

The Charter of a

Christian, (so stiled by
the Reverend Author.)

Wherein are laide open
those unsearchable riches and
priviledges, he hath by his inter-
est in *Christ*: whom enjoying,
he possesseth all things else.

By the Reverend Divine
R. Sibbs, D.D. and Preacher
to the Honourable society of
Grays Inne, and Master of
Katherine Hall in *Cambridge*.

Corrected and enlarged.

Published by T. G. and P. N.

Christ is all in all.

L O N D O N .

Printed by *J. O.* for John Rothwell,
and are to be sold at the Sunne in
Pauls Church-yard. 1638.

* * The T. G. and P. N. on both of these title-pages were Dr Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye. Cf. Vol. II., page 3, but for Hanburg read Hanbury.

G.

THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

GOOD READER! didst thou ever yet read over thy own heart and life, and mend in some degree what was amiss in both? If not, what comfort can this treatise afford thee? If so, what comfort can it not? This short discourse lays open a great matter. It is a counterpane of a Christian's charter. The author himself styles it 'The Christian's Charter.'

If thy life be good, thy tenure is large; yea, larger than that of the Corinthians. The apostles, as Paul, Apollos,* and Cephas were theirs; so they are thine. And besides them, all that have succeeded them, the faithful ministers of the gospel, and all their studies and writings. The reverend author of this treatise is thine, and this book is thine; thine to shew thee how much is thine. Let me be thine also to commend this work to thee, and to pray for thee, that as the Lord opened the eyes of Elisha's man to see the mountain full of horses and chariots, and more with them than against them, 2 Kings vi. 17, so he would open thine, to see thy great riches and privileges in Jesus Christ. The want of sight makes us think we want. Post over the two great volumes of heaven and earth, and thou shalt find thyself wealthy.

Man hath this excellency above all inferior creatures, to know what he is and what he hath above others. The brute beasts are better than plants, but they know it not; and so plants are more excellent than the elements, &c. They have worth, but understand it not. Man hath this added to his dignity, to know it. And this is given him, as a schoolman saith, that he may rejoice in that he hath, and him that gave it (*a*). The sun rejoices not in its own beauty, because it knows it not. As there is *ignoti nulla cupido*, so *nulla delectatio*. We can as little delight in what we know not, as desire it.

He therefore must needs be rich that hath the 'blood of Christ,' which purchased the world. When all losses, either in goods or children, befall such a man, yet he hath enough besides. When man says all is gone, Christ says all is his. This should make him hold up his head, but not too high. It should make him cheerful, but not withal scornful.

Men are still apt to run into extremes. Tell men of the heinous nature of sin, and for the most part they either stop short and do not bewail it, or step beyond and quite despair. Obstinacy is the low extreme like the earth, hard also and rocky as it is. Despair is as much too high, as it were in the element of fire, which scorches up the spirit. The middle region of air and water, of sighs and tears, is the best. Thus when we treat of a godly man's privileges, some will overween them as fast as others undervalue them. Christian virtues are *in medio* as well as moral; but generally men seem to promise to themselves, as Jonathan to David, 1 Sam. xx. 36, either to shoot short or beyond. Men will either overdo or do nothing. The Mediator teaches us a middle way. St Paul, when the viper hung upon his hand, was thought some notorious malefactor;

* Spelled 'Apollo.'—G.

when he shook it off without harm, was a god, Acts xxviii. 3, *seq.* The first was too bad, and the last too good. The middle had been best: if they had said, he is some good man.

This causes many differences in religion. Men run so far one from another, some to one side and others to the other side of the circumference, that whilst they stand *è diametro oppositi*, they leave the truth behind them in the centre. Some will give too much to this or that ordinance, because others give too little; and some will give too little, because others give too much. It is a spirit of opposition that causes divisions. Two spheres will but touch in a point; and so when men are swollen with pride and anger, they gather up one from another, and resolve not to adhere so much as in one point.

The apostles were given to the church to rejoice in, but neither to despise nor deify; they might neither glory over them, nor glory in them. It is the sin of these times; look it, reader, that it be not thine. Some men fall out with the whole tribe, and thereupon begin to lay aside the principles of sobriety. But should I tell thee what is said by Baronius (*b*) and some others, and what might be said of the honour of that calling, this discourse would rather want an epistle than be one, for the length. Indeed, some have gone too far, and made the priesthood more than it is. A Latin postiller upon that in Exod. xxx. 31, where it is said, 'Thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons,' &c., because it is said, ver. 32, 'upon man's flesh it shall not be poured,' thence infers, in an hyperbolical sense, that priests are angels, not having human flesh. Some kind of postils and glosses are like antique flourishings about a great capital letter, which is not so much adorned by them as darkened. Such is this. We have a dignity indeed, but no deity. Therefore in the words following the text here handled, chapter the fourth, verse the first, says the apostle, 'Let men so account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.' As the ministers of Christ, we are not to be abased, and as but ministers, not to be adored; as stewards, not to be magnified, and as stewards of the mysteries of God, not to be vilified. Consider the Lord's messengers both as 'earthen vessels' and as having a treasure in them. But there are those that set some too high, and depress others too low. This partiality hath brought many miseries upon the church, and diverted many men from the church. It hath sent many a *renegado* bound for Rome. Discontent is a dangerous thing, when the occasion is just.

In a word, I desire thee to weigh well one passage, and not to misdeem it, which the worthy author hath, page 16, concerning the right of wicked men to earthly things. He says it is a mistake to think they have no right to them. And so it is indeed, Ps. xvii. 14. They have their portion in this life. A man must needs have some right to his portion. What Ananias had, Acts v. 4, was his own, whilst he had it, as Peter tells him; and yet Satan had filled his heart. We are to do good to all, but especially the household of faith, Gal. vi. 10. Therefore we may do good, and distribute to those that are not of the household of faith. But what needs this, if earthly things belong not to them? If in giving them we shall make them usurpers, we had better not give to them. If a covetous man hath no title to his goods, when sentence of condemnation is passed upon him, he may say, Why am I condemned for not giving, when I had nothing to give? Besides it will follow, that no man shall be condemned for want of liberality in not giving, but only for want of justice in not restoring. The earth was to bring forth to Adam fallen, or for Adam, though thorns

and thistles. The sons of Adam have the earth, though the curse with it. A title therefore they have, though not the same title with the righteous. The godly have them as from a loving Father, the wicked as from a liberal Lord, who out of goodness makes the 'sun to shine both upon the just and unjust,' Mat. v. 45. Therefore a Christian's right doth not exclude, but excel theirs.

Let not therefore a godly man trouble himself to argue them out of their good things here received; they are all they shall have. Let the wicked make much of what they have, for they shall have no more. The servant of the Lord must seek his portion in another life. The greatest part of the things he hath here is the least part of the things he shall have hereafter.

But then take the right course, and first make God thine, and then all shall be thine. But before God can be thine, Christ must be thine; and before him, faith must be thine; and before faith, the word must be thine. Therefore so order thy affairs as to hear, and so order thy hearing as to believe, and so thy faith as to find Christ in thy heart; and then thou shalt find God in Christ, and all in God.

But I entreat thee for the mercies of Christ, if thou undertakest a Christian profession, walk answerably to it; and to a good profession, add a good confession. 'Oh! that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men,' Ps. cvii. 8. Bless God for all thou hast and shalt have; yea, for this work, &c., the man that indited it: a man, for matter always full, for notions sublime, for expression clear, for style concise; a man spiritually rational, and rationally spiritual; one that seemed to see the insides of nature and grace, and the world and heaven, by those perfect anatomies he hath made of them all. But his work needs no letter of commendation from any, much less from one so unworthy as I am. Therefore pardon me, and read him, and try thyself, and glorify God. Farewell.

J. B.*

* These initials probably represent Jeremiah Burroughs, than whom none of the Puritans more nearly resembled Sibbes either as a man or as a writer. He died November 14. 1646. He is one of Fuller's 'Worthies.' For a short memoir, consult Brook's *Lives of the Puritans*, III. pp. 18-25.—G.



A CHRISTIAN'S PORTION;

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Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.—1 COR. III. 21-23.

ONE man is prone to idolise and set up another man in his soul higher than is fit, which is never without great danger and derogation from Christ. Men, for the love of that good that is in others, whom they reverence overmuch, take in ill, and all. We are very prone to this fault when we look too much to persons who are subject to like infirmities with ourselves. That is the reason why the apostle is so careful in this chapter to abase man in the beginning of this 21st verse. 'Let no man glory in men;' that is, so far as to depend upon them in matters of faith. This, therefore, is the principal scope of the apostle, in this place, to cut off faction and overmuch dependence upon men. There were some vainglorious teachers that had crept into the consciences of people (as it is their use),* and drew factions, and so set up themselves instead of Christ. The apostle, to prevent this, saith, 'Let no man glory in men.' Do not glory in your teachers; they are but your servants and Christ's servants; 'for all things are yours.' By means of those vain-glorious teachers the people grew divided, and began to set up one and cry down another. To redress this, the apostle saith, 'All things are yours;' whether Paul, meaning himself, or Apollos,† another excellent man; yea, Cephas, Peter himself. Paul with all his learning, Apollos with his eloquence, Peter with his vehemency of spirit; what he is, and what he hath, all his endowments are for the good of the church.

So that here we have, *first*, a *dehortation*: 'Let no man glory in man.' Then a *reason of it*: 'For all things are yours.'

He sets down the reason, first, in gross in the whole, 'All things are yours.'

And then parcels it out, as it were, by retail: 'whether Paul, or Apollos,

* That is = 'custom, way.'—G.

† Again, and throughout, spelled Apollo.—G.

or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come.' And so by induction of particulars he lays open and unfolds this tapestry, that they may see the riches of this 'all,' and then he wraps up all again, 'all are yours.' Those things that I have named are yours, nay, things that are most unlike, 'life and death are yours.' What need we doubt of other things, when death is ours? He that hath the power of death, the devil, is not excluded; 'he is ours.'

Here is also a gradation: 'All is ours.' Is there a full point there? No. 'We are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' The gradation is upwards and downwards. God descends to us. 'All' is from the Father, and from Christ mediator, to man, and for man's sake to the creature. The gradation up again is, 'We are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' Which makes a blessed concatenation, or chaining and linking of things from the wise and great God. All things hang on him, and are carried to him again; and as they come from one, so they end in one. As a circle begins and ends in one point, so all comes from God and ends in God.

In the reason we have the 'Charter of a Christian,' the dowry that the church hath by her marriage with Christ. He is the greatest king that ever was, and she is the greatest queen; for Christ, he is Lord of heaven and earth, and of all things; and her estate is as large as his. 'All things are yours,' &c., even from God to the poorest thing in the world. God passeth over himself to his children; he is theirs, Christ is theirs. Therefore angels are theirs; for angels ascend and descend upon Jacob's ladder, that is, Christ.

Having set down this general, 'all things are yours,' to discourage them from glorying in men, he parcels that general into particulars: 'Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death,' &c.

1. *All persons* are yours.

2. *All things* are yours.

3. *All events* are yours.

Persons: 'Paul, Apollos, Cephas.'

Things: 'The world, or life, or death.'

Events: Whatsoever can come, for the present, or for time to come, 'all is yours.'

For persons: 'Paul, Apollos, Cephas are yours.' Therefore Peter is not the head of the church. He is named here in the third place, among the rest, and after the rest: 'Whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, he is yours.' You know who ground all their religion on this. Peter is the head of the church, and they are the successors of Peter. But Peter is the church's, and therefore cannot be the head and commander. The pope pretends that he is Peter's successor, and yet he will be head of the church. But you see Cephas is a servant of the church's, as well as Paul and Apollos. You see the hypocrisy of him, by the way. He will call himself *servus servorum Dei*, the servant of the servants of God, as if he would justify this blessed speech. Cephas and Paul are servants of the church, and I, that am Peter's successor, am so; but yet he stamps in his coin, 'THAT NATION AND COUNTRY THAT WILL NOT SERVE THEE, SHALL BE ROOTED OUT' (c). And so, while he pretends to be servant of servants, he will be lord of lords; he tyranniseth over the church, and overthroweth this text that saith, 'All things are for the church, and we must glory in no man,' so as to let him be the author of our faith in anything. That man of sin and his adherents, the faction of Rome, wrong the church two ways especially.

1. *First of all*, in that they have of their own brain, without Christ, the

head of the church, *ordained a world of idle ceremonies*, which they will have to have supernatural effects, and to confer grace.

2. And then, *secondly*, in that they *make laws to bind the conscience, without reference to Christ*, and their traditions must have the same authority with the word of God ; so they sit in the temple of God ; and that is the reason why popery prevaileth so. Whereas, indeed, no man is lord of the faith of another man. The chiefest men in the world are but servants of the church : Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas. 'The woman must not usurp authority over the man,' 1 Tim. ii. 12, nor must the church be above Christ.

To go on ; not only all persons, but the whole world, is the church's.

The world natural, the civil world, and the ecclesiastical world.

(1.) *First, the world natural is the church's* ; that is, the frame of heaven and earth. All things are made for man, and he is made for God. As a wise philosopher could say, that man is the end of all things in a semi-circle (*d*) ; that is, all things in the world are made for him, and he is made for God. The world is ours, all things in the world are our servants ; for they mourn in black, as it were, for our miseries since the fall, and in our restoring again they shall be restored. They wait for the day, as it is Rom. viii. 21, 'For the glorious liberty of the Son of God.' They have their happiness and misery together with men. The world stands for the elect. If all the elect were gathered out of the world, there would be an end of all things ; all would be in confusion presently.

(2.) And so *for the civil world*, all states are for the church. The commonwealth is for the church. Therefore St Paul bids us 'pray for kings and princes,' &c. Why ? That under them we may live a godly and peaceable life,' 1 Tim. ii. 2. If it were not for the gathering of the church, God would take little care for commonwealths. They stand because the church is mingled with them. Take church from the commonwealth, and what is it but a company of men that make the world their god ? Kingdoms and commonwealths are but hospitals and harbours for the church. Though they despise the church, and account of it as Christ was accounted, a stranger that they will not acknowledge, yet notwithstanding, those few despised ones are the substance of the kingdom. God intends the church as the considerable part of the world, though men think not so. The rest that are not the church, they are for the church. As we say of a field of wheat, the ploughing, the rain, the stalk, the ear, the husk, all is for the wheat ; so the standing of the world, the government of it, the parts and gifts of men, all are for the church, to do good to it. Were it not for the service they owe to the church, they should not continue.

(3.) And *in the church* all that ever is good is for the elect's sake. As we stand under Christ in great terms, ambassadors, &c., so we stand to the church as servants. 'We preach ourselves servants for Christ's sake,' 2 Cor. iv. 5. 'Let a man esteem of us as of the ministers of Christ,' 1 Cor. iv. 1. No greater nor no less, but as the ministers of Christ. Persons and ministry, calling and gifts, all are for the church, as it is Eph. iv. 11, *seq.*, at large ; when he ascended up on high, he 'gave some to be apostles, some pastors,' &c., all for the good of the church. 'I suffer all for the elect's sake,' saith St Paul, 2 Tim. ii. 10. Therefore it forceth very well ; we should not glory in the ministers, nor in any creature. They are for us. But if a man will glory, let him glory in him who hath made all things his, that is, in Christ.

(4.) Further, *the world is ours, take it in the worst sense* ; the world of wicked men, all their plots, and the 'prince of the world' are the church's.

How is this? He and all his instruments are under the command of him that turns all his designs contrary to his own intention. This is a hell to Satan, and one of the chief torments that he hath; that as his malice is above his power, so God overpowers him in his power. God overshoots him in his own bow. Whatever he designs against the head Christ, and against his members the church, it is overturned for the good of the church. In the apostles' times some were 'given over to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme,' 1 Tim. i. 20. It is a strange thing that Satan should teach not to blaspheme, who is the author of blasphemy; yet by consequence, he afflicting their bodies, thereupon they came to be wise, and learned to be moderate and sober, and to be Christianly minded, and not to blaspheme. So the prince of the world is ours in this by an over-commanding power, that turns all to good against his intentions. For there is but one grand monarch in the world; every kingdom is under a higher kingdom. There is but one to whom all are subject. There is one grand wheel that turns all the others. And therefore Satan himself is serviceable to God's end, whether he will or no.

And then for the world of wicked men, all their designs, though for the present they seem to be against the church, yet they are serviceable to the church. For wicked men are but the launderers of the church, to wash the church, to purge it, to do base services that God intends for the refining of the church. And all their hatred is for the good of the church. For God suffers the world to hate his children, that his children might not love the world, because it would be a dangerous love. The church is a strange corporation; it is such a corporation as hath greatest benefit by enemies. The enemies of the church are the promoters of the greatest good of the church. The very world is the church's, take it in the worst sense, for the 'wicked world that lies in mischief.' But I will not dwell upon that. To go on.

As all things in general, so *life* especially is the church's. Why doth God prolong the life of good pastors and good people, but that they may be blessed instruments to convey truth to posterity? As St Paul saith, Phil. i. 23, 24, 'It is for your sake that I am not with Christ. It were best for me to be dissolved, and to be with Christ,' a great deal; but for your sake, for your good, I must remain still. So, for the life of pastors and good Christians, by communion with whom we have benefit. For their particular it were best for them to be in heaven, to be gathered to the triumphant church, to their friends, to Christ, to the saints, the souls of just men made perfect, there is no question of it; but for the church's sake they are made to want their glory for a time. Paul was content to be without the joys of heaven for a while, to want his crown of glory, to live in the church, to do good. So the life of other able worthy men it is for the church, and it is the calamity of the church when God takes them away.

And so the life of good magistrates, it is for the benefit of the church. It were better for them to be in heaven. But as it is said of David, Acts xiii. 36, 'He served God in his own generation.' So every magistrate hath his generation, time, allotted, a generation to stand up in the church and state, and to serve God in, and then God takes him away.

And then our own life is ours, while we live in order to a better life (for all must be understood in order to happiness), which is the only life. This present life is nothing but a shadow, yet we have a world of advantage in this life, to get assurance of a better. This life, indeed, is but a little spot of time between two eternities, before and after, but it is of great conse-

quence, and it is given us to get a better life in, that glory may be begun in grace, and that we may have a further and 'further entrance into the kingdom of heaven here,' as Peter saith, 2 Peter i. 11.

Again, life is ours, because the time we live here is a seed time. This life is given us to do a great many of good things in, the crop and harvest of which is reserved for the world to come; and when we have done the work that God hath given us to do, we are gathered to our fathers.

And life is a special benefit, because by the advantage of life we further our reckonings after death. A good Christian, the longer he lives, the larger good accounts he hath, the more he soweth to the Spirit. It is therefore a blessed thing for a godly man to live long, for a good man to be an old man. All his sins are wiped away; they shall never be laid to his charge. He may say, he hath lived long, and sinned a long time, yet his sins are forgiven, and all his good deeds shall be upon the file,* and be set on the score, even to 'a cup of cold water,' Mat. x. 42, and he shall be rewarded. There is not a sigh, not a tear but it is registered. The longer a man liveth, if he should live Methuselah his days, the richer he should be in good works; and the richer he is in good works, the more he shall have his part and share in glory after. The longer he lives, the happier the times are in which he lives; for a good man makes the times happy, and it is happier for himself. The more rich he is in good works, the more rich he shall be in glory after, the heavier his crown, and his reward shall be in heaven. The richer shall be his harvest, the larger his seed-time hath been.

Use. These things being so, *we should bless God, and be very thankful that he yields to us this life;* for besides an advantage of doing good, it is a preparative to a better. This life is, as it were, the seminary† of heaven. Heaven indeed is the true paradise of all the plants of God, but they must have a seminary to be planted in first; and therefore the church is called the kingdom of heaven, because we are first planted here. Therefore we should bless God for this life, and not wish ourselves dead out of murmuring, but in subjection yield ourselves when God will. Oh, this life is a blessed time. It is our seed time. The longer we live the more opportunity we have to do good, to grow in grace, and to do good to others, and to enlarge our own accounts and reckonings to the end. The next thing to speak of is death.

'Or death.'

He doth well to join these two together, for if life be not ours for good, death will never be ours. He that doth not make a good use of life, never hath death to be his comfort; but instead of an entrance into heaven, it shall be a trap-door to hell. But if life be ours, and we have made a blessed improvement of it, then death also shall be ours. And 'blessed are they that die in the Lord,' Rev. xiv. 13.

It is a strange thing that death should be ours, that is a destroying hostile thing to nature; the king of fear as the Scripture calls it, Job xviii. 14; and that terrible of all terribles, as the philosopher saith, (e) 'the last enemy,' as Paul saith, 1 Cor. xv. 26. Death is ours many ways. It is a piece of our jointure, for these words contain the jointure of the church. The church is Christ's spouse. 'All things are Christ's,' and therefore all things are the spouse's; and among other particular gifts given to the church, death is one.

But this death in the gospel is turned to another thing. It is a harmless

* Cf. Note b, Vol. I., page 289.—G.

† That is, 'seed-plot.'—G.

death. The sting is pulled out. It hath lost all his venom in Christ. That which is malignant and hurtful in death is taken away. What is the poison and sting of death? It is sin. Now that is forgiven in Christ. But that is not enough for God's bounty, that death should not hurt us. No; it is ours, it tends to our benefit many ways.

First, It unclothes us of these rags, these sick, weak, and untoward bodies of ours, that occasion so much disquiet to our souls; these mud walls. It takes down the tabernacle, it puts off our old rags, and puts on a new robe of immortality, and garments of glory. It ends all that is ill. All is determined in death. It is the last evil. It puts an end to all our labours, to all our troubles, and sorrows. Then the cursed labour of all our sins (that are the cause of sorrow) shall have an end. 'Blessed are they that die in the Lord, they rest from their labours,' Rev. xiv. 13. There is no rest till we be dead. Death is the accomplishment of our mortification.

And there is an end of the labour and toil in our callings, and the miseries and afflictions that accompany them. It frees us from all labours whatsoever. For death is a sleep, and all labours end in sleep. And as after sleep the spirits are refreshed; so after death we are more refreshed than we can conceive now. Death is ours because it is our resting-place. After our bodies are weary and worn out in toiling, then comes death, and then we rest in our graves.

It frees us from wicked men, and sets us clear out of Satan's reach. This world is the kingdom of Satan, but when we are gone hence, he hath nothing to do with us. Sin brought in death, and now death puts an end to sin; we shall be no more annoyed with Satan or his temptations, which is a great privilege.

And then death is a passage to another world. It is the gate of glory and everlasting happiness. It is the beginning of all that is good, that is everlastingly and eternally good. Our death is our birthday. Indeed, death is the death of itself; death is the death of death (*f*). For when we die, we begin to live, and we never live indeed till we die. For what is this life? Alas! it is a dying. Every day we live, a part of our life is taken away. We die every day, 1 Cor. xv. 31. The more we have lived, the less of our life we have to live.

The life in heaven begins at death. Death is the birthday of that life of immortality, and that is the life which can only truly be called life. When Christ came by dying to purchase life, it was not this sorry life on earth, but the life in the world to come, that life of immortal glory; and death's day is the birthday of this life. And for our bodies, they are but refined by death, and fitted, as vessels cast into the fire, to be moulded, to be most glorious vessels after.

Death is ours every way. It is our greatest friend under the mask of an enemy. So that, whatsoever Satan may suggest to the contrary, death is ours; our friend that was our enemy; a good thing that was an ill. Our fancy in a temptation may make us apprehend those things that are useful and good to be terrible and ill, and those things that are truly dangerous to us as if they were the only good. Satan abuseth our imagination, by amplifying the good of evil, and the evil of good. But, indeed, death, and all that makes way unto it, sickness, and misery, they are ours; they do us good, they fit us for heaven. Sickness, it fits us for death; it unlooseth the soul from the body. As for the profits, and pleasures, and honours of the world, what do they? They nail us faster to the world,

and do us hurt. Therefore, death is ours. It is a good messenger ; it brings good tidings when it comes. Hereupon it is that the wise man saith, 'The day of death is better than the day of birth,' Eccles. vii. 1. When we are born, we come into misery ; when we die, we go out of misery to happiness. It is better to go out of misery than to come into it. If the day of death be better than the day of birth to a Christian, certainly then death is theirs. It makes a short end of all that is miserable, and it is a *terminus* from whence all good begins. There is nothing in the world that doth us so much good as death. It ends all that is ill both of body and soul, and it begins that happiness that never shall have an end. Therefore, 'blessed are they that die in the Lord, saith the Spirit,' Rev. xiv. 13, 'A voice from heaven' saith so, and therefore, 'Write,' saith he. It may be written if the Spirit saith it : it is testimony and argument enough. 'Blessed are those that die in the Lord : they rest from their labours ; and their reward follows them.' For they rest from all that is evil, and from that only. All that is good, 'their works follow them.' So that if all evil cease, and all good follows, I hope death may well be said to be ours, and for our good.

Use. If death be ours, and all that makes way to death, sickness, &c., the curse of them being taken away, and in the room a blessing hid in them, then why should we startle and be affrighted too much at the message of death, as if it were such a terrible thing ? Why should we be afraid of that that is a part of our portion ? Why should we be afraid of that which is friendly to us and doth us so much good ? What, to be a Christian that lives in the household and family of faith, and to want faith so far as not to believe the glorious estate after death, or that it is not his, or that death lets him not into it !

Nature will be nature, and death is a dissolution, and so the enemy of nature, the last enemy. Therefore nature cannot but in some measure be affrighted with death ; but then grace and the Spirit of God in his children should be above nature, and cause them to look beyond death to that happy condition which death puts them in possession of. Death is like Jordan. We go through the waters and waves of it to Canaan, the land of promise and happiness. Faith would let us see this ; and so grace would subdue nature, though nature will have a bout* with the best, death being the terrible of terribles, and the king of fear, as I said before. Therefore I speak not this that we should be senseless, but that we may see how far the meditation of these things, of this blessed prerogative, and this one part of our charter, should strengthen us.

I beseech you, therefore, let us lay up this against those dark times wherein death will be presented unto us an ugly and grim thing. It is so to nature indeed, but to faith, death is become amiable.† Indeed, as I said, there is nothing in the world that doth us so much good as death, for it is the best physician. It cures all diseases whatsoever of soul and body. And indeed—for to shut up this point—death is the death and destruction of itself ; for after death there is no more death. It consumes itself. By death we overcome death. 'We can never die more,' Rom. vi. 9. We are freed from all death. Therefore, to be afraid of death, is to be afraid of life, to be afraid of victory ; for we never overcome death till we die. Lay up these considerations against the time of need. When death comes, there will be a confluence of a world of grief, when conscience, being guilty

* That is, 'one turn,' 'one trial.'—G.

† That is, 'lovely.' Cf. Ps. lxxxiv. 1.—G.

of sin, shall be arraigned before God; when there will be sickness, and diseases of body, and a deprivation of all the comforts and employments of the world. They will all meet in a centre, in a point, at death; but a man had need to gather the greater comfort against that hour; and what shall comfort us then? There is a sweet comfort in Rom. viii. 38, 39, that neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ. It is a sweet comfort, that nothing shall separate us; but this is a greater comfort, that death is ours. It shall not only not separate us from God and from happiness, but it shall bring us to nearer communion with God and Christ, for it is a separation that causeth a nearer conjunction; the separation of soul and body causeth the conjunction of the soul to Christ for the present, and afterwards an eternal conjunction of soul and body in this blessed fruition of him. Now, blessed be God for Jesus Christ, that hath made in him even death, the bitterest thing of all, to be sweet unto us.

‘Or things present.’

Whatsoever is present, good or ill. The good things present are ours, for our comfort in our pilgrimage and passage towards heaven. God is so good unto his children, as that he doth not only reserve for them happiness in another world, but the very gallery and passage to heaven by the way is comfortable. Things present are theirs. They may enjoy them with comfort; they have a liberty to all things, for refreshings, &c. ‘All things are pure to the pure,’ Titus i. 15. ‘Every creature of God is good, so it be received with thanksgiving and prayer,’ 1 Tim. iv. 4. We have a liberty to use them, but it must be with prayer and thanksgiving. Though a man hath a liberty and right to any thing, yet there must be a suing it out, there must be some passage in law to put him in possession. So, though we have a freedom to ‘present things,’ there must be somewhat to make a sanctified use of them. We must go to God by grace to use them well; all must be sanctified by prayer and thanksgiving.

And as good things, so ill things present are ours. Afflictions are ours, because they fit us for a happier state; they exercise what is good in us, and mortify what is ill. They are sanctified to subdue that which is ill, and to increase that which is good, and to make us more capable of glory. Who is so capable of glory as he that hath been afflicted in this world? To whom is heaven heaven indeed but to the man that hath led an afflictive life, a conflicting course with the world and his own corruptions? Heaven is a place of happiness indeed to him. Therefore, evil things are ours, because they sweeten happiness to come, and make us more capable and more desirous of it. So both good and evil things present are ours. God governing the world, and all things coming from him as a father, nothing shall come to us for the present but what he means to guide for our good.

Use. Therefore we should take them thankfully at God's hands. ‘In all things be thankful,’ 1 Thes. v. 18. ‘In all things rejoice,’ Phil. iv. 4. Because evil, though it be grievous for the time, yet it hath ‘the quiet fruit of righteousness,’ Heb. xii. 11. It quiets the soul after in that good we have by it. There are divers good things that we never have but by evil. There was never man yet could say he had patience but by suffering. So things present, whether they are good or ill, they are ours, to help us in the state of grace, and to fit us for the state of glory. But, the most difficulty is in

‘Things to come.’

For what assurance have we of things to come? Yet 'things to come are ours,' whether they be good or evil.

For good. The remainder of our life, that is ours to do good in. Death is to come, and that is ours. And judgment, that is ours; for our Brother, our Head, our Saviour, and our Husband, he shall be our judge, 1 Cor. vi. 2; and at the day of judgment, 'we shall judge the world.' And then after judgment heaven is ours; immortality and eternity is ours; communion with the blessed company in heaven is ours. 'All is ours' then.

Indeed, the best is to come; for if we had nothing but what we have in this world, 'we were of all men most miserable,' 1 Cor. xv. 19. Alas! what have we, if things present only are ours? But the best is behind. That for which Christ came into the world is behind. That which he enjoys in heaven is ours. He will take his spouse where himself is, into his own house, and he will finish the marriage, which is begun in contract, and then 'we shall be for ever with the Lord,' 1 Thes. iv. 17. 'The things to come' are the main things, that which our faith lays hold on. That which we raise ourselves and comfort ourselves by, are especially the things to come, especially the promises of happiness and glory, and exemption and freedom from all ill. Whatsoever is to come is ours, and ours for eternity. Indeed, here I am swallowed up; I cannot unfold to you what is ours in that sense. For 'if neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for his children in this world,' 1 Cor. ii. 9, that peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost, how can we conceive here of that glory that is to come? Indeed, it is to be in heaven to conceive of it. It is a part of heaven to know them; and therefore the full knowledge of them it is deferred for that time till we come there.

And evil things to come are ours also. They cannot do us harm, they cannot 'separate us from Christ,' Rom. viii. 35. Nothing for the time to come shall be prejudicial, to unloose that blessed union that is between our soul and Christ; as St Paul, Rom. viii., in that heavenly discourse of his, towards the latter end of the chapter, Rom. viii. 38, 39, saith triumphantly and divinely, 'Nothing shall separate us from Christ; neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come.' We have the word of God for it, 'that nothing to come shall hinder us.' Whatsoever is to come, be it never so ill, it shall further us, as the apostle saith in the same chapter: Rom. viii. 28, 'All things shall work together for the best to them that love God.' Therefore, if nothing to come can hinder us, and all things that are to come shall further us, then all things to come must be ours. In 1 Pet. i. 5, 'We are kept by the power of God, through faith, to salvation.' Salvation is laid up for us, and we are kept through faith, by the power of God, to salvation. Therefore all things to come are ours.

It is a great comfort that nothing shall separate us; no, not death itself. But this text affords an exuberancy of comfort above that, that death is ours; and in being so, it shall not only not separate us from Christ, though it separate soul and body, but join us to him.

I beseech you, take it as a notion that may help against the terror of that doleful separation of soul and body. It parts two old friends, but it joins better friends together, the soul and Christ.

Farther, all things to come are ours; even all things in the largest sense, the bitterest of all things.

The very judgment of the wicked, and the eternal sentencing of them, is the church's. Why? It adds a lustre to God's mercy in advancing his

own, as it is Rom. ix. 23. God magnifies his mercy to 'the vessels of mercy,' by punishing a company of reprobates, in whom he hath no delight, by reason of their sins. His mercy appears much by that, even by the eternal sentence and punishment of wicked men. So all serves to set out the glory and excellency of God's people.

Use. The use that the apostle mainly intends is, that a Christian is as sure of the time to come as of the time past or present. We are sure of what we have had, and what we have; but a Christian is in so firm a condition and state that he may be sure of what is to come: because God and Christ are not only 'Alpha, but Omega' also; Christ is not only he 'was, and is,' but 'is to come,' Rev. i. 8. He is 'Jehovah, the same for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8. And therefore, as things past could not hinder us from being elected and called; and things present cannot hurt, but they are ours: so are things to come; because God, and Christ, who is the mediator under God, hath the command of all things to come. And therefore we may be as sure of things to come as of things present. What a comfort is this to a Christian, when he is casting what should become of him, if times of trouble and public calamity should come! Presently he satisfieth himself with this, come what will come, all shall be for the best, 'all things to come are ours,' even all things whatsoever.

'All things are yours.'

But yet we must understand this with some limits. We therefore unloose some knots, and answer some cases.

Case 1. First, it may seem *there is no distinction of propriety,* if all be a Christian's.*

Obj. And if every Christian may say, 'All is mine,' then what is one man's is another's, and there will be no propriety.

Ans. I answer, undoubtedly there is a distinction of properties in the things of this life. 'All is ours,' but it is in another sense. 'All is ours,' to help us to heaven; 'all is ours' in an order to comfort and happiness; but for propriety, so all things are not ours. For you know the distinction: some things are common *jure naturæ*, by the law of nature, as the sun and air, and many such like things; and some *jure gentium*, by the law of nations. It is but some things are thus common. But then there are some that by particular municipal laws are proper.

The distinction is established both by the law of God and the law of man.† Therefore, not to stand long in answering this question, the Scripture stablisheth the distinction of master and servant; and therefore it establisheth distinction of goods. The Scripture establisheth bounty and alms. If there be not a distinction of property, where were alms? Solomon saith, 'The rich and the poor meet together: God is the maker of both,' Prov. xxii. 2. He means, not as men only, but as poor and rich.

If riches be of God, then distinction of properties is of God; for what is riches but a distinction of properties? If God make poor and rich, then there must be poor and rich. 'The poor you have always with you,' Mat. xxvi. 11. Therefore the meaning is, 'All is yours;' that is, all that we possess, and all that we need to help us, is ours in that order and carriage of things that may help us to heaven. And so the want of things is ours, as well as the having of them. The very things which a Christian wants are his; not only the grace of contentment to want, but when God takes away those things that are hurtful for him, that may hinder him in his

* That is, 'property.'—G.

† In margin here, 'Read Judges xi. from ver. 12 to 20.'—G.

course to heaven, that is his. It is a part of this portion, not to have things, if God see it good. The want of things is a part of this 'all.'

Obj. That which is so commonly alleged to the contrary, in Acts ii. 44, 'All things were common,' will easily receive answer.

Ans. 1. For, *first, it was partly upon necessity.* If all things then had not been common, they had all been taken from them.

2. And then, *secondly, it was arbitrary also.** 'Was it not thine own?' saith Peter, Acts v. 4. Thou mightst not have parted with it, if thou wouldst. It was arbitrary,* though it was common.

3. And then, *thirdly, all things were not common (g).* Some good men kept their houses. Mary had her house, Acts xii. 12.

4. And then, *fourthly, all things were common, but how?* To distribute as they needed; not to catch who would and who can. But they were so common as they had a care to distribute to every one that which they needed.

Case 2. Obj. Another case is this; all is the church's, all is good people's, and therefore if a man be naught,† nothing is his. There is a great point of popery grounded upon this mistake. For therefore say the Jesuited papists, the pope may excommunicate ill princes, in order to spiritual things, *in ordine ad spiritualia.* He is the lord and monarch of all. They are evil governors; nothing is theirs, all is the church's.

Ans. But we must know that political government is not founded upon religion; that if a prince be not religious, he is no king; but it is founded upon nature and free election, so that the heathen that have no religion, yet they may have a lawful government and governors, because it is not so built upon religion; but where that is not, yet this may be, and God's appointment to uphold the world. So that, let the king be anything or nothing for religion, he is a lawful king.

Obj. But it is further objected, that they succeed Christ, &c., and he was the Lord of the world, and they are the vicars of Christ; and therefore they may dispossess and invest whom they will.

Ans. But you must know, Christ as man had no government at all: but Christ as God-man, mediator; and so he hath no successor. That is incommunicable to the creature. Christ as man had no kingdom at all, for he saith, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' John xviii. 36. And St Austin saith well, 'Surely he was no king, that feared he should be a king' (h). For when they came to make him king, 'he withdrew himself and went away,' John vi. 15. And now Christ governs all things in the church. How? As God, as mediator, as God-man; not as man, but as God-man; and so he hath no substitute. They are all vain, impudent allegations, as if all were theirs, because all is the church's to dispose; and the pope takes himself virtually to be the whole church.

'All things are ours.'

Case 3. Doth not this hinder bounty? It is mine, and therefore I do not owe any bounty unto others; as Nabal said, 'Shall I give my bread, and my water, and refreshing,' &c., 1 Sam. xxv. 11. He was too much upon the pronoun 'mine.'

Ans. However all that we possess is ours in law, yet in mercy many times it is the poor's, and not ours. The bonds of duty, both of humanity and religion, are larger than the bonds of law. Put case, in law thou art not bound to do so, yet in humanity, much more in Christianity, thou art. That that thou hast is the church's, and the poor's, and not thine. It will

* That is, 'uncontrolled' = of choice.—G. † That is, 'naughty' = wicked.—G.

be no plea at the day of judgment to say, it was mine own. Thou mayest go to hell for all that, if thou relieve not Christ in his members. Therefore 'all things are ours' now, not to possess all we have, but to use them as he will have them used, that gives them. And when Christ calls for anything that is ours, we must give it. And though we be not liable to human laws, if we do not, yet we are liable to God's law; and alms and works of mercy, is justice in God's account; for we ought to be merciful to Christ's. And in the royal law, the works of love and mercy are justice, and we withhold good from the owners, if we be not merciful. For in religion, the poor, that by God's providence are cast on us to be provided for, have a right, and that which we detain from them is theirs. And therefore, as St Ambrose saith very well, 'If thou hast not nourished one, howsoever in the law thou art not a murderer, yet before God thou art' (i). It is a breach of that law, 'Thou shall not steal,' not to relieve. The very denial of comfortable alms is stealth in God's esteem; and therefore, though 'all be ours,' yet it is so ours, as that we must be ready to part with it when Christ in his members calls for it; for then it is not ours.

Case 4. Again, here is another question; if all be ours, we may use a liberty in all things, what, and how we list, because all is ours.

Ans. I answer: The following are good consecratories hence. 'All is ours;' and therefore with thankfulness we may use any good creature of God. 'All is ours;' and therefore we should not be scrupulous in the creatures, we should not superstitiously single out one creature from another, as if one were holier than another. 'All is ours;' and therefore with a good conscience we may use God's bounty. But hereupon we must not take upon us to use things as we list, because 'all is ours.' There is difference between right, and the use of that right. God's children have right to that which God gives them, but they have not the use of that right at all times, at least it may be suspended. As for example, in case the laws forbid the use of this or that, for the public good of the nation. Also in case of scandal. A man hath right to eat, or not to eat; but if this eating 'offend his brother,' he must suspend the use of his right. 'Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat,' saith St Paul, 'asking no question,' 1 Cor. x. 25; that is, freely take all the creatures of God, without scruple. 'For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,' Ps. xxiv. 1. God, out of his bounty, spreads a table for all creatures, for men especially. 'The eyes of all things look up unto thee, and thou givest them meat in due season,' Ps. cxlv. 15, 16. 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' Make no scruple therefore. But mark, in verse 28, he restrains the use of that liberty upon the same text of Scripture: 'But if any man say, This is offered to an idol,' and take offence, 'eat not, for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake;' till he be better satisfied. 'For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.'

Quest. Can the same reason be for contraries?

Ans. Yes. That is, for thyself, when thou art alone, take all things boldly. God envies not thy liberty. Take any refreshment, yet needest thou not to eat 'to offend thy brother;' God having given thee variety of creatures, even in abundance, and hath not limited thee to this or that creature; so that the same reason answereth both. 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' Use it then alone, and not to the scandal of thy brother. 'For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' Why shouldst thou use this creature, as if there were no more but this?

And therefore in case of scandal and offence, we should suspend our liberty, though all be ours.

Again, though all be ours, yet notwithstanding we have not a sanctified use, but by the word and prayer. 'Every creature of God is good, if it be received with prayer and thanksgiving,' 1 Tim. iv. 4. His meaning is, though we have a right to all things to our comfort, to help us to heaven, to cheer us in our way, to be as it were chariots to carry us; yet in the use of that right, we must do it in faith, that we may apprehend our right, that we do not use them with a scrupulous conscience, and sanctify them by prayer. We must take them with God's leave. A father gives all to his son that he needs, and promiseth his son that he shall want nothing; but he will have his son seek to him, and acknowledge him. You shall have all, but I will hear from you first; you shall have all, but I will reach it to you from my hand. So God deals with his children. They have a right to all, but he reacheth it to them in the use of means. We must have a civil right by labour, or by contract, &c., and then we must have a religious right by prayer. We must not pull God's blessings out of his hands. For though he give us a right in the thing, yet, in the use of that right, he will have us holy men.

Case 5. If you ask, What is the reason that good men oft fall to decay, and have a great many crosses in the world?

Why surely (not to enter into God's mysteries), when they have God's blessings they sanctify them not with prayer; they venture upon their right with scandal and offence to others.

Case 6. Again, 'all things are ours.' Therefore truth, wheresoever we find it, is ours. We may read [a] heathen author. Truth comes from God, wheresoever we find it, and it is ours, it is the church's. We may take it from them as a just possession. Those truths that they have, there may be good use of those truths; but we must not use them for ostentation. For that is to do as the Israelites; when they had gotten treasure out of Egypt, they made a calf, an idol of them. So we must not make an idol of these things. But truth, wheresoever we find it, is the church's. Therefore with a good conscience we may make use of any human author. I thought good to touch this, because some make a scruple of it.

'All things are ours.'

Use 1. Now to make some use of this point, 'all things are ours.' We see then that a Christian is a great man, a rich man indeed; and only he is great and rich. It is but imagination and opinion that makes any worldly man great. Can we say that all is his? No. A spot of earth is his, and not his neither; for it is his but to use for a time. He shall be turned naked into the grave ere long, and then he shall be stripped of all. But a Christian is a great man; though he be as poor as Lazarus, 'all is his.'

Obj. But you will say these are great words, 'all is his.' Perhaps he hath not a penny in his purse.

Ans. It is no great matter. God carries the purse for him; he is in his non-age, and not fit for possession. He hath much in promises; he is rich in bills and evidences. Again, let a Christian be never so poor, others are rich for him. Solomon saith there are some kind of oppressing rich men, 'that gather for those that will be good to the poor,' Prov. xxviii. 8. God hath given gifts to wicked men for the good of the church. They themselves are not the better for them. They want love and humility to make use of them. But all things are ours, as well what we want as what we have. For it is good for us that we should want them. A man hath riches

when he hath a spirit to want riches. Is not he richer that hath a heart subdued by grace to be content to want, than he that hath riches in the world? For outward things make not a man a whit the better. But he that hath the Spirit of God to support him, that he can submit to God, he is truly rich. It is the mind of a man that makes him rich, and not his purse. Now there is no child of God, but he is master of all things. Though he be poor, he is master of riches, because he can want them, and be without them. Grace teacheth him to want and to abound, as St Paul saith of himself, 'through Christ that strengtheneth him,' Phil. iv. 13. He hath grace to master poverty and whatsoever is ill, and to be content to be what God will have him to be. In want he hath contentment, and in suffering patience. I appeal to the conscience of any man that hath a conscience, is it not better to want temporal things, when we have supply in grace, in faith, &c., than to have great possessions as snares, for so they are to a carnal heart? Is not a Christian better in his wants, than another in his possessions. Who would be as many great ones are and have been alway, though they be invested into much greatness, both of authority and riches? Who would not rather choose the state of a Christian? Though he be poor, yet he hath grace. [Who would choose] rather to be great without grace and to be left of God to their corruptions, to abuse that greatness and riches to their own destruction, and the destruction of many others?

Therefore a Christian is a happy man, a great man, take him as you will; greater than the greatest man in the world without grace; for what he hath, he hath with a curse, as God gave Israel a king in his rage, Hosea xiii. 11. You know what Moses saith, Deut. xxviii. 17, 'Cursed shalt thou be in thy blessings.' A man may have a great many things, and be cursed in them. He doth not say he will curse them in the want of riches, that they should be poor, but he will curse them in their good things; they should have the vengeance of God with them. A Christian may want these things, but he hath the grace of God to want them, and he hath comfort here and assurance of better hereafter. Therefore all things are his, even the worst, because all things have a command to do him good. All things have a prohibition that they do him no harm. As David said of Absalom, 'Do the young man no harm,' 2 Sam. xviii. 5, so God gives all things a prohibition that they do his children no harm, nay, they have a command on the contrary to do them good. If they do them not good in one order, they do it in another; if they do it not in their outward man, they do it in their inward; and God's children by experience find him drawing them nearer to himself, both by having and wanting these things. So though they be not in possession theirs, yet in use, or, as we say, by way of reduction. The worst things are God's children's. For God brings all things about to their good. And when God's children shall be on the shore hereafter, and shall be past all and shall set their foot in heaven once, then they shall see by what a sweet providence God guided it, 'that all things wrought for their good,' Rom. viii. 28.

Quest. But you will say this or that particular is not mine, nor possessed by any of the saints.

Ans. All things are not ours by possession, but by some kind of use or other. We see and behold and meditate upon such things as are possessed by others, and exercise our thoughts profitably about God's providence in disposing these things as he pleaseth; as also we hereby stir up within us the graces of patience, contentedness, and thankfulness for what we have. Thus

what we possess not may be ours, and in a better and more profitable use of it to us than to them that possess it.

A Christian therefore, I say again, is a great man, above other men. And this is the reason that carnal men, that have the spirit of the world in them, do so bitterly envy and malign them. Certainly, they secretly think, this man is greater than I am ; there is that in him that I have not. A Christian is above other men, and is able to judge them ; and knoweth what they are, even miserable in their greatest heights. 'The spiritual man is judged of none,' 1 Cor. ii. 15. Men judge him poor and wretched, but it is false judgment, for he is ever truly rich and noble and happy. He fixeth a true judgment on them, but they cannot of him ; for he is in a rank of creatures above them. 'The saints shall judge the world,' 1 Cor. vi. 2. Those that are despised now shall judge others ere long ; they shall be assessories in judging the world. No marvel wicked men secretly malign God's people. The wicked cannot but judge them better and happier than themselves. As the life of grace is a higher thing, in the nature of the thing, than the life of reason, so those that have a gracious spiritual life, they are in a rank of creatures above all other men in the world whatsoever.

We see then what a great man a Christian is. He is master of what he hath, and of what he hath not. And is not this a wonderful prerogative that a Christian hath, that turn him to what condition you will, raise him or cast him down, kill him or spare his life, you cannot harm him ? If you spare his life, this life is his ; if you kill him, 'death is his.' Kill him, save him, enrich him, beggar him, his happiness is not at your command. There is a commanding power to rule all things for the good of God's people. It is not at the devotion* of any creature in the world, either devils or men. God overturns and overpowers all, and all is and shall be theirs.

The state of grace is higher than any earthly condition, therefore it cannot be tainted or blemished by earthly things. Nothing that sense suffers hath power over reason, for it is above sense. If a man be sick he hath the use of reason ; if health, reason also manageth it. No inferior thing can manage a superior. Let a man's estate be what it will, grace will master it, because it is a condition above, a ruling commanding condition.

Use 2. [1.] What a comfort is this in all troubles, that God will sanctify all conditions to us, and us to them. Who would be disconsolate in any condition whatsoever ? Who would be disconsolate to live, when he knows that life is his ? If God had not good to do by his life, he would take him away. Who would grieve when death comes, when he knows that death is his ? So that a Christian may say, if poverty, if disgrace be good ; if the order of evil things will help me ; if cross winds will blow me to heaven, I shall have them. For the world and the miseries of the world, the persecutions and afflictions, 'all are ours.' The worst things are commanded to serve for our main good. Therefore let us comfort ourselves. We cannot be at loss in becoming religious and true Christians, for then 'all things are ours.' He loseth nothing that, by losing anything, gaineth all things.

[2.] *For grace : for seeing 'all things are ours,' this should teach us to use all things to the honour of him that hath given us all things, not to be servants to anything, not to be subject to any creature,* as St Paul saith of himself, 'I will not be in bondage to anything,' 1 Cor. vi. 12. Why ? A Christian is master and lord over all. What a base thing is it for a man to be enthralled to such poor things ? As you have some in bondage to a weed.† Some are in bondage

* That is, 'the option.'—G.

† That is, 'tobacco' = smoking.—G.

to this affection and some to that, some to an idle custom. For a man to be as Rachel, 'Give me my children, or I die,' Gen. xxx. 1; I must have wealth, I must have pleasure, or else I cannot live; as you know that wretched man Amnon, he pined away to have his will; and so Ahab, who pined away himself because he had not that he would have—are these men masters? No. They bring themselves in slavery and subjection to the creature. Can they say as Paul, 'All things are ours; things present or to come'? when they put themselves in subjection, and those blessed souls of theirs, they make slaves to their servants, to things worse than themselves, that they trample on. If all things be ours, let us bring ourselves in subjection to nothing; but labour rather to have grace to subdue and use all things to right ends.

Use 3. Again, this should increase in us the grace of thankfulness. Hath God thus enriched us? Hath he made all things ours to serve our turn (in such a way as he accounts service); that is, that whatsoever we have shall help us to heaven and hath a blessing in it? Though it be sickness, or want, it is ours, and for our benefit. Lord, do what thou wilt, so thou bring me to heaven. If thou wilt have me poor, if it will do me good, let me be so; if thou wilt have me abased, I am content, only sanctify it to bring me to heaven. How thankful should we be to God, that hath placed us in this rank, that he hath put all things under us, and made all things our servants! It was at his liberty to have made us men or not, and when we were men, to make us Christians or not. But being made, we are made lords over all; all things are put under our feet, being one with Christ, as Ps. viii. 6. In the thoughts hereof our hearts should rise up to the Lord thankfully, and say, as he doth there, 'Lord, how wonderful is thy name in all the world.'

Use 4. And fourthly,* it should teach us, for matter of judgment, though it be a shame for us to be taught it, *that there is a God and a wise God.* There are a company, yea, a world of things in the world of different ranks and natures, as evil and good, &c., and yet you see how one thing is disposed for another. The sun shines upon the earth; the earth is fruitful for the beasts; the beasts serve man; and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Where there are many things, and things that understand not themselves, and yet there is subordination, there must needs be a wise God that made all things, and sets all in this frame and order. And as it shews there is a God, so that this God is one, because all tend to one. There are a world of things, but all are for man. There are a world of Christians, but all are for Christ, and Christ is for God. Where there are variety of things, and all ordered to one, there must needs be one eternal, wise God. It helps and stablisheth our faith in that grand point, to know that there is a wise, understanding, gracious, powerful God, that rules and marshals all the creatures, otherwise than themselves can do. If there be order in things that have no understanding, surely the ordering of them must come from an understanding. The work of nature, as we say, is a work of intelligence: as in bees, there is planted a wonderful instinct, and in other things, but they understand it not themselves. Therefore the work of the creature, being a work of understanding, it must needs come from him that is a higher understanding, that orders these things. If all these things, good and evil, creatures, states, and conditions, serve God's children, and they are for God, then certainly there is a wise God that orders these things out of goodness to us. And we finding all

* Misprinted 'thirdly.'—G.

things ordered to us, should order ourselves to God. If there be a God that hath ordained variety of things, and of his goodness hath placed us in this rank of things, that all should be our servants, we ought to refer all our endeavours, what we are, and what we can do, to the glory of this God. And this indeed is the disposition of all those that can speak these words with any comfort, 'All things are ours, Paul, and Apollos, magistrates, ministers, life, and death, things present or to come; all are ours.' Those that can speak these words with comfort, are thus disposed; finding all things theirs, they refer all to the glory of him who hath made all things serviceable to them. But to proceed.

I come now to the next branch.

'Ye are Christ's.'

It pleaseth us well to hear that 'all things are ours.' Aye, but we must know further, that there is one above to whom we owe homage, and of whom we have and hold all that we have. 'Ye are Christ's.' This is the tenure we hold all things by, because 'we are Christ's.' Whatsoever the tenure *in capite* be amongst men (which you are better acquainted with than myself*), I am sure it is the best tenure in religion, 'All is ours,' because 'we are Christ's.' We hold all in that tenure. If we be not Christ's, nothing is ours comfortably. 'We are Christ's,' and therefore 'all is ours.'

Quest. But what say you then of those that are not Christ's? Are not the things theirs that they have, because they are not Christ's; or have wicked men nothing that may be called theirs?

Ans. I answer, they have. And it is rigour in some that say otherwise, as that wicked men are usurpers of what they have. They have a title, both a civil title and a title before God. God gave Nebuchadnezzar Tyrus as a reward for his service; and God gives wicked men a title of that they have. And they shall never be called to account at the day of judgment for possessing of what they had, but for abusing that possession. And therefore properly they are not usurpers, in regard of possession; but they shall render an account of the abuse of God's good bounty.

It is in this as it is in the king's carriage to a traitor. When a king gives a traitor his life, he gives him meat and drink that may maintain his life, by the same right that he gives him his life. God will have wicked men to live so long, to do so much good to the church; for all are not extremely wicked that are not Christ's members, that go to hell. But there are many of excellent parts and endowments, that God hath appointed to do him great service. Though they have an evil eye, and intend not his service, but to raise themselves in the world, yet God intends their service for much purpose, and he gives them encouragement in the world, as he will not be behind with the worst men. If they do him service, they shall have their reward in that kind, Ps. lxii. 12. If it be in policy of state, they shall have it in that; and they shall have commendations and applause of men, if they look for that; and if he give them not heaven, they cannot complain, for they care not for that; they did it not with an eye for that. Now if God use the labour and the industry and the parts and endowments of wicked men for excellent purposes, he will give them their reward for outward things: 'Verily, you have your reward,' saith Christ, Mat. vi. 2.

Obj. But the apostle saith, 'All things are yours,' because 'ye are Christ's;' as if those that have not Christ have nothing.

Ans. It is true, howsoever, in some sense, men that are out of Christ, that

* The auditory being at 'Gray's Inn.'—G.

have not his Spirit, have title by virtue of a general providence to what they have ; yet they have not a title so good and so full as a godly man, as a Christian hath. They have not this tenure to hold all things in Christ. Therefore their tenure is not so good, nor so comfortable, in three respects.

[1.] *First*, they have them not *from the love of God in Christ*. They have it from God and Christ, as the governor and ruler of the world, and making all things serviceable to the church. Therefore he gives these gifts even to wicked men ; for the good of others, as the governor of the world ; but he bestows them on his children out of love.

[2.] And then, *secondly*, they have them not from God, *as a father in covenant*. They have no title as children of God ; for so a Christian is the heir of the world. The first-born was to have a double portion. A true Christian hath a double portion. 'All things are his' here ; and heaven is his when he dies. 'Things present are his' while he lives ; and 'things to come are his,' when he goes hence.

[3.] And then, *thirdly*, in regard to the end, *to wicked men they do not further their salvation*. They have them not from God with grace to use them well. But God's children, as they have them from his love, and from God as a Father in covenant, so it is for their good. Wicked men they have *donum Dei sine Deo*, they have the gifts of God without God ; without the love and favour of God, as Bernard saith well (*j*). But God's children have the gifts of God with God too. Together with the gifts and good things from him, they have his favour, that is better than his gift. For all the good things we enjoy in this world, they are but conduits to convey his favour. God's love and mercy in Christ is conveyed in worldly things ; and the same love that moved God to us in heaven, and happiness in the world to come, it moves him to give us daily bread. There is no difference in the love, as the same love that moves a father to give his son his inheritance, moves him to give him breeding and necessaries in the time of his non-age. We are here in our non-age, and God shares out such a state to us ; and from the same love that he gives us these things, he gives us heaven afterwards. Now wicked men have not this full degree of title. Yet they have a title, as I said before ; and they shall never answer for the possession of what they have, but for the wicked use of that possession.

Case 4. Again, a little further to clear one case I touched before.* If all things be ours because we are Christ's, may we as are Christians use all things as we list?†

Ans. There is a fourfold restraint in regard of the use.

[1.] There is a restraint, *first, of religion*. Though all things be ours in regard of conscience : we may eat and drink, and use any creature of God without scruple ; yet there is a restraint put upon it sometimes in religion : that it be no prejudice to the worship of God. In the Lord's day we may refresh ourselves, but not so as to hinder the worship of God : here is a higher restraint put upon our liberty.

[2.] And then, *secondly, sobriety*, it puts a restraint upon our liberty. 'All things are ours' in Christ. We must not take liberty, therefore, to exceed sobriety. *Licetis perimus omnes*, it is an ordinary speech, we all perish by lawful things (*k*). Howsoever, 'all things are ours,' for our use ; yet we must use them soberly, and not exceed.

[3.] And then, *thirdly, charity* puts another restraint.‡ It must be

* Cf. page 16.—G.

† That is, 'as we choose.'—G.

‡ In margin here, 'See Case 4 before.'

without offence to others. We must not think to have a free use of that may offend others. In that case there is a restraint. Therefore St Paul saith, 'I will never eat flesh whilst I live, rather than I will offend my brother,' 1 Cor. viii. 13.

[4.] And in the *last place*, in case of *obedience*. There is a restraint upon 'all things' we have; that is, in outward things. Howsoever no man may meddle with the conscience; yet the magistrate may restrain this or that creature. 'All things are ours,' because we are Christ's. This may satisfy in some doubts.

Now to come more directly to this branch, to shew how 'we are Christ's.'

We are Christ's in all the sweet terms and relations that can be. Name what you will, 'we are Christ's.' We are his subjects, as he is a king: we are his servants, as he is a lord; we are his scholars, as he is a prophet. If we take Christ as a head, we are his members; if we take Christ as a husband, we are his spouse; if we take Christ as a foundation, we are the building; if we take Christ as food, he incorporates us to himself; if we be temples, he dwells in us. There is no relation, nor any degree of subjection and subordination, but it sets forth this sweet union and agreement between Christ and us. So that 'Christ is ours,' and 'we are Christ's' in all the sweet relations that can be. We are his members, his spouse, his children: for he is the 'everlasting Father,' Isa. ix. 6. He is all that can be to us, and we are all that can be to him, that is lovely and good.

But yet all relations are short.* They reach not to set out the excellency and the truth and reality of this, that 'we are Christ's.' For what is a head to the body (which is one of the nearest)? Can the head quicken the dead body? No. But Christ can, *agere in non membrum*; he can work in a dead member, that that is not a member, to make it one. Can a husband change his spouse? Moses could not. He married a blackamore. He could not alter her disposition or her hue (1). But Christ can alter his spouse. He is such a foundation as makes all 'living stones.' Therefore, in St John xvii. 21, because there is no manner of union in the world, that can serve to set out the nearness we have to Christ, saith Christ, 'Father, I will that they may be one, as thou and I am one.' He sets it out by that incomprehensible union. He goes divinely above earthly things, to set out the reality of this, how we are Christ's and Christ ours. We are Christ's in the most intimate nearness that can be; we are so Christ's, as nothing in the world else is, when we believe once. Though all things are Christ's, yet the church is Christ's in a more peculiar manner. There is a peculiarity in this that we are Christ's; that is, we are in the nearest bonds, nearer to Christ than the very angels. For they are not the 'spouse' of Christ; they are not the 'members' of Christ. They are ministering spirits to Christ, and so to us. There is no creature under heaven, no, nor in heaven, that is Christ's, as we are. We are his 'portion,' his 'jewels,' his 'beloved.' We are Christ's in all the terms of nearness and dearness that can be.

And this nearness is mutual. We are Christ's, and Christ is ours. He dwells in us and we in him. He abides in us, and we in him. He is in us as the vine is in the branches, and we are in him as the branches in the vine. And as it is intimate and mutual, so it is eternal; we are Christ's for ever.

But to come more particularly: By what title are we Christ's?

(1.) The *first* title that Christ hath to us is the same that he hath to all

* That is—they fall short of the relation between Christ and his people.—Ed.

things else. All things are God's and Christ's *by creation* and preservation: all things consist in Christ.

(2.) But, *secondly*, there is a more near title than by creation; namely, *by gift*. For the Father hath given us to him. For all that are God's by election, he gave them to Christ, to purchase for them* 'by his blood.'

(3.) And, *thirdly*, he hath title to us '*by redemption*.' We cost him dear. We are a spouse of blood to him, the price of his blood, Exod. iv. 25. He died for us. We could not be Christ's, but he must redeem us out of the hands of our enemies. And God would have his justice satisfied, that grace and justice might meet and kiss one another. God's justice must be satisfied before Christ would have us: for however there was *amor benevolentiae*, a love of good will, that gave us to Christ, yet till Christ redeemed us, and made us his own, there was not *amor amicitiae*, a love of friendship between God and us. So all friendship comes upon title of redemption.

(4.) Then, *fourthly*, upon redemption, there is a *title of marriage* that Christ hath to us. God, that brought Adam to Eve in paradise, he brings Christ and us together. And

(5.) We *give consent on our part*, as it is in marriage, to Christ. He is our husband, and we give our consent to take Christ to be so, that he shall rule and govern us, and we take him for better for worse in all conditions. Thus we see how Christ comes to be ours, and we to be Christ's. Now, the points that arise from this branch, 'And ye are Christ's,' are these,—

First, That 'all things are Christ's.'

Secondly, That 'we are Christ's.'

Thirdly, That 'all are ours, because we are Christ's.'

The connection of the text is this: 'All things are yours.' Why? Because 'you are Christ's.' How follows that? Because all things are Christ's. If all things were not Christ's and we Christ's, the argument would not hold. So that all are Christ's first. All the promises are made to Christ first, and all good things are his first. All the 'promises are yea in him,' 2 Cor. i. 20; they are made in him, and they are 'amen,' they are performed in him. I need not stand much upon this. All things in the world are Christ's, for he made all, as it is Col. i. 16, and he hath reconciled all. All things are Christ's, especially by the title of redemption, as he redeemed man. And indeed we could not be Christ's unless Christ had subdued all things to himself. Unless he had possessed all good and subdued all that is ill, how could he have brought us out of the hands of our enemies? Therefore, in St John xvii. 2, our Saviour Christ speaks there of the 'power that his Father had given him over all things.' But this was upon consideration of his resurrection. After his resurrection, he saith, 'All power is given to me in heaven and earth,' Mat. xxviii. 18. Christ, as mediator, had title to all things by virtue of the union. As soon as the human nature was knit to the divinity, there was a thorough title to all things. But it was not discovered,* especially till the resurrection was past, when he had accomplished the work of redemption.

He was also to ask. 'Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thy possession,' Ps. ii. 8. God would not let his Son have anything (though he redeemed the church, and all things, in some sort) without asking. Shall any man then think to have anything without prayer, when all things were conveyed to the Son of God by asking?

Further, Christ is 'the heir of the world,' Heb. i. 2. Therefore, all

* Qu. 'to purchase them'?—Ed.

† That is, 'manifested.'—G.

things must be his as the heir. This is a clear point, and I do but name it, because it hath a connection with the truths I am now to speak of.

Hereupon it comes, that 'all things are ours, because Christ is ours.' Christ is said 'to be the first-born of many brethren,' Rom. viii. 29; and the 'first-begotten of every creature,' Col. i. 15; and 'the first-begotten from the dead,' Col. i. 18. All these shew the priority of Christ, that Christ is first, that he should have the pre-eminence in all things. For Christ is the prime creature of all; he is God's masterpiece. That is the reason why nothing can be ours but it must be Christ's first. He is the first-begotten of every creature, both as God and man. He is the 'first-begotten,' because he is more excellent in order and dignity than any other whatsoever. So he is the 'first-begotten from the dead,' 'the first fruits' of them that sleep, because all that rose rose by virtue of him. Hereupon it is that we can have nothing good but we must have it in Christ first.

Use 1. Therefore we must know this to make a right use of it, *whatsoever privilege we consider of as ours, we ought to see it in Christ first.* Our election is in Christ first. He is chosen to be our head. Our justification is in Christ first. He is justified and freed from our sins being laid to his charge as our surety, and therefore we are freed. Our resurrection is in Christ first. We rise, because he is the 'first-begotten from the dead.' Our ascension is in Christ, and our sitting at the right hand of God in him first. All things that are ours, they are first his; what he hath by nature we have by grace. Why do the angels attend upon us, and are ministering spirits to us? We are Christ's, and he is the Jacob's ladder upon whom the angels ascend and descend. All the communion those blessed spirits have with mankind is because we are Christ's. They are ministering spirits to Christ first, and then to us, because we are Christ's.

Therefore it is a good meditation, fitting the gospel, never to think of ourselves in the first place, when we think of any prerogative, but to think of it in our blessed Saviour, who began to us in all. He was the first in everything that is good. As the elder brother, it was fit it should be so. And he must have the prerogative in all things. Therefore,

Use 2. Let us glorify Christ in everything. When we think of our title to anything, think, this I have by Christ: be it of our justification or glorification, this I had by Christ and in Christ.

This is another use we are to make of it, the rather because it sweetens all things we have. If all things should come immediately from God, they were comfortable, but whenas all shall be derived from God by Christ, we have God's and Christ's love together. There is not the least good thing we have, but we must think, This I have by Christ, this victory over ill, and this conversion of ill to good. The thing is sweet, but the love of Christ is sweeter. The thing itself is not so good as the spring whence it comes. It pleaseth God we have a triple comfort at once in every good thing: comfort in God the Father, that we have it from his love, and comfort in the Son of God, and comfort in the creature. Therefore, let us not be swallowed up in the creature, but reason thus: This is a sweet comfort, but whence have I it? Oh! it is from Christ, and the love of Christ, and I have Christ from the Father. There is Christ, and God the Father, and the thing, and the love of Christ, and the Father, which is sweeter than the thing itself. As in the gifts from friends, the gift is not so sweet as the love it comes from. The love and favour of God is better than the thing itself. This is indeed a comfortable observation to know, that 'all things are ours, because we are Christ's.' For why is Paul, and

Cephas, and the ministers ours? They are the ministers of Christ first. 'We are the ministers of Christ, and your servants, for his sake,' saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 5.

Why is life and death ours? Because Christ hath conquered death first; and it was the passage of Christ to his glory. He conquered the ill of it. He took away 'the sting of it;' and thereupon it is so good and useful to us. He hath the 'key of hell and death;' that is, he hath the government of it, having overcome it. And 'things present and to come.' Heaven, which he now possesseth, it is his, and thereupon it comes to be ours. Therefore, let us think of Christ in all things, and think of the sweetness of all things from this, that they come from Christ.

To enlarge this point a little further. We have all from Christ, and in Christ, yea, and by Christ, and through him.

[1.] *First*, We have all we have in Christ, *as a head*, as the first, as our 'elder brother,' as a root, as the 'second Adam.' We have all in him, by confidence in him. We have whatsoever is good in him.

[2.] And, *secondly*, we have all by and through him, *as a mediator*, for his sake. We have title to all, because Christ, by redemption, hath purchased a right to all, in and through him.

[3.] *Thirdly*, We have all by him, by a kind of working *as the efficient cause*, because we have the Spirit of God to extract good out of all. For, being reasonable creatures, God will make all ours, as becomes understanding creatures; that is, by sanctifying our understanding to extract the quintessence out of every thing. For a Christian hath the Spirit to let him see that God is leading him by his Spirit to good in all. And whence comes the Spirit? From Christ. Christ hath satisfied the wrath of God the Father. And now the Father and Christ, both as reconciled, send the Spirit as the fruit of both their loves. So Christ, as the efficient cause, makes all ours, because the Spirit is his, by which Spirit we make all ours.

[4.] And, *fourthly*, Christ is an *exemplary cause*. We have all in him, and through him, and by him, as an exemplary pattern. The same Spirit that subdued all to him subdues all things to us. To make this clear a little. There was in Christ *regnum patientiæ*, a kingdom of patience, as well as *regnum potentiæ*, a kingdom of power and glory. There was a kingdom of patience; that is, such a kingdom as Christ exercised in his greatest abasement, whereby he made all things, even the worst, to be serviceable to his own turn and the church's. So in every member of his, there is a kingdom of patience set up, whereby he subjects all things to him. To make it yet clearer.

When Christ died, which was the lowest degree of abasement, there was a kingdom of patience then. What! When he was subdued by death and Satan, was there a kingdom then? Yes, a kingdom. For though visibly, he was overcome and nailed to the cross; yet invisibly, he triumphed over principalities and powers. For by death he satisfied his Father; and he being satisfied, Satan is but a jailor. What hath he to do when God is satisfied by death? Christ never conquered more than on the cross. When he died he killed death, and Satan, and all. And [did] not Christ reign on the cross when he converted the thief? when the sun was astonished, and the earth shook and moved, and the light was eclipsed? Who cares for Cæsar when he is dead? But what more efficacious than Christ when he died? He was most practical when he seemed to do nothing. In patience he reigned and triumphed; he subjected the greatest enemies to himself, Satan, and death, and the wrath of God, and all. In

the same manner all things are ours, the worst things that befell God's children, death, and afflictions, and persecutions. There is a kingdom of patience set up in them. The Spirit of God subdues all base fears in us, and a child of God never more triumphs than in his greatest troubles. This is that that the apostle saith, Rom. viii. 37, 'In all these things we are more than conquerors.' How is that, that in those great troubles we should be 'conquerors and more'? Thus the spirit of a Christian, take him as a Christian, reigns and triumphs at that time. For the devil and the world labour to subdue the spirits of God's children and their cause. Now to take them at the worst, the cause they stand for, and will stand for it; and the spirit that they are led with is undaunted. So that the Spirit of Christ is victorious and conquering in them, and most of all at such times.

It is true of a Christian indeed that one speaks of a natural man—but he speaks too vaingloriously—he subdues hope and fear, and is more sublime than all others. A Christian is so *dum patitur vincit*, &c.: when he suffers he conquers, nay, more then than at other times; for the spirit gets strength, and the cause gets strength by suffering, and answerable to his suffering is his comfort and strength. So that all things are his. The Spirit that subdued all things to Christ, subdues them to him. Nay, he makes all advantageous for the time to come; as St Paul saith, 'These light afflictions that we suffer, work unto us an exceeding weight of glory,' 2 Cor. iv. 17; because they fit and prepare our desires for glory. And answerable to that measure that we glorify God, shall our reward be in heaven; and the more we suffer, the more 'entrance' we have into heaven in this world; we enter further into the kingdom of grace, and by consequent into the kingdom of glory. So that there is a kingdom set up in a Christian, as there was in Christ, in patience in suffering. So we see that 'all things are ours,' because 'we are Christ's,' and what we may observe from thence.

To shut up this point with some use.

Use 1. *Let us be stirred up to study Christ, and in Christ to study our own excellency.* St Paul accounted all 'dross and dung, in comparison of the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ,' Phil. iii. 8. And indeed we cannot study Christ but there will be a reflection upon the soul presently; it is a transforming study. The study of the love of Christ must needs make us love him again. The study of the choice that Christ hath made of us, it will make us choose him again, and to say, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee?' Ps. lxxiii. 25. If we study the grace and mercy of Christ, we cannot but be transformed in marvellous respect to him again. Therefore let us raise up our thoughts more to think of Christ, and the excellencies of Christ, with appropriation to ourselves, 'All things are yours, and you are Christ's.' We should not study Christ and any excellency in him, but we should also think, This is mine, this is for me. The more the spouse hears of the riches and advancement of her husband, the more she blesses herself, and saith, This is for me. And the more we think of Christ, the more we think of our own advancement and excellency. Therefore we should be willing to hear 'the unsearchable riches of Christ' unfolded to us; for these serve to kindle the love of the spouse to Christ.

The ministers are *paranymphs*,* friends of the bridegroom, that come between the spouse and Christ, to make up the match between them; and one blessed way whereby they do it, is to unfold to the church her own

* That is, *παρὰνυμφος*.

beggary, and the riches she hath by Christ; her own necessity, and the excellency that she hath in Christ. The main scope of the ministry is to shew us our beggary in ourselves, and our danger: that we are more indebted than we are worth; that we are indebted to God's justice for body, and soul, and all; and as we are indebted, so we must have supply from the riches of another of necessity, or else we go to prison and perish eternally.

Now Christ doth not only pay our debts—for that we may look for out of self-love—but he is 'the chief of ten thousand,' Cant. v. 10, he is an excellent person in himself. Now the unfolding of the excellencies in Christ is a means to procure the contract and marriage between the church and Christ. And let us labour by all means to be one with Christ, to study further union and communion with Christ, because upon this term and tenure 'all things are ours,' if we be Christ's; if not, nothing is ours but damnation. And considering that the more union we have with him, the more we shall know our own prerogative, that 'all things present and to come are ours,' therefore we should labour to know him more. There are three graces tending to union:

Knowledge, faith, and love.

The more we know him, the more we shall trust him. 'They that know thy name will trust in thee,' Ps. ix. 10. And the more we trust in him, the more we shall love him. Knowledge breeds trust, and trust breeds love. Therefore let us labour to grow in our knowledge, and trust, and love to Christ.

And to that end, as I said, to take all occasions to hear of the excellencies of Christ, to study them ourselves, and to hear of them from others, especially in the ministry. In Cant. v. 9, those that were not converted, the daughters of Jerusalem, they ask the church, 'What is thy beloved more than another's beloved?' 'My beloved,' saith the church, 'is white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand;' and thereupon she sets him out from top to toe, in all his excellencies, and saith, 'This is my beloved;' and thereupon she that before asked in slighting, 'What is thy beloved more than another's beloved?' in the 6th chapter saith, 'Where is thy beloved, that we may seek him with thee?''* So when we know Christ and his excellencies, the next *query* will be, 'Where is thy beloved?' Of all arguments in divinity we can study, we hear of nothing more comfortable than of Christ and the benefits we have by him; for God will be glorified in nothing so much as in that great mystery of Christ. Therefore let these things be more and more sought after.

Quest. But how shall I know that Christ is mine, or that I am in Christ, or no? For all depends upon this tenure, that we are in Christ.

Ans. Ask thine own heart. (1.) Hast thou given thy *consent*, and contracted thyself to Christ, or no? This is one way, as I said, whereby we are Christ's, by giving our consent. Our own hearts will tell us whether we have given our consent to take Christ to be a head, a governor, and a king to rule us, as well as for a priest to die for us. If thou be content to come under the government of Christ, to be ruled by his Spirit, thou mayest say, I am Christ's; I have given up myself to him; I am content to take him. We know what hath proceeded from our own will, and there are none that have given up themselves to Christ, but they may know it. Therefore let us consider whether we have passed our consent to Christ, or no. I fear it is yet to do with many; for instead of contracting themselves to Christ, they have yielded to their own lusts.

* Cf. Vol. II., page 132, *seq.*—G.

(2.) Again, *secondly*, consider *by what spirit thou art guided*, whether by the Spirit of Christ or no. 'He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his,' Rom. v. 8. Christ is a husband that will rule his spouse. He will rule in his own temple and house. He is a head that will rule his own members. Consider what spirit guides and actuates thee, whether the Spirit of Christ or the spirit of the world. If the Spirit of Christ rule in us, it will work as it did in Christ, that judgment of things that Christ had, heavenly things to be the most excellent, and the same judgment of persons to esteem of those that Christ esteems of. It will work the same carriage to God, to men, to enemies, to Satan. If we have the Spirit of Christ, it will transform us to be like Christ in our judgment and dispositions and affections every way, in some degree, according to our capacity and measure. Therefore let us not deceive ourselves; if we be led by the spirit of the world, and not by the Spirit of Christ, we cannot say with comfort, I am Christ's. When every one shall come to challenge their own, the devil will say, Thou art mine, thou wert led by my spirit. But if we yield ourselves to be guided by the blessed truth of God, when that challenge shall come, 'Who is on my side. Who?' Christ will own us for his in evil times.

(3.) *Thirdly*, He that is Christ's will stand for Christ upon all occasions, and stand for religion. He will not be a lukewarm neuter. If we be Christ's, it is impossible but we should have a word to speak for him and for religion. If we be Christ's, we will be strong for Christ; we will be true to him; we will not betray Christ and the cause of religion that is put into our hands. But, by the way, let us take heed of making this a name of faction, as the Corinthians did, to say 'I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I am of Christ;' as some that say they are neither papists nor protestants, but Christians. But in times wherein profession is required, a man must shew his religion here. Not to say, I am Christ's, is to be an atheist. In case of confession and profession of religion, we must own the side of Christ and say we are Christ's indeed.

It is said in the Revelation, that so many hundreds and thousands were sealed with a 'seal in their foreheads,' Rev. vii., *throughout*. For even as the slaves of anticrist are sealed in the hand, they have a mark in their hand; that is, they are bold for anticrist; so all God's children are sealed in their foreheads. That is the place of confession and profession, the forehead being an open place. Christ carries God's broad seal. He seals all that come to heaven in the forehead. He seals them first in their hearts to believe the truth, and then he seals them in the forehead, openly to confess. 'With the heart we believe, and with the mouth we confess to salvation,' Rom. x. 10. Therefore those that are not bold to confess and profess religion when they are called to it, they are none of Christ's 'sealed ones,' for he seals them to make them bold in the profession of religion. Let this be one evidence whether thou art Christ's or no; if the question be, 'Who is on my side?' to own Christ's side, to stand for Christ and the religion reformed and stablished. If a man do not this, he cannot say I am Christ's; but his heart will give his tongue the lie, if he stand not boldly for the cause of Christ. 'He that is ashamed of me before men, I will be ashamed of him before my heavenly Father,' Mark iii. 38.

It is a comfortable consideration, if upon trial we find ourselves Christ's, that we own the cause of Christ and his side. It is the best side, and we shall find it so in the hour of death and the day of judgment. If we find ourselves to be Christ's, what a comfort will this be? Of all conditions in

the world, it is the sweetest and the safest condition to be in Christ. It is to have all below us ours, and all above us too to be ours ; to have God the Father ours, and God the Holy Ghost ; to have all in heaven and earth to be ours, 'things present and things to come.' What a comfortable consideration is this in all storms, to be housed in Christ, to dwell in Christ, to be clothed with Christ ! When the storm of God's anger shall come upon a nation, and at the day of judgment to be found in Christ, 'not having our own righteousness,' Philip. iii. 9, and in the hour of death to die in Christ ! If we be Christ's, we live in him and die in him, and shall be found in him at the day of judgment. If we be Christ's, we are in heaven already in Christ our head. We sit in heavenly places together with him. In all the vicissitude and interchanging of things in the world, which are many, 'life and death, and things present, and things to come,' there is a world of vicissitudes ; but in all, in life and death, look backward, or forward, or upward, or downward, if a man be in Christ, he is upon a rock. He may overlook all things as his servants. All things shall be commanded by God to serve for his good, and to bring him to heaven, to yield him safe conduct. We study evidences and other things. This is worth our study more and more, to make this sure, that we are Christ's, and Christ is ours. The more we grow in knowledge, and faith, and love, the more we shall grow in assurance of this.

Use 2. Again, if we be Christ's, *why then should we fear want, when all things are ours, and we are Christ's?* Can a man want at the fountain ? Can a man want light that is in the sun ? Can a Christian that hath all things his ; and in this tenure his, all things are his, because Christ is his, —can anything be wanting to him ? It should comfort us against the time to come, if we be stripped of all, yet we have the Fountain of all. We must be stripped of all at the hour of death, whether we will or no ; but if we be Christ's, and Christ be ours, all things are in him in an eminent manner. It is a wonderful comfort for the present, against all fears and wants ; and it is a comfort for the time to come, that when all things shall be taken from us, yet he that is better than all things, that is better than the world itself, will remain to us. Therefore let us think of these things. It is wondrous comfortable to be Christ's, and to be his in such a peculiar manner.

Use 3. And, *thirdly, let us learn, as we are advised, Ps. xlv. 10, 'to forget our father's house,' to forget all former base acquaintance, and to be contented with Christ.* What saith our blessed Saviour in the Gospel ? 'Those that hear my words, they are my brother, and sister, and mother,' Mark iii. 35. Are they so ? And shall not we, for Christ's sake, that is nearer than any in the world, 'hate father and mother,' &c., Luke xiv. 26, that is, not regard them for Christ. If we be so near Christ, and he will stick to us when all will leave us, then let us answer Christ's love. He is to us instead of all kindred ; let him be so, if we cannot have their love upon other terms than to forsake Christ. Thus we see what we may observe from this, that 'we are Christ's.' Now it is said here besides, that 'Christ is God's.'

Here is a sacred circle that ends where it begins ; for all things come out from God at the first, and all things go back again to God and end in him. 'All are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' Man is, as it were, the horizon of all things ; that hath one half of the heavens below, divided and terminated, and the other above. A holy man is between all things, above him and under him. All things are his below him. They

serve his turn and use, to help him to heaven, as a *viaticum*. And all things above him are his; that is the cause that all things below are his. Now to come to this last branch.

'And Christ is God's.'

In what sense is Christ God's? Was he not the Son of God? Yes! That is true. He was the eternal Son of God. But that is not here meant. Christ is God's, as Mediator. The Father, the first person of the Deity, is the fountain; and the Mediator comes from him in a double sense.

First, Because the Father, the first person, was offended; therefore he must appoint a mediator. Now, by what bonds is Christ God's? By all the strong terms that can be devised. God sent him into the world: 'He sent his Son,' Rom. iii. 25. God set him forth as a propitiation: 'Him hath the Father sealed,' John vi. 27. He came forth with God's broad seal. God sealed him to be Mediator in his baptism, and by his working of miracles, and raising him from the dead. God the Father sealed him, and set his stamp upon him to be his. He sent him, and set him forth, and sealed him: 'He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows,' Ps. xlv. 7. He was anointed to shew his authority. Kings, and priests, and prophets were anointed. So God the Father hath appointed him to be king, priest, and prophet of his church. He is anointed in all these terms: 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell,' Col. i. 19. And Mat. xi. 27, 'All power is given to me of my Father, in heaven and earth.' So when he was to ascend, saith he, 'All power is given to me in heaven and earth,' Mat. xxviii. 18. He came out from the Father with all authority. The Scripture is marvellous pregnant in this point, to shew with what authority Christ came from the Father. The points here considerable are, first of all, that all things are Christ's, and therefore we are Christ's; so

All things are the Father's.

This is the highest degree. We can go no further. There is the centre wherein we must rest: 'All things are the Father's.' All things are of God, that made all of nothing, and can turn all to dust at his pleasure. 'All things are of him, and by him, and through him,' as it is Romans xi. 1, *seq.*, divinely set forth. There is no question of this. It were to add light to the sun to shew that all things are the Father's; and hereupon Christ is the Father's in the first place. And then 'all things are ours,' because 'Christ is ours,' and 'Christ is the Father's.' The point that is more material, and worth standing on, is this, that

Though all things come from the Father, yet not from the Father immediately, but they come from Christ.

Christ is the Father's, and we are the Father's in Christ; and all things are ours in Christ. There is no immediate communion between us and the Father, but Christ comes between God and us.

Why is this needful?

For many undeniable reasons.

Reason 1. First, Because there is no proportion between God the Father and us, but a vast disproportion. He is holiness and purity, and a 'consuming fire' of himself. What are we without a mediator, a middle person, without Christ coming between? Nothing but stubble, fit fuel for his wrath. So that all love and good that comes from the first Person, it must come to us through a middle person: 'You are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' We cannot endure the brightness of the majesty of the Father. It is too great a presence: 'He dwells in that height that no man can attain unto,'

as the apostle saith, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Therefore there must come a person between, invested in our nature. God in our nature comes between the Father and us, and all things come from God to us in him. As the salt waters of the sea, when they are strained through the earth, they are sweet in the rivers, so the waters of majesty and justice in God, though they be terrible, and there be a disproportion between them and us, yet being strained and derived* through Christ, they are sweet and delightful; but out of Christ there is no communion with God. He is a friend to both sides: to us as man, to him as God. All things come originally from the fountain of all, God. They are God's; and you know the three persons meet, in one nature, in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Ay; but, as I said, the holy God doth not convey immediately good things to us, but by the mediation of Christ. For God would have it thus since the fall, that having lost all, we should recover all again by the 'second Adam,' that should be a public person, a mediator between him and us; and so through Christ we should have access and entrance to the Father, and that by him we should have boldness. And that God again downward might do all things with due satisfaction to his justice; because, as I said, we are as stubble, and God 'a consuming fire.' Were not Christ in the middle, what intercourse could there be between the Lord and us? No other than between the fire and the stubble: majesty on his side, and misery and sin on ours. There must be a mediator to bring these two contraries together. So all comes downward through Christ from God to us. God doth all in Christ to us. He chooseth us in Christ, and sanctifies us in Christ; he bestows all spiritual blessings on us in Christ, as members of Christ. To Christ first, and through him, he conveys it to us. He hath put fulness in him, and of his fulness 'we receive grace for grace,' John i. 16; for Christ is complete, and in him we are complete.

Reason 2. Then again, *secondly*, God will have it thus, as it is fit it should be so, *because Christ is fitted for it.* He is the Son by nature; and it is fit that we, that are sons by adoption, should have communion with the Father in the Son by nature. He is beloved of the Father first: 'In him I am well pleased,' Mat. iii. 17. We come to have communion with God in him in whom he is well pleased. Christ is *primum amabile*, the first beloved of all; for God looks on Christ as the first begotten of him. He is the first Son by nature, and beloved of God. Hereupon God comes to delight in us that are sons by adoption, that are heirs, because we are 'fellow heirs with Christ.' He delights in us, because we are one with Christ, in whom he beholds us.

Reason 3. Again, *thirdly*, God doth this, not only to keep his state in remoteness from us, and his greatness, *but he doth it in mercy.* He hath appointed Christ to come between, that now we might not be afraid to go to God by the middle person, appointed by himself, 'who is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.' Now, we go to God, who is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; God not simply and barely considered, but God incarnate. There is no going to him in ourselves, but God being bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; as Bernard saith, I go willingly to a Mediator made bone of my bone, my brother (*m*). It was a comfort to Joseph's brethren, that they had Joseph their brother the second man in the kingdom. And is it not a sweet comfort to Christians that they have one that is the second person in the Trinity, that is their brother, that is the high steward of heaven and earth? Is it not a comfort to the

* That is, 'communicated.'—G.

spouse that her husband is advanced over all, and is nearest to the king? Is it not a comfort to every one that is in relation to another to have one that may stand for them, that is both able and willing? Now, Christ is able as God, and willing as our brother; and therefore is a fit person to come between God and us. He can do us good, because he is God; and he will do us good, because he is 'bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.' So we see that Christ is God's, and why there must be a third person come between God and us; and Christ is fitted to be the middle person.

Now, to confirm it by a place of Scripture or two. The Scripture is everywhere full of this argument: 'It pleased God to reconcile all to himself in Christ, in whom we have obtained the inheritance, that in the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ,' Eph. i. 10, *seq.* It is a recapitulation, a bringing all to one again. God the Father, in Christ, brought all to a head again; he brought all to himself again; for without Christ we are scattered, and severed, and distracted* from God. But in Christ God brought in all† one head again, both that are in heaven and in earth. And so in Col. i. 19, 'It pleased God that in Christ all fulness should dwell, and in him to reconcile all things in heaven and earth.'

The use of this is manifold, and very comfortable.

Use 1. First of all, do all things come from God the Father to us in Christ, a middle person? As all things below us are ours in Christ, so all things above us: God the Father is ours in Christ. Then it should teach us *to direct our devotion upward to God, as God comes downward to us.* All things come down from God in Christ. God is the Father of Christ, and Christ is the Father of us. As nothing comes immediately from the Father down to us, so let us not go mediately up but in Christ to the Father; that is, let us offer all our prayers to God in the mediation of his beloved Son, the Son of his own appointing, Jesus Christ. We must ask all in his name. 'Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name,' &c., John xiv. 13, 14. 'Do all in the name of Christ,' Col. iii. 17. It is ignorant presumption, arrogant, and fruitless, in any of our devotions and prayers to God, to go to God in our own name, to think of God without a relation of a Father in Christ. Though we do not alway name Christ, yet we must think of God in the relation of a Father, in which Christ is implied; for how comes he to be a Father but in Christ? He is Christ's first, and ours in him. Let us not consider of a bare naked God, but of God invested with a sweet relation of a Father in Christ, by whom he is become our Father. Therefore, Lord, we come not to thee in our own name, and in our own worth and desert, which is none at all; but we come to thee in the merits of Christ, in the mediation of Christ, in that love thou bearest to him, and that for his sake thou bearest to us that are his members. This is the way of intercourse between God and us. To think of God out of Christ, out of the mediator, it is a terrible thought, nothing more terrible: but to think of God in Christ, nothing more sweet; for now the nature of God is lovely, coming to us in Christ, and the majesty and justice of God are lovely. When it comes through Christ to be satisfied, it is sweet; for, Lord, thou wilt not punish the same sin twice. And the majesty and greatness of God is comfortable. Whatsoever is God's is ours, because Christ is ours. God in his greatness, in his justice, in his power. All things being derived and passing through Christ, are sweet and com-

* That is, 'separated' = violently.—G.

† Qu. 'all in'?—Ed.

fortable to us. Therefore, seeing 'Christ is God's,' and all things come from God in Christ, let it direct us to perform all to God in Christ.

Use 2. Again, secondly, if so be that God be ours, and all things ours in Christ, then, when we are to deal with God the Father, or to deal with Satan, or to deal with others soliciting us, then let us make use of this, *Christ is God's, and I am God's through Christ.* When we have to deal with God the Father, that seems angry for our sins, and our consciences are wakened and terrified, say, Lord, Christ is thine; I have nothing to bring thee myself but a mediator of thy own setting and sending forth; of thine own anointing and sealing; and thou wilt not refuse the righteousness and obedience of a mediator of thine own. Christ is God's. Let us carry our elder brother with us whensoever we would have anything of God. When we have offended him, come not alone, but bring our Benjamin with us; come clothed with our elder brother's garments. God will not refuse the very name of his Son; it is a prevailing name with his Father. It is thine own Son; he is a mediator of thine own: though I have nothing of my own to bring thee, yet I bring thee thine own Son. I beseech you, let us think of this when we have offended God, and our consciences are troubled; let us go to God in the sweet name of his Son.

Use 3. Again, thirdly, if so be that Christ is God's, and nothing comes from God but through Christ, *let us give Christ the greatest pre-eminence.* Christ is of God's own appointment, and all things are ours because Christ is ours; nay, God is ours, because Christ is ours. Therefore let no man set up themselves in our consciences but Christ and God. The conscience is for Christ, for our husband. Christ is ordained of God to be our head, and to be all in all to us of God the Father. Therefore, in the solicitations of our judgment, to judge thus and thus, let us think what saith Christ my husband, who is God's. God will have us hear him: 'This is my beloved Son, hear him,' Mat. iii. 17. He comes with authority from God the Father; what saith he? If it be not the judgment of Christ, who shall sit in my conscience but Christ? Shall the pope? Shall any man usurp by an infallibility of judgment to say it is so; you must, upon pain of damnation, believe it? I cannot but speak a little of it by the way. The modestest and learnedest Jesuit of late times, speaking of this argument of Christ: bringing an objection that some may make against the pope's authority: saith he, If the pope say otherwise, his authority were more to me than the definition of all the holy fathers; nay, saith he, I say with Paul, 'If an angel from heaven should come and say it,' and the pope should say otherwise, I would believe the pope before I would believe an angel from heaven (*n*). Such a place hath that 'man of sin' in the conscience of those great learned men. This is intolerable. We are Christ's; he is our husband. Christ comes with authority from the Father. We must hear him; he is God's. Therefore let no man prevail in our consciences that brings not the word of God and of Christ.

Use 4. Again, fourthly, if Christ be God's, and all things come to us from God by Christ, then *we see a rest for our souls.* We can go no farther than God, and in God to the first person in trinity. The Christian religion pitcheth down a centre for the soul to rest in, a safe pitching place, a safe foundation. It shews our reconciliation with the great God now. Christian religion shews that all is ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's; and there it sets down a rest for our souls. In Mat. xi. 28, Christ, after he had said, 'All things are given me of my Father,' saith he, 'Come unto me,' therefore, 'all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you.'

What encouragement have we to come to him ? ' All things are given me of the Father.' ' Christ is God's.' Therefore ye may boldly come unto me. ' Ye shall find rest to your souls in me.' Ay, but is Christ the last rest ? No ; the Father is the last rest : for in Christ I know the Father is well pleased. Ye shall find rest in Christ, because he hath satisfied the Father. So all solid comfort must be terminated in God, in the first person in the Trinity. We can go no further than God, the first person, the fountain of the Trinity. So you see in that we are Christ's, and Christ is God's, there the soul hath footing for itself in God the Father.

Quest. But may we not rest in Christ ?

Ans. Yes. Because he is authorised of God the Father ; and we can go no further ; for the party offended first of all by our sins is God the Father, and he hath found out this remedy, this mediator. And therefore why should we suspect anything, to trouble our souls, to run in a maze, but go to God in the name of Christ upon this very ground ? Lord, thou that art the party offended, and out of the bowels of mercy hast found out this mediator, I rest in him, because he came out from thee. And therefore here is a solid rest for the soul, when the soul goes back to God the Father, and rests in him. We say of a circle, it is the strongest of all figures, because it is a round figure : it strengtheneth itself ; whereas a straight line is weak. As we see those round bodies that are made arches, &c., they are the strongest figures, because every stone strengthens another ; so this is the strongest reflection of all, that as all things come from God the Father, so when we go to him and rest there, who can make a rupture ? It is the strongest of all. The soul stays not in the way in this and that thing : all are false rests ; but it goes to Christ. And to satisfy the soul the more, when it rests in Christ, it rests in the Father. Therefore when I deal with Christ, and think of Christ, I must think I have to deal with the Father. Christ was incarnate ; it was as much as if the Father had been incarnate ; for it was by his authority. Christ suffered, but God ' gave him to death for us all.' See the Father in all, and there the soul will rest.

We see herein the wondrous strong salvation of a Christian. It is not only founded in the good will of the Son, or of the Father, but it is founded in the love of both, and upon the authority of Christ coming from the Father. For ' God was, in Christ, reconciling the world to himself,' 2 Cor. v. 19. So our salvation is founded and built upon the mutual love of the Father and of the Son to us. The Son loves us as from the Father, and the Father in the Son, so strong is our salvation built.

Use 5. Then again, *fifthly, for comfort.* If Christ be God's, appointed by God a Saviour, and to make all things ours, to bring us back again, shall not we reason with the apostle, Rom. viii. 32, ' If he hath not spared his own Son, but given him to death for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things else ?' That place is a proof of the text in hand. How shall we prove that ' all things are ours' for our good ? Because ' God hath not spared his own Son,' that is better than the world. Therefore God will rather create another world, than we shall want anything that is for our good. If he have ' given his Son for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things ?' as much as shall be conduceable for our good.

Use 6. Now for an use of *duty.* Since God hath ordained and anointed Christ for our good, let us thank God for Christ, as the apostle doth : ' Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' Eph. i. 3. We forget it. We see it is the beginning of every epistle almost of Paul and Peter. ' Blessed be the Lord and Father of Christ,' 1 Peter i. 3. Alas !

how had he been our Father if he had not been the Father of Christ first? And where had been our anointing, if Christ had not been anointed first? Where had been our inheritance, if he had not been the heir first? And where had been his love to us, if he had not loved him first? For there could be no communion between the holy God and us without that middle person. Therefore 'blessed be God, the Father of Christ.'

We bless God for our meat and drink, for the comforts of this world, for everything; but do we remember to bless God for Christ? We bless God for petty things, as indeed we cannot be too much in thanksgiving; it is the employment of heaven. Oh! but let us bless God especially for him, in whom we have all in this world and in another world. Blessed be God for anointing Christ. So 'God loved the world, that he gave his Son,' John iii. 16. He could not express how much. 'Christ is God's.' Therefore bless God for Christ above all other things whatsoever.

Use 7. And now, *seventhly, to go boldly upon all occasions to the throne of grace.* Now in Christ there is good terms between heaven and us. So long as we have our flesh sitting at the right hand of God to plead for us, to be an intercessor and advocate for us, let us go boldly in all our necessities to the throne of grace in the mediation of Christ. 'Christ is God's,' and with God at his right hand in all glory and majesty making request for us, nothing can be thought of more comfortable. Indeed, without these considerations, what is our religion? What is all mortality* without knowing God in Christ? 'This is eternal life, to know thee, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ,' John xvii. 3. It is the beginning of heaven, as Christ saith. It is not only the way to bring us to heaven, but it is initial salvation. The knowledge of God the Father, and the knowledge of Christ coming from the Father with a commission to work all for our good, it is eternal life.

Thus we see what we may observe out of this, that Christ is God's. We can go no further. We cannot take up our rest better than in this. 'All is ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Therefore let us end with that in Rom. xi. 36, 'Of him, and by him, and through him are all things: therefore to him be glory for ever, and for ever.' If all things come from the Father, by and through the Father in Christ, to the Father therefore be all glory for ever and ever. Amen.

* Qu. 'morality'?—G.

NOTES.

(a) P. 3.—'Man hath this added to his dignity, to *know it*. And this is given him, as a schoolman saith, that he may rejoice in that he hath, and him that gave it.' This sentiment occurs with even more than his ordinary grandeur of expression in the 'Thoughts' of Pascal, who has clothed with new splendour many of the incidental observations of the Schoolmen. Pascal was of course much later than Sibbes; but their reading lay in the same directions. Cf. Pascal by Pearce after Faugère; 'Thoughts on Religion,' c. iii. iv.; *Disproportions or Inequalities in Man; The Greatness and the Misery of Man* (1850).

(b) P. 4.—'But should I tell thee what is said by Baronius and some others, and what might be said of the honour of that calling' [the ministry], &c. . . . Cæsar Baronius (or Baron) was a cardinal of the Church of Rome. A list of his numerous ecclesiastical and controversial writings will be found in Watt's *Bibliotheca Britannica*, *sub voce*. Throughout he extols, rather exaggerates, the office of, not the ministry as Sibbes understood it, but the priesthood. This he does in common with all the

papist controversialists, who in proportion as they degrade THE PRIEST, exalt the priests. Pity the Romish writers are so oblivious of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

(c) P. 7.—‘Cephas and Paul are servants of the church, and I that am Peter’s successor am so; but yet he stamps in his coin “That nation and country that will not serve thee, shall be rooted out.” This legend is found on a coin of Pope Julius III., about 1557, as follows:—*GENS. ET. REGNUM. QUOD. NON. SERVIERIT. TIBI PEREBIT.*’ A representation of one of these coins is given by Elliot in his *Horæ Apocalypticæ* (II. page 474, 5th ed., 1862). It is understood to have had special reference to the invasion of England by the Spanish Armada in the following year.

(d) P. 8.—‘As a wise philosopher could say, that man is the end of all things in a semi-circle.’ That is, probably, the final cause, for whose sake the inferior creatures exist.

(e) P. 10.—‘That terrible of terribles, as the philosopher saith’ [of death]. Sibbes usually employs the historic formula of the orator = Cicero; the philosopher = Aristotle. His present reference is probably therefore to the familiar *παντων τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερωτάτος* of Aristotle. The phrase is frequent in the Latin classics also.

(f) P. 11.—‘Indeed, death is the death of itself; death is the death of death.’ Dr John Owen has appropriated these words as the title of one of his most striking books, viz., ‘The Death of Death in the Death of Christ; or a Treatise of the Redemption and Reconciliation that is in the Blood of Christ’ (1642. 4to).

(g) P. 16.—‘And then, all things were not common.’ Sibbes is probably inaccurately reported here. The thought may be thus brought out. ‘All’ [did not make the] things (or property) [which they possessed] common. Without this caveat Sibbes would seem to contradict Acts ii. 44, than whom none would have shrunk with greater horror from so doing. Perhaps the following paraphrase renders the statement of the original: ‘All that believed who were together, had all things common;’ i. e., the associated Christians as distinguished from the permanent residents in Jerusalem.

(h) P. 16.—‘And St Austin saith well, “Surely he was no king that feared he should be a king.”’ The words of St Augustine are, . . . ‘Quid enim? Non erat rex qui timebat fieri rex? Erat omnino’ (Tract. xxv. in Joan vi.). Sibbes appears to have read the sentence without the note of interrogation.

(i) P. 17.—‘And therefore, as St Ambrose saith very well, “If thou hast not nourished one, howsoever in the law thou art not a murderer, yet before God thou art.”’ This sentiment occurs again and again in the writings of St Ambrose, and is dwelt upon in his treatise on Ahab and Naboth’s vineyard; but the actual expression has not been found.

(j) P. 23.—‘As Bernard saith well, *Donum Dei sine Deo*, they have the gifts of God, without God; without the love and favour of God.’ The passage referred to is probably the following, ‘*Neque enim quæ habemus ab eo, servare aut tenere possumus sine eo.*’—*Bern. in Ps. xc., Sermon I.*

(k) P. 23.—‘*Licetis perimus omnes*, it is an ordinary speech: we all perish by lawful things.’ This is probably a recollection of Gregory’s fuller statement: ‘*Solus in illicitis non cadit, qui se aliquando et a licitis caute restringit*’ (Moral. lib. v. et Homil 35 in Evang.).

(l) P. 24.—‘Moses . . . married a blackamore. He could not alter her disposition,’ &c. This, which is a common illustration in Sibbes’s age, is surely unwarranted, at least if by ‘blackamore’ he intended what we understand thereby, viz., a thick-lipped negress. Shakespeare makes a similar mistake respecting Othello.

(m) P. 33.—‘As Bernard saith, I go willingly to a Mediator made bone of my bone, my brother.’ The following are the words of Bernard:—*Ut ex æquo partibus congruens mediator, neutri suspectus sit, Deus filius Dei fiat homo, fiat filius hominis; et certum me reddat in hoc osculo oris sui. Securus suscipio mediatorem Dei filium quem agnosco et meum. Minime, plane, jam mihi suspectus erit. Frater enim et caro mea est. Puto enim, spernere me non poterit os de ossibus meis, et caro de carne meâ.*—*Bern. in Cant. Cant. Ser. II.*

(n) P. 35.—‘The modestest and learnedest Jesuit of late times, speaking of this argument,’ &c. A very similar passage from Bellarmine is quoted in Vol. I. p. 313. G.