

THE MATCHLESS LOVE AND INBEING.

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NOTE.

'The Matchless Love and Inbeing' appeared in the first edition of *The Saint's Cordials*, 1629. It will be observed from the full recapitulation in the commencement of the first of these sermons, that the two so designated formed part of a series, expository, in all probability, of the whole chapter. These not having been preserved, accounts perhaps for the withdrawal of 'The Matchless Love and In-Being' from the after editions, of 1637 and 1658, of the 'Cordials.' The title-page will be found below.*

G.

* THE
MATCHLES LOVE,
AND IN-BEING.

In two SERMONS.

Wherein is shewed,

- { That we may be Assured of Gods loue vnto vs :
- { Helpes for Weake Christians how to attaine vnto this loue :
- { Helpes how to know that we haue it in vs :
- { That Christ is in all beleeuers :
- { How to know that Christ is in vs :
- { How in a seeming absence he is discouered to be in the Soule :
- { How to keepe Christ there, and how to recouer him being lost, &c.

[Woodcut here, as described in Vol. IV. page 60.]

VPRIGHTNES HATH BOLDNES.

EPHES. 3. 17, 18, 19.

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by Faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in loue, May be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the bredth and length, and depth and height :

And to know the loue of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulnesse of God.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the yeare 1629.

THE MATCHLESS LOVE AND INBEING.

SERMON I.

I have declared unto them thy name, and I will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.—JOHN XVII. 26.

THE dependence we have heard heretofore, when I entered upon the first part of this verse. Our Saviour intending to have committed his disciples to the love of his Father, that they might be the fitter objects of his love, he sets down here his own care for the present, and for the time to come; for it is hypocrisy in prayer when we pray for that that we endeavour not. For as he prays the Father to take them into his charge, so he sets down his own care about them: 'I have manifested thy name, and I will,' &c. The verse contains this blessed act of Christ.

1. What he hath done.

2. What he will do.

3. The end of it.

'I have declared thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.' 'I have declared, and will declare.' This I unfolded at large the last day. Among many other things, this one I observed, that *we are in a perpetual proficiency in this life*. We never know so much, but we may know more, and we ought to know more. So that by consequence there is a perpetual necessity of Christ's prophetic office. 'I have declared, and I will declare,' &c. We see *the church in general grew to knowledge by degrees*, till Christ, the Sun of righteousness, came gloriously in the flesh; till John pointed at him with the finger, 'This is the Lamb of God,' &c., John i. 29. And as the whole body mystical, so every member; we grow to knowledge by degrees. 'I have declared,' &c. Christ doth fit his work to our exigents. We need further knowledge, and he is bountiful to promise a further declaration. 'I have, and I will.' *He is never weary of well-doing*. As his love is infinite, so his expression is unwearied that comes from his love. A ground of special comfort, as we shewed, to all Christians, especially to the labouring, weak Christians, that their beginnings are pledges of further degrees. For Christ, where he is Alpha, he will be Omega; and where he is the author, he will be the finisher of our faith; where he hath laid the first stone, he will set up the roof at length. 'He hath declared, and he will declare.'

He is not such an unwise builder as will leave his work.^c He knows what he can do, and therefore we may enter upon all the means of saving knowledge, with this confidence, that we have a teacher that will carry us along from one degree of knowledge to another. And let us never despair for any insufficiency of parts. *It is no matter what the capacity or the incapacity of the scholar be, when there is such a teacher.* When God is the teacher, it is no matter how dull the learner is, for Christ doth not only bring doctrine, but he brings wit, grace, and ability to the inward man; that is, not only a declaration, as man doth teach the outward man, but he unlocks and opens the heart, the ears of the inward man, as he opened Lydia's heart, &c., Acts xvi. 14. Let none distrust if they be conscionable* and careful in the use of good means. Many other things, I observed hence, which I will not be large in unfolding. 'I have declared to them thy name,' &c.; that is, that whereby thou mightest be known. Now in the covenant of grace, God would be known by the sweet name of Father, by the attributes of mercy and love. That whereby he will be known is his name, his mercy in the covenant of grace in condescending to be our Father in Jesus Christ, together with the sweet attributes of love and mercy, from whence all spring. This is his name. Now he will not be known only to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God that brought them out of the land of Egypt, or out of the North; but he will be known by the name of 'the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' and our Father; to be the Father of mercy, and the God of all comfort. Thus we must labour to present God to us now in his right name. This name makes all other names sweet that he hath. For being once gracious and merciful, and a Father in covenant, his power is ours, his wisdom is ours, and all is ours. Then this name of God is set forth at large: 'Jehovah, Jehovah, merciful, forgiving iniquity,' &c., Exod. xxxiv. 7. 'I have declared thy name,' &c. But this I stood at large on.

What was the end of our blessed Saviour in this his gracious dealing?

'That the love wherewith thou lovest me may be in them, and I in them.'

In unfolding of which words, I propounded these general heads, to omit other things. First, *That God doth love Christ, because he is the first object of his love, his own image*; for he represents God's attributes, and whatsoever is good in him, every way exactly. He is the Jedidiah, the beloved of the Lord. He is the true Isaac, the true matter of joy. He is the first Son, the first beloved. This was the first thing we unfolded and made use of. The second was this, *That after Christ, God loves all that are Christ's with that love wherewith he loves Christ.* There is a former love, indeed, of God, to give us unto Christ; but I speak of the carriage of our salvation, all which is in Christ. He loves Christ, and he loves us in Christ, and not otherwise. There is a love that moved him to give Christ, but this love must concur with the other attributes. It must be such love and mercy, and so apprehended, as must be without offering violence or wrong to other attributes. His justice and his holiness must not be wronged. And therefore though he bare love to those whom he knew before all worlds; yet in the carriage of salvation he intended actually so to set his love upon them, as that it should be in one that should make satisfaction for them, being considered as sinners in themselves. And God would have, in our salvation, the glory, as of infinite love to man, so of infinite hatred of sin, and likewise of infinite wisdom, in reconciling these together. His infinite hatred to sin, how could he shew it more, than that rather than he would

* That is, 'conscientious.'—G.

not have it punished, his Son must become incarnate, to be a surety for sin and to take it away? How could he shew his infinite love more, than by giving such a gift as Christ, and his infinite wisdom, than to devise such a way as to bring these two together, justice and love, to reconcile them? So though God loved a certain company whom he foreknew to everlasting life, yet he intended, in the carriage of their salvation, to do it with the manifestation and glory of his attributes, that no attribute might be wronged nor complain, and that justice might fully be satisfied; but especially that his mercy and love might triumph. For what in God stirred up a fatherly heart? What stirred him up to reconcile justice and mercy, but love, that set on work all other attributes, his mercy, and love, and goodness? God loves us in Christ therefore, and only in Christ; because in Christ only his wrath is satisfied. Christ only is the mediator, the only treasury of the church to convey all to us. The adopted sons have their excellency, and all that they have, in the virtue of the natural Son. But this I have unfolded at large heretofore, and shewed the use of it last day; this was the second thing.

The third general thing out of the text is this, that *the love of God to us is in Christ, loving us in him, as electing us, and doing all good to us in him*. It is the ground of all other favours and graces whatsoever. And therefore he sets it here for all in all, 'I have declared, &c., that the love wherewith thou lovest me may be in them,' &c. What! doth he not say, that I might be merciful to them and pitiful, and that they may have other graces that love me? What needs all this? He sets down the spring of all, 'I have manifested thy name,' thy gracious name, that in the apprehension of that they may find my love. And so, when we feel the love of God and of Christ, know that all other graces flow from thence; for indeed all graces wrought in us issue from God's love to us first. Whence comes pity, and mercy, and love, but from God's shining in our hearts first by his love, that doth mould and frame the heart to all duties and graces whatsoever, and to the first grace to love God? For how can we love him unless we have an apprehension of his love first? You know iron, and stones, and things that are cold of nature, if they have any heat, we say it is the sun that hath heated them, or the fire that hath warmed them, because intrinsically they have no heat. So when there is any goodness in the creature, any pity, mercy, or love to God, or to those that are his, it implies, that there hath been first the fire, the light of God's love to us. And therefore, saith Christ, 'I have manifested thy name to them, that thy love may be in them.' This love in them will be enough to set them on fire on all good things whatsoever. 'We love him, because he loves us first,' 1 John iv. 19. We know him, because he knows us first, Gal iv. 9, and we choose him, because he chooseth us first. We joy and delight in him, because he joys and delights in us first. All is a reflex from him, whatsoever of good comes from us. This was the third thing. We made thence use of it, and so brake off. To go on. The fourth thing which I propounded to speak of out of the words is this, *that this love of God to us may be known, and ought to be known of us*.

It may be known with an experimental and with an applicatory knowledge. The next was, that *the way to know God's love to us, is the manifesting of his name in the gospel*: that follows by the connection of them two together; and the last is, *Christ being in us*, which I cannot come to at this time. So then now, to clear this point, that *we may, and it is our duty to do it, to labour to know God's love to us*. We ought to labour that

God's love may be in us, and that we may know it, not generally that he loves us, but that his love is in us, that it is incorporate and invested into us, to have a taste and be sensible of it. For this is the end of Christ's prayer, 'That the love wherewith thou lovest me may be in them,' &c. And the next way to know it, which we shall speak of at this time among the rest, it is this, 'The manifesting of God's name by Christ.' For the first then.

Doct. 1. That we may, and ought to know God's love to us in Christ. That we ought to know it; what need I be large in the point? I will not, because it is so clear. For if it be, as I shewed the last day at large, the spring of all duties, of all other graces, which sets all on work, then surely we ought to labour for that which may make us good, and not only good, but comfortable. Now all our goodness, and comfort, it comes from this original, the knowledge of God's love to us, when that is in us, for we have no love to him until we know that we are beloved of him.

1. *We cannot be thankful to God till we know that he loves us in Christ.* I speak of his peculiar love as a child. Who can be thankful for that which he knows not? It overthrows all thankfulness and denies it. We ought to labour for the assurance of the love of God in Christ. For it is a duty to joy in the Lord as our portion. Now we must be certain of his love first. How else can we practise this duty of rejoicing in the Lord always? What joy and cheerfulness can come without the love of God shining upon us and enlarging our hearts to joy? As the shining of the sun enlargeth the spirit of the poor creatures, the birds, in the spring time, to sing, so proportionably the apprehension of the sweet love of God in Christ enlargeth the spirit of a man, and makes him full of joy and thanksgiving. He breaks forth into joy, so that his whole life is matter of joy and thanksgiving.

2. Again, *In suffering any cross, any opposition, who will endure to lose his temporal goods, his life and liberty, to be restrained any way, that knows not God's love?* Who will abide anything for him that he loves not? What doth set us to suffer all things that may be for God? The apprehension that he loves us. What makes a man willing to end his life, and to yield up his soul to God? He knows he shall yield his soul to him as to a father that loves him, that will save his soul. Can a man be willing to leave his home here, when he knows not whether he shall have a better or no? Can a man commend his soul to one that he knows not to be his friend? No. Can he commend such a jewel to one that he knows not but to be an enemy? Can he say with Simeon, 'Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation'? Luke ii. 29. Doth not all joy and comfort come from the love of God in Christ? What should I enlarge the point? We can neither have grace, nor joy, nor suffer anything with thankfulness, nor end our days with joy and comfort, till we get assurance that we are in the covenant of grace, and that God's love is in us.

And therefore it is clear to anybody that knows anything in religion, or desires anything, that we ought to labour that God's love may be in us. I beseech you, therefore, make use of it to see the abominable doctrine of popery—I cannot speak too hardly of it—which teacheth that we ought to doubt of God's love. It cuts the sinews of endeavour. Who will endeavour after the attaining of the love of God, and this assurance, when this is laid in the way, that we ought not to do it? Are we not prone enough to distrust, but we must be taught it? Is not Satan malicious enough,

but we must light a candle to him, and arm his malice with this doctrine, that we ought to doubt? He is the master of doubtings; for the works of darkness, and all the discomfort and sin that he brings on us is in darkness, in this particular darkness, that we know not whether we be the children of God or no. And therefore, say some, why should we leave our gain, our profit, and our present pleasures that we have? And what doth he aim at by the sins he tempts us to, but to shake our assurance of God's love? Well, they teach the doctrine of devils in divers things, amongst which this is one that strengthens the kingdom of Satan much, that people ought to doubt, and that there is no way or means to get assurance of God's love. This is to overthrow the intent of Christ's prayer. Wherefore doth he pray here, and what doth he promise in his prayer? That God would shew them his love, and that he may do it: 'I have declared thy love,' &c. So it is clear that we ought to answer Christ's aim. Why doth Christ declare his Father's name? And why are all the means of salvation, but that we may have God's love in us? Is it not our duty, then, to answer Christ's course, and his promise, and his love? Taking that, then, for a ground, that we ought to labour to have God's love to be in us, we will shew that we may attain to it, and come to know that God loves us. I will not be long in it, it is a clear point, which heretofore, upon another occasion, I have spoken of.

We may attain to it. Here is the way, as I shall shew in the next point, 'By the declaration of God's name.' For what is faith, which is the work of the gospel and grace of the new covenant, but the apprehension of the love of God in Christ? It is nothing else; and therefore we may attain to it in the covenant of grace. Faith is nothing but the act whereby we apprehend this effectual love of God to us in Christ. Therefore we that are Christians may attain to it, because we have the Spirit of God, which 'searcheth the deep things of God,' 1 Cor. iii. 10. Our spirit knows what is in us, and God's Spirit knows what is in God, and we have the Spirit of God to shew us the things of God, and all the benefits and fruits of his love, with the affection itself. The Spirit searcheth the deep things of God, as it is in 1 Cor. ii. 10. It is a point I have heretofore followed at large. A Christian in the covenant of grace, he knows that God loves him. There is no truth in the world so illustrious, so gloriously and apparently* true, as this. Would you have a better pledge of his love than Jesus Christ, the Son of his love, to be given for us, the dearest thing that God hath? He would not have us doubt of his love that hath given such an invaluable thing as his own Son to assure us of it, besides all that comes from this; for if he have given him once, he gives all things with him. He that hath given us his Son for our Redeemer and Saviour, he gives us heaven for our inheritance, and his Spirit for our conduct, guide, and sanctifier, Rom. viii. 32. He hath given angels for our attendants. He gives us peace, and joy, and all things. In Christ, we have all. But here, because it is a main point, I will enlarge myself a little, and speak as familiarly as I can to every conscience.

Quest. 1. How shall a sinner, that is not yet converted, be persuaded of God's love to him?

Quest. 2. And how shall we, in the time of temptation, deal with sinners in the state of grace? I speak of the ordinary course, how a Christian may be persuaded of it. For the first, which is, how those that are unconverted may be drawn to the sense of the love of God, to find that they have any

* That is, 'manifestly.'—G.

portion in it at all, that they may have it for the time to come, though they feel not yet any goodness in them.

Ans. 1. I answer, *We must draw them to a sense that they are not yet in the love of God, by those things, that their corruptions suggest to them to measure the love of God by.* As, for example, you have a company that think their case is good, because God hath given them outward blessings, and accompanies his blessings with patience and long-suffering; gives them parts and gifts, and preferments in the church; gives them place, great estimation, and such things. Hereupon they begin to reason, Certainly God is in love with me; though, if a man should search their lives and examine them, you shall find that there is no act, no evidence of God's special love to them at all. Such, therefore, must be convinced, that they must not measure God's love by these things; that that which is common to castaways cannot be a character and sign of God's love; but these things are common to castaways. Did Abraham give Ishmael, and the rest of his children, moveable things? but Isaac had the inheritance, Gen. xxv. 6, *seq.* Esau had his portion in the things of this life, but Jacob goes away with the blessing. The blessings of the left hand, castaways and reprobrates may have in abundant measure. God fills their bellies with abundance of outward things, whose hearts he never fills with his love, as in Dives, Luke xvi. 25. Not to enlarge myself, look on such instances. What tend they to, but to shew that these outward things are no evidences of God's love? and for God's patience in enduring me in such a state as I am in, that is no argument. For God in his patience endures the vessels of wrath, who treasure up 'wrath against the day of wrath,' Rom. ii. 4, 5, God suffering them to prolong their days in judgment, that so he may pour the full vials of his wrath upon them. He suffers them, to lead them unto repentance; and they, not making a right use of it, God after justifies his vengeance and judgment the more, when he pours it upon them, so that plenty in outward things, accompanied with patience, is no true sign of God's love.

Like think of parts and gifts. Had not Judas excellent parts? Nay, the devil himself, who comes near him in the depth of understanding and policy? &c. Judas had a place in the church, he was an apostle. And for gifts, Ahithophel and Saul had gifts of government. All these are no evidences of the love of God to be in us as yet, or that he hath any interest in us. The way, therefore, to bring those that have not the love of God to love God, is to shew them their vain confidence, that they trust to a broken reed, and to that which in the time of sickness, the hour of death, and the day of judgment, will deceive them, seeing they trust unto a cracked title. Well, if the consciences of such as are not yet in the state of grace be once awaked, we may thus draw them to be within the compass of the love of God. Otherwise, when they see the vanities of other things, and likewise that there is sin in them, somewhat that lays them open to the wrath of God, then Satan will help their conscience, Satan and their conscience will tell them oftentimes all, and make them reason, As for such a wretch as I, there is no hope; I had as good go on in a sinful course, and have somewhat in this world, as to want heaven and the comforts of this life too. And so Satan keeps them in darkness, because they think it is to no purpose to go about another course, and that it is impossible they should come to assurance. Such kind of conceits he hath.

But we must know, that in the covenant of grace now in the gospel, this is not put as a bar of God's love, that I am a sinner, that I have committed

any degree of sin whatsoever. None are shut out but those that will be as they are. And therefore all objections are taken away in the promulgation of the gospel. Ay, but I am guilty, and Oh, I am laden with sin! 'Be of good comfort, thou art called, thou art the man. Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden,' Mat. xi. 28. Oh that I might find mercy, says one. Why, 'Blessed are the hungry and thirsty; blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are the mourners,' Mat. v. 3, 4; and 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come,' Isa. lv. 1. There is hope for thee. He keeps open house for every one. He shuts out none but those that shut out themselves, that think these things are too good to be true, and therefore will enjoy their pleasures, and go on still and daub with their conscience. But if their hearts be awakened, if they will go to God and cast themselves upon his mercy, whosoever is weary, whosoever is athirst, whosoever is heavy laden, God is no acceptor of persons, but at 'what time soever any sinner whatsoever repents of any sin whatsoever,' God will shew mercy, if he come in and accept of the proclamation of pardon, Ezek. xviii. 22. If he come in, and will not continue in his rebellion still, but cast himself upon his mercy, and resign, and yield himself to God and to Christ's government, to be ruled by him, as a subject should be, he shall find mercy. Let the devil, therefore, keep none in bondage, in the dungeon of ignorance and unbelief, for the end of the gospel is to bring in all such, if they will.

But to come more particularly to such as have true goodness in them, and yet the devil takes all advantages to hinder the apprehension of God's love to them in Christ.

Quest. 2. How shall we in divers states and cases bring men to be persuaded of God's love in Christ, when conscience and Satan, together with some outward occurrences, urge them to unbelief and to stagger?

For instance, a sinner that is converted and in the state of grace, he may oftentimes fall into some great sin; hereupon Satan, taking advantage of the sin, together with conscience, which always helps Satan in this case, speaks bitter things.

Ans. 1. Thus we must answer such as are drawn by Satan to sin, and after accused by Satan for sin, and to whom God is presented as a hateful God, &c., *that notwithstanding they should not be discouraged.* We have many examples in Scripture: 'If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Christ Jesus,' &c., 1 John ii. 1; and he is the propitiation for our sins. We ought not, therefore, to be discouraged from going to God, humbled as we ought to be. Here is place for humiliation, but there is no place for base discouragement, and calling God's love into question. A son under anger is a son; and therefore, though Satan presents to him an angry God for sin—for this temptation is then sharpened indeed, when it is made a weapon by Satan, by reason that God accompanies the sinner that is fallen into sin, with some judgment as a punishment—yet he ought to lay hold on the rich mercies of God in Christ. What should he else do? Shall he run away from God? No. A bastard, a slave, will do so; but he runs to God. Even as a child, when he hath offended his father, doth not run away from him; but, knowing that his father is merciful and loving, though he have offended him, and that he is now a son, though under his wrath, he goes and studies to appease his father, casts himself upon his favour and mercy, and will endure his correction gently. Thus ought we to do. Satan, when he hath gotten us to sin, he saith, Now you had as good run on still, for God follows you with judgments; you have offended

God, and there is no hope for you. So he keeps us without comfort, and God without service, by that means ; whereby we run deeper and deeper into God's books. Oh come in betimes, and repent. It will be easier. Thy comfort will be stronger. God will be sooner pacified. Thy heart will not be so hardened. Do not call in question God's love to thee ; for Satan tempts, and corrupts, and draws thee to sin, for that end, to call it in question. God may love thee, though he follow thee with shows of anger ; for he may be angry, and yet love thee too, as we shall see afterwards.

Ans. 2. Again, Satan doth use as a weapon, to shake our sonship or adoption, and our estate in God's love, manifold temptations and crosses, and such like, to discourage us. He comes with ' If.' ' If thou wert in the love of God, and the love of God in thee, and did belong to thee any way, would God follow thee thus and thus, with these declarations of wrath and anger ?'

I answer, A man may retort that upon Satan the tempter, and upon his own heart. The spirit retorts that upon the flesh : ' God corrects every son, and he is a bastard that hath not correction,' Heb. xii. 8. In this world, to thrive in a course of sin, when a man hath offended God, it is a sign of reprobation rather than otherwise. Every child God corrects ; and for poverty, shame, and the like, we must not measure God's love by these, for God loves us as he loved Christ. Mark here Christ's prayer : ' That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.'

Quest. How was God's love in Christ ? To fence him from poverty, from disgrace, from persecution, from the sense of God's wrath ? No. But the first-begotten Son, the natural Son, he was persecuted as soon as he was born ; he was disgraced, calumniated, slandered, and abused to the death. Nay, and he felt the wrath of God. ' My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?' Mat. xxvii. 46. We then may be in the love of God if we be no otherwise than the natural Son was, in whom the love of God was when he was at the worst. In the lowest degree of his abasement, God loved him then as much as at any other time, even when he was accompanied with the sense of the wrath of God. And therefore reject and beat back all temptations with this invincible argument, It is no otherwise with me than it was with his natural Son. Shall I desire to be loved any otherwise of God than Christ was loved ? His love to Christ did not exempt him from slander, from disgrace, from abasement, from the sense of his wrath, when yet he was the Son of God always ; and I, being in this case, shall I doubt of my adoption ? Shall I dishonour God ? Shall I add this sin to the rest of my sins ?

Satan is wonderful prone to take these weapons, to sharpen them, as I said before, of sin, desertions, sometime of temptations and outward afflictions ; and so he comes with his ' If,' ' If thou wert the Son of God, would he deal thus and thus with thee ?' It was alway his course. We must therefore have present, to repel all such temptations, that God loves us as he loves his Son, that he chastiseth every son ; and that God's love is not always and only manifested in exempting of us from these things. Let us measure God's love that he bears to us in Christ, by the best fruits of his love. What are those ? An heart to seek him ; to fear his name ; love to his majesty ; love to his children ; delight in good things ; hatred of that which is evil. None but his can esteem and value his love by these things. By these therefore, and the like peculiar marks and stamps of the Spirit that are in us, let us judge of his love, and not by any outward thing whatsoever ; for all outward crosses whatsoever befell his own Son. And

can we desire that he should love us otherwise than he loved him? We are predestinate to be conformable unto him, Rom. viii. 29, and why should we refuse to be conformable to him in abasement, with whom we hope to be conformable in glory? Let faith therefore plead against all the suggestions of Satan and accusations of conscience. By faith in the word of God persuade we ourselves that we are in the love of God. If we find any evidences of his love in our spirits, we shall come to them by and by. But, first, I will name one or two directions how we may come to have God's love in us, and how to know that his love is in us.

1. We may come to have his love in us, *if we be careful to preserve ourselves under the means of salvation, and if so we do present God to ourselves, as he is presented in our glorious gospel.* When we are convinced of sin first (I speak of such as are convinced thoroughly of a sinful state, such may come to the knowledge of God's love in Christ by the gospel, and by presenting God to their souls as he is presented in the gospel, to be the Father of mercy and the Father of Christ. The devil he puts other colours upon God: he presents him as a tyrant, as a judge, as a revenger, as one that hates him.

2. Again, Labour to be such as God may love us. God loves his own image. Wherefore doth he love Christ, but because he perfectly represents him? If we would come to have God's love in us, beg of him, that by his Spirit he would stamp his likeness in us; that as he is light, we may be light; as he is love, so we may have love; as he is pitiful, so we may have our hearts enlarged; as he is free in love, so we may be free in love; and that we may be holy, as he is holy; that as he hates sin, so we may hate it; that we may joy in him, affect what he doth affect, hate that which he hates; that so he may look upon us, as his own image, and delight in us, as the representation of his own likeness.

3. Again, We may come to have God's love, *by more and more sequestering ourselves and our affections from conformity with his enemies:* for this helps the other. If we would be like to God, and so come to have him delight and solace himself in us, we must withal labour to be unlike the world and wicked persons, that are yet in the state of corruption and danger of damnation. Let us labour not to conform ourselves to them, but to frame ourselves clean of another fashion; for you know, if we fashion ourselves to the world, the world is not of God, but it is God's enemy. How shall God delight in us, when we delight in courses that are sinful, wretched, and worldly? The world must perish, be condemned, as Paul saith, 'God afflicts us that we should not be condemned with the world,' 1 Cor. xi. 32. The world lies in mischief. Our especial care, therefore, must be, that we have no correspondency with it.

4. But especially, to come to that which I intend to make a distinct point, *by the Spirit, and Christ's manifesting of God himself in the gospel:* 'I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.'

Exhortation. Beg of Christ, therefore, the spirit of revelation, as it is Eph. i. 17, that you may know what is the exceeding love of God in Christ; and see the height, and breadth, and depth of God's love in him. Beg of Christ to shew the Father to us. You know what that holy man said in the gospel, 'Shew us the Father, and it is sufficient,' John xiv. 8. So desire we no more but to see the Father once. We must go to Christ, that he would shew us the Father; and we must go to God the Father to discover his Son. For either or both discover the other. God draws us to

Christ. 'There is none come to me,' saith Christ, 'but the Father draws them.' And Christ opens and discovers the Father to us, and the Holy Ghost discovers them both; for as he proceeds from both, so he shews us the love of both. He shews us the love of the Father and the Son.

Labour, therefore, for the manifestation of Christ, that Christ would manifest his Father's love to us, and that God would manifest Christ by his Spirit: that the Father would give us his Spirit, and the Son would give us his Spirit, which is his love. For God's love is always with God's Spirit. This Spirit comes from him, and his love is always with his Spirit. The same Spirit that sanctifieth us, that witnesseth, is the Spirit of love. Now Christ doth manifest this. We must not only pray, but we must know how Christ manifests himself.

Christ doth manifest God's name to us, as I said before, which is his truth. He opens the understanding by his Spirit, and then he speaks to every man's particular soul by his Spirit. 'I am thy salvation;' he gives faith, &c., Luke xxiv. 45. All knowledge of God's love is from the knowledge of the gospel, together with his Spirit. For how can I know that God loves me, but by his own word and Spirit, by his own Son, Christ? I say, the Spirit and the word, which are divine, they persuade me of God's love. That must be above nature, above Satan, and above all opposition whatsoever, that convinces my heart of God's love in Christ. The arguments must be divine, taken out of God's truth; and those truths must be set on by the Spirit of God, which is above my spirit, and by Christ, God and man, who sends his Spirit. This will silence all objections whatsoever that the heart can make, as indeed our hearts are full of cavils against the love of God. God's Spirit will do it by Christ, together with the truth, the word and Spirit going together. And therefore, because I cannot enlarge myself, beg the Spirit of revelation; and because the Spirit and word go together, attend always upon the word, and think the promises are God's promises, and desire that Christ would set the promises upon our hearts, that we may know the things that belong to us in particular.

Use. Well, if this be so, that the declaring of God's favour and mercy is the way that his love may be in us, as it is, then what shall we think of those that are enemies to the declaration of the name of God, the preaching of the gospel, to the reading of Scripture? They are enemies of our comfort and of God's glory. For how shall I know that God loves me, but by declaring his name by the word, and by the Spirit? Christ by the Spirit and by the word declares his Father's name, and so I come to know the Father's love to me. How pitiful is the estate of those souls that live where there is no means, no word of God, no declaring of God's name? Can the love of God be in them? No; this manifesting of God's love, it is with the manifestation of the truths of the gospel. 'I have manifested thy name in the teaching of the word, that thy love may be in them.' Let us therefore be persuaded to attend upon the means of salvation, and upon the Spirit of God, together with the means. God will work together with the means of salvation, and persuade our hearts of his love to us in Christ, if we attend meekly upon them, at one time or other.

Obj. Oh, but I have attended long upon the means, and have prayed, and yet I cannot find the love of God to me.

Ans. 1. Wait, wait a while; all are not called at one hour. Josias was called when he was young, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 2; and so Timothy, 2 Tim.

iii. 15, and Joseph when they were young; Paul when he was old. Those that were converted at Peter's sermon were men of years, Acts ii. 38. Wait; the good hour will come. God perhaps will have thee under the law a little longer before thou come under grace. He will convince thee of thy cursed estate thou art in by nature, make thee see thyself more vile; and when he hath wrought and perfected the work of humiliation, then in time call thee. Leave not the porch of wisdom's house, leave not the manifestation of God's truth; for in time God will speak to thee, and will say to thy soul that he is thy salvation. To come to an evidence or two of this estate.

1. We may know that we have the love of God in us, among other things, *if we come by this love by the manifestation of God's name*, the manifestation of the truth of God, which is his name revealed in the gospel; if we have the love that we pretend we have of God in us, we can say it came by the declaration and manifestation of God's truth with his Spirit; from thence I came to know God's love to me.

2. I may know it likewise in that *I love God again freely*. He hath loved me, and therefore I love him. I will not offend him, if it were to save my life. I love his truth so, I value it as a pearl, above all things. I could sell all, I could part with all, rather than with that. Therefore God's love hath been heretofore certainly made known to me, in that I so love God and value his truth.

3. *Seasonable afflictions* (which the devil moves us to think evidences of God's hatred), *they are evidences of his love, if they be sanctified*, to make us jealous of our ways, and to see the depth of our corruptions the more, that we can never see sufficiently in this life. They are arguments of God's love. But especially this,

4. *If our love to God come from the word and Spirit, and from good things, that are manifested from thence*. When thou dost find God's love in thee in regard of some beginnings of faith, hope, love, hatred of evil, and that there is peace, and joy, and such like things in thee, which are peculiar, then comfort thyself in thy portion, whosoever thou art, whatsoever estate thou art in for outward things. St Paul, we see, for outward matters, what a kind of man he was. He reckons up his own afflictions and abasements; but how full of thankfulness was he, because he knew that God loved him in Christ, that God's love was in him! 2 Cor. xi. 26. Our Saviour, Christ, what did he care for all these outward things? He knew his Father loved him. Let us therefore labour to have our part and portion in this peculiar love of God, and to be assured that God's love is in us; and for other matters, let us leave them to God's wisdom, who knows what is good for us, and beg of God thus: Lord, I do not ask of thee riches, I ask not glory, I ask not preferment in the world, I ask none of these: I ask thy love, in which all is that is good. For the love of God it is a rich love, as that love that he bears to his Son. If he love me once, he loves me as he loves his Son. Now, he loves him freely, and richly, and unchangeably, and with an incomparable love. God's love both to him and us, it is an incomparable love. For what is the love of a father but a drop from his love? And what is the love of a mother? 'Can a mother forget her child? Yet if she could, I would not forget thee,' saith God, Isa. xlix. 15. So David, 'When my father and mother forsook me, God took me up,' Ps. xxvii. 10. Behold the incomparable love of God to us! And therefore if we have that, we have all that is good.

The love of God, though with afflictions, with crosses, with whatsoever

in the world is contrary, yet it is the most desirable estate; for one glimpse of God's fatherly countenance in Christ, it will make us in such a case as we shall not care for any affliction whatsoever. Paul in the dungeon, God gave him a taste of his love, and what did he care for whipping? for the darksomeness, for the nastiness and noisomeness of the prison? Acts xvi. 25. He was, as it were, in paradise. God's love was in him. If God's love be in us, if we be with Daniel in the lions' den, the den shall be a kind of paradise. I say, where God is, there is paradise; yea, indeed, where God's love is, there is heaven itself. So we have God's love, it is no matter what we want; nay, it is no matter in what state of misery we are in this world.

If God have kindled love in us, there is no such sweet estate. If it come from God, it will make us digest anything. Love it will put such life in us, that we shall want or suffer anything quietly. When we feel the love of God in us, that he loves us to immortality, that he loves us to life everlasting, to an inheritance immortal and undefiled, that he loves us in things that accompany salvation, peculiar blessings, this will swallow up all discouragements whatsoever, it will make us be in heaven before our time. The sense of the love of God, when it is shed into our hearts, as it is Rom. v. 5, what will it do? It will make all tribulations, afflictions, crosses, and wants sweet unto us. 'The love of God,' saith he, 'is shed into our hearts by the Spirit.' When the Spirit of Christ Jesus is shed into our hearts, and witnesseth to us the love of God and of Christ, it makes us rejoice under hope, triumph in all tribulation, in all estates whatsoever, as he saith excellently, Rom. v. 3-5. But now to add one thing.

Quest. When doth Christ manifest his Father's love most to us by the Spirit?

Ans. I answer, *This is not at all times alike.* For it is with a Christian's soul as it is with the days of the year, or the seasons of the day. There is foul and fair, there is darkness and light, there is an intercourse, not always an even apprehension to us of God's love in Christ at all times. God sees reasons why it should not be so. Among many there are these,

1. *To sharpen our desires of heaven*, which is a constant, immutable, unchangeable estate.

2. *And likewise to make us watchful*, that when we have tasted of God's love we do not lose it.

3. *To make us observe how we lose it at first*, that so we may recover it again.

4. *To be a correction to us likewise for our boldness to sin, and keeping carnal company, &c.* Many ends God hath to withhold the taste and sense of his love to us, that we may fear him at one time as well as at another.

Quest. But when is it most of all?

Ans. God's love is in us most *when we stand most in need of it, in extremities.* When no creature can help us, when we stand most in need of the manifestation of God's love, we have it. When do parents shew their love most of all? Is it not in the extremities of their children? Then they [be]moan them, and pity them, whom before in the time of health they corrected sharply. But now they see the child is sick and distempered, now they shew all love to it. So when all comforts are taken away, then God's comforts come in place, and then especially; for then they are known to be God's, who doth all things as shall be most for his glory. Then it is most for his glory to help when none else can, and then it is most for the

comfort of a poor distressed Christian ; for then God comes, as it were, immediately, and doth help even to the ravishing of the soul. If a prince or a king, not sending any messenger, should come to a man immediately, in his own person, and should say to him, Fear not, you shall want nothing, you shall have the best encouragement I can, &c., Oh what a comfort would it be to any man ! Yet what are all these to the sweet report of God's love in Jesus Christ ? When nothing else can help us, then God's Spirit comes immediately to us, and tells us, Be of good comfort, heaven is yours, God is yours, Christ is yours : all is yours to work for your good. And he doth not only feed them with promises, but enlargeth the soul with present comfort.

Who would therefore be discouraged from enduring anything for God's name, being cast into extremity, when that is the time specially to feel God's love more than at other times ? the sense and feeling whereof in Christ is the best estate in the world. There is no estate comparable to the sense of God's love. What makes heaven heaven, as it were, but the sense of his love ? of his sweet fatherly face in Christ shining upon us in his Son, and persuading of us that we are his sons ? Why, this divine comfort that comes from the favour of God, it is that that makes all nothing, commands all the creatures, rebukes all, Satan and all. The beams of such a rich and gracious God is above all discouragements ; for they are human or diabolical ; they go no higher ; and if they be discouragements from the sense of the wrath of God, from divine desertion, when God shews himself an enemy, yet when he discovers himself a friend and a father in Christ, they all vanish, even as a cloud, as a mist, before the sun. What are all earthly discouragements to the sense of God's love in Christ ? Thus we see how God's love is manifested to us by manifesting of God's name by Christ, and when especially, and to what end : ' That thy love may be in them,' saith Christ.

Use 1. Do but raise these thoughts in your meditations, *what a comprehensive thing this is that Christ aims at in his prayer, and in his endeavour ; ' I have declared thy name, and I will,' &c.*

Is not this therefore a main thing that we should aim at, that Christ aims at ? Must not this needs be an excellent state, to have the love of God in us ? Let us therefore, to conclude all for this time, have it in our thoughts, and in our aims, that God's love may be in us. It is no matter who hates us, if God loves us ; if God and his love be present with us, it is no matter what troubles be present. Though we be in the valley of the shadow of death, if God be with us, and the assurance of his love to our hearts, it is an heaven upon earth. Rejoice in your portion, whosoever you be, that find the love of God to you in regard of the best things.

We see it is the aim of Christ's prayer, and of his endeavour. It is the aim of the declaration of the gospel, that God's love may be in you ; that when God, in regard of his Spirit, and grace, and comfort, is in you, you may have a rich portion. Would you have more than God himself, and his love ? What if you want a beam ? You have the sun itself, God's love. You want perhaps riches or friends ; ay, but you have God's love, which is a wise love. If he saw it were for your good, you should not want them. If you want a stream, you have the spring itself. Rejoice therefore in this your portion ; let it be an argument to comfort you, and an argument and motive of endeavour to us all, to labour to find this love of God in us ; and to root and purge out of your souls all other things that cannot stand with the love of God. Desire God by his Spirit to subdue

in us, and to work out of us mightily, by the strong operation of his blessed Spirit, whatsoever cannot stand with his love in Christ; that he would reign and rule in us by his blessed Spirit; that he would make us such, that he might, as it were, keep his court in us; that he would make our hearts, as it were, an heaven for himself to dwell in; that he would cast down all high and proud thoughts whatsoever; that his love may be in us.

Use 2. And when we want any grace, pitiful hearts, love to men or God, we must take the method here laid down. I know all this comes from the want of the feeling of God's love to me; for if God's love were rooted in my heart, if it were as hard as steel, it would make it flexible, pliable, pitiful, and tender to others, and I should love God again. My heart is cold and dead; what is the reason of it? I feel not God's love, and therefore it should edge our prayers thus: 'Lord, let me feel thy love in Christ; I cannot love holy duties without the manifestation of thy love; and therefore manifest thy love to my soul.' 'I give you a new commandment,' saith Christ, 'that ye love one another,' John xiii. 34.

Quest. Why, whence comes this commandment of love to the brethren in the gospel to be a new commandment?

Sol. Because the declaring of the name of God, of his mercy, and of his love in Christ, gives us new hearts; and where there is more manifestation of God's mercy, there is more love to others; and therefore, because there is a new enlargement of God's love in Christ, therefore it is a new commandment. The heart is set on fire now with the love of God, which is manifested in Christ, which was not declared before.

And therefore, if we would have new hearts for this new commandment, this love to God and to others, let us labour to have the declaration of the name of God; more of the mercy of God in Christ; more declaration by his word and Spirit; that so by his sanctified means, having his love in us, we may have new hearts, new love, and new affections to one another. This is the way, in the want of grace, to come to get the love of God in Christ; desire him that he would by his Spirit reveal himself, and reveal Christ to us; and that we may see the dimensions of his love, 'the height, and breadth, &c., of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge,' Eph. iii. 19, and then all our grace and comfort will follow.

When we are in darkness we are glad to come into the light of the sun; so when we have any distemper in our souls, let us come to this light of God's love in Christ, and by oft meditation of God's word, see there how he presents himself to us a father in covenant; not only a friend, but a father, a gracious father; beg with all means, with reading, with hearing, with conference, with God's Spirit, to reveal his fatherly affection in Christ, and for other things they will be easy.

I speak this the rather, because men go plodding upon duties, and take not a right method. When we find any distemper and deadness of spirit, search what is the cause of it. If it be negligence, irreverence, or any such thing, let us repent, and do the first works. But let us always take this in: 'Lord, shew thyself, shew thy love; thy pardoning love first, and then thy curing love; thy forgiving love, and then thy giving love. I am in a sinful state, forgive that which is amiss, and give me that which I want; shew thy large love every way, both in giving and forgiving; heal me and cure me; let me feel this thy love in the sweetest peculiar fruits of it;' and then reformation will follow upon all, then our care will be continual, when we have the love of God so to walk as that we may abide in that love, and that love in us, that we do not displease him, nor give occasion of distaste.

Therefore there must be a great deal of reverence and love, much humility and watchfulness, if we would preserve ourselves in the love of God. For when one hath once tasted of his love, it is his desire alway to taste it, to taste how gracious the Lord is, Ps. xxxiv. 8. If we therefore would so do, let us watch narrowly, as he that would keep his acquaintance and love with a great person. For we must know the distance between the great God and us. There must be humility. Humble thyself, and walk with thy God, and 'make an end of your salvation with fear and trembling,' Philip. ii. 12. With a fear of jealousy, especially that we grieve not the Spirit, that 'seals us to the day of redemption,' Ephes. iv. 30. And therefore, if we have the Spirit witnessing this love, which is the cause of all comfort and all grace, grieve not the Spirit, quench not the Spirit. When the motions of it come, resist not the gracious Spirit with carnal delights; let the Spirit have a full work; let us lie open to the Spirit of God. God's love reigns in us then, when we will do nothing contrary to it.

Now the sweetest fruit of it in us is his Spirit. Let us not quench nor resist the Spirit, but cherish it by all duties, and by all holy means. One day led thus by a Christian, though with some conflict with corruption, in the taste and sense of God's love to him in Christ, is worth all contentment that this world can afford. And therefore David knew well enough what he wished, Ps. iv. 6, when he desires 'neither corn, nor wine, nor oil.' Let them, saith he, desire what they will, but, 'Lord, shew me the light of thy countenance,' and in it I shall have all that I desire to have; and without that I care neither for corn, nor wine, nor oil, nor any thing.

So let it be our prayer that God would shew his love and mercy, that he would shew his love to us in Christ, which is better than life itself. And then for other things, be at a point, be indifferent. We see the apostles' prayers in their epistles, all of them being led by the same Spirit. They pray for grace, and mercy, and peace. Why do they not pray for all other things? To shew if they had grace, and mercy, and the love of God, they have all. If we have not that, it is no matter what we have. But some other things there are to be unfolded, which must be referred till another time.

THE MATCHLESS LOVE AND INBEING.

SERMON II.

That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.—

JOHN XVII. 26.

I HAVE spoken at several times of this verse. We propounded formerly out of it these points to be handled :

First, That the love wherewith God loves his own Son is the love wherewith he loves those that be in him.

Secondly, That God loves his own Son best and first.

Thirdly, That the love of God is the cause of all good to us.

Fourthly, That this love of God may be known.

Fifthly, That one way and ground to know that God loves us with that love he loves his own Son, is the manifestation of God's name : the manifestation of God's truth in the gospel. By that we come to know that God loves us ; for this is the coherence of the text, 'I have manifested thy name to them, that thy love may be in them.' So then, the scope, as we see hence, of the gospel, and the manifesting of it, is to lay open the riches of God's love to us, that we may know that God loves us in his beloved Son Christ Jesus. Indeed, so it is. For we have a throne of grace discovered to us in the gospel—God reconciled in Jesus Christ. All is love and mercy to those that are in Christ. 'I have manifested thy name, that thy love may be in them.' The more, therefore, God's name is manifested, God's truth and the covenant of grace, his love and mercy, his name whereby he is now known in the gospel, the more, I say, it is discovered and laid open, surely the more we know God's love, which is as a banner, Cant. ii. 4, 'displayed over us' in the gospel. The use of a banner, you know, was to draw swords under it. Now God's love in the gospel is displayed as a banner ; and therefore it hath an attractive, drawing force, to bring us under the sweet government of God in the gospel, because there we are under God's love ; and his love, where it is displayed, is like a banner. But this I shall have occasion to touch hereafter.

The point that I am now to take in hand is this : *That Christ doth manifest his Father's name, his love, his mercy, his goodness and truth, 'that God's love may be in them, and himself in them.'*

We see, then, that God's love and Christ do go together. Wheresoever

his love is in the best things, there it is in Christ, and with Christ : ‘ That thy love may be in them, and I in them. ‘ This is eternal life, to know thee, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ,’ John xvii. 3. All comes from God’s love to us, together with Christ and in Christ. Where Christ is not, there is not the love of God ; and where the love of God is, there is Christ. The sweet combination of the Trinity is not only a pattern of love and agreement to us, that we should love one another, but a main ground of comfort likewise ; for they join in love for our good. The Father loves us as he loves his Son, and with his Son. Where Christ is, there is his Father’s love ; and where his Father’s love is, there is Christ. ‘ I am in the Father, and the Father in me,’ John x. 38. All that the Father hath is mine, and all that I have is the Father’s.

I say, it is not only a pattern of agreement, that we should labour to agree as the Trinity, which is an exact form of unity, but it is a ground of special comfort ; they agree in our good and eternal salvation. The Father looks upon us as we are in his Son ; as he hath given us to him to bring us to salvation by his merit and passion. Christ looks on us as we are in the Father’s love. ‘ Thou gavest them me ;’ and we look on ourselves, first, in Christ, and then in God’s love, when we see ourselves in Christ. So that there is this mutual interview, God loves us as we are in his Son : he is in the Father, and we in Christ. We see ourselves in Christ, know ourselves in him, and love ourselves in him, as having our being and living in him, and we are known by him, and his love is known by us, because they go both together. ‘ That thy love may be in them, and I in them.’

‘ And I in them.’

We are in Christ, as the branch in the vine, as the members in the head, knit to it in the body ; and he is in us as the vine is in every particular branch ; as the head is in the members by his influence, imparting unto them life, regiment,* and motion. ‘ In them ;’ that is, for the explication of the term, ‘ that I may be in them,’ and dwell in them as in a temple, in a house ; that I may infuse strength into them, as the vine into the branches ; that I may impart spiritual life into them, as the head into the members. This is the end of my manifesting thy name, that I may be in them, that so thy love may be in them. I might hence observe—I will but touch it—that whosoever knows not Christ, nor hath a being in him, hath nothing to do with the Father, by combining of these two parts together, ‘ That thy love may be in them, and I in them.’

‘ I in them.’

Doct. The end of Christ’s manifesting his Father’s name is, that he may be in them, and that his Father’s love may be in them. To unfold the connection a little.

Quest. How doth this hang together, ‘ I have manifested thy name to them, that I may be in them’ ?

As thus :

Sol. God’s mercy and truth in the gospel, the covenant of grace, are all in Christ, and for Christ. This being discovered and manifested to the soul, the soul sees the love of God in the gospel. There it is opened and discovered. There is offered God’s love and mercy in forgiving sins, and in giving all privileges in Christ, not only discovered, but offered to all believers that will receive Christ. Thus all the good in him being discovered and offered to the soul, hereupon it comes to lay hold upon Christ,

* That is, ‘ government.’—G.

and to embrace him, as offered of the Father, and presented unto it by the Spirit of God, given together with the gospel and the manifestation of it. The Spirit works faith and belief in the heart, which closeth with Christ thus offered; so Christ dwells in the heart by faith. Faith ascends to heaven, and lays hold on Christ; faith goes back to Christ crucified, and Christ dwells in the heart by faith, Eph. iii. 17. Upon the manifestation and discovery of the Spirit, it being given with manifestation, faith is wrought, by which Christ dwells in the heart. 'I have manifested thy name, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them,' &c. Now, for some observable points, observe this,

Doct. 2. Christ is in all believers.

His further dwelling and discovering himself to believers is the end of this manifestation of God's name in the gospel. Christ is in them, as the vine is in the branches; as the head is in the members, Christ is in them all.

Christ is in all believers.

Here is a notable bond of union between them, Christ by his Spirit is in them all, therefore they should all labour to be one. Christ is one in them all, not divided; his Spirit is the same spirit in them all. It were an excellent thing, if all the men in the world had the same thoughts, the same religion, the same aims, the same affection to good things, all as one man. How strongly would they then be carried against any opposition whatsoever! And how comfortable would they be in themselves, if all had one heart, one affection, one aim! This should be, and this is the end of Christ's prayer. It is the end of all, to bring us all to be one in ourselves, to be one in him and in the Father. Now here is one argument to enforce it, that all may agree in good things, in our aims, love, and affections. There is one Christ, there is one head of all the members. 'I in them.' We must take heed that we do not think this phrase to be a shallow phrase, as it is in common life. We say of two friends, there is one soul in two bodies, because the soul lives in the party loved; and so to make it nothing but a matter of affection.* No; 'I in them;' that is, I dwell in them, because I love them; so it would be, that we are in Christ because we love him; and so Christ and we make one soul in two bodies, as though it were nothing but an unity, a dwelling in regard of the affection he bears to us. No; I am in them, and I have manifested thy truth, that I may be further in them. It argues more than union in affection, as in marriage there is more than the union of love, there is the bond that interesteth the wife in all the goods of her husband. Christ is in us more than in love, for he is in us indeed.

Quest. Ay, but is he in us body and soul, and Godhead, and all? What need this, as the papists will have him in the sacrament?

Sol. No; but he is in us in regard of his human nature, because his Spirit is in us, and the same Spirit that sanctified that nature, the same Spirit sanctifieth us. So there is an union between us and his human nature, though it be in heaven. As I said, the last day, of the sun; the sun is in the house when the beams of the sun is there; so when we find the efficacy of Christ, that Christ dwells in us by his Spirit, though his human nature be not there, yet, notwithstanding, the power of the grace of Christ is there, because the same Spirit that sanctified his human nature sanctifies and comforts us, and doth all. It is a wonderful working and operative being when Christ is said to be in us. Even as the vine doth

* Cf. note b, Vol. II. p. 194.—G.

transfuse juice and life to the branch, whereupon it comes to be fruitful, so we must conceive deeply of this phrase, 'I in them.' To omit other things;

Quest. How shall we know that Christ is in us?

Sol. 1. This is one way, if Christ be born in us once. If he be in us by his Spirit, *he will work great matters in us, there will presently be tumults in the soul.* For Christ when he is in us, he comes not to friends, but he finds all in rebellion and in opposition; when he is in us therefore, presently there are stirs in the soul. Even as, as soon as ever he was born into the world, you know Herod was mightily troubled and all Jerusalem with him, Mat. ii. 3. Herod had little cause, but much troubled he was. He thought one was born that would have dispossessed him, and therefore he was jealous, much troubled, and labours to kill him if he could. So it is when Christ is born in the soul, there are tumults. Those lusts that bare sway before, those desires, down they go, they plead prescription, and are loath to yield. Natural desires, that have been from before, are loath to yield to Christ, a new comer. He is as a new conqueror that comes with new laws, fundamentally new. He overturns all the laws of lust and of the flesh. He comes in more strongly; and thereupon in conversion, wheresoever Christ is born, there is first a strife, the soul doth not presently yield to him. This is spoken of those that have not been converted from the beginning. There are some now in the bosom of the church, that have no violent conversion from a wicked estate to a good. But from a less degree to a greater, they grow more and more. They have the Spirit of Christ from the beginning. They are not much troubled with such inward oppositions.

2. Where Christ is, *he will drive out all that is contrary.* As when he entered into the temple, he drove out the money-changers, and whipped out those corrupt persons there, Mat. i. 12, so, as soon as ever he comes into the soul by his Spirit, out go those lusts, those desires that were there before, worldliness, profaneness, fury, and rage, wherewith the soul was transported before, that possessed the habitation that God should dwell in. When Christ comes in, he scourgeth out all. Where these therefore are in any force, there certainly Christ is not.

3. Again, *Where Christ is, he doth rule;* for he takes the keys of the house himself, and governs all in some measure. He gets into the heart, rules, and sets up a throne there. For I make account* if he go no deeper than the brain and tongue; that is, to give him no better entertainment than he had when he was born, to be put in a manger. No; where he is—I mean, where he is in the heart and affections—there he rules; and where he takes not his lodging in the affections and in the heart, in the joy, desire, and delight, he is not at all to any purpose. To have him in the brain to talk, and in the tongue to discourse, and to keep the heart for worldly lusts and such things, I account not this an inbeing of Christ to any purpose, to any comfort. Where Christ is comfortably, he takes his throne and lodging in the heart, he dwells in it by faith. By heart, I mean, especially, the will and affections. He draws the will to cleave to him, to choose him for the best good. And therefore where Christ dwells, there is an admiring of the excellencies, and of the good things that are in him, and contentment in him above all things in the world. For he dwells in the heart and affections, especially in the will. The will chooseth him to be an head and husband. It cleaves to him as the chief good. The affection of joy, it

* Qu. 'no account'?—ED.

joys in him above all things. The affection of love and desire, of zeal in his cause, is strong against those that oppose him and his truth. Thus he takes up his seat and his throne in the heart wheresoever he is in truth.

4. And, therefore, this follows upon that too. Where Christ is in the heart by faith, and takes up the affections, *there is a base esteem of all the excellencies in this world whatsoever.* Moses did but see afar off the excellency that came by Christ, and he accounted all the pleasures of sin for a season to be nothing, Heb. xi. 27, and took upon him the rebuke of Christ rather. St Paul accounted all but dung and dross, Philip. iii. 8; all his former works, all his pharisaical excellency, and all things else he accounted as nothing, and of no value, having in his heart and soul an admiration of the all-sufficiency and excellency in Christ. Zaccheus, as soon as ever Christ came once into his house—but he was in his heart before he was in his house, or else he had never done it—he grew liberal: ‘Half my goods,’ saith he, ‘I give unto the poor,’ Luke xix. 8. He loved extortion and base courses before, but now down they go, he will be no base dealer, no oppressor any more. No; the half of his goods he gives to the poor, and he satisfies those whom he had wronged.

And so the disciples, howsoever they were busied before, when Christ once took up his lodging in their hearts, and opened their spirits by his Spirit, to see wherefore he came into the world ‘to save sinners,’ and opened their eyes to see the excellency that was in him, away goes all the trash that they were exercised in before, that they might follow Christ. Matthew follows him presently, Luke v. 27; and so the rest. It is impossible that the heart which entertains our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ into it, should have in over-much admiration any earthly excellency whatsoever. For it is the nature of the soul, upon the discovery of better things, to let the estimation of other things of less value to fall down presently. As we see in civil things, children, when they come to be men, they are ashamed of childish toys. So it is with a man that is converted: when Christ enters he so opens the understanding, and enlargeth the heart to see and admire better things, that presently it begins to care nothing for this world in comparison. Thus we see how we may know whether Christ hath taken his seat and lodging in us or no.

5. To go on a little further. If Christ be in us, *he doth frame us to himself.* He doth transform us to his own likeness, where he rules by the Spirit; for he is such a head as changeth his members, such an husband as changeth his spouse, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Moses could not change the complexion of his Ethiopian wife: she was black, and he left her black. But Christ renews and changeth his spouse. He is such a head as quickens his members; such a vine as puts life in the branches. And therefore you may know by this altering, changing, transforming power, whether he be in you or not. He alters and changeth us to his own likeness, that as he is set down in the gospel in his life, conversation, and disposition, so, if we have entertained him and he be in us, we should have the same disposition, the same mind, and the same will with him; for he will alter us to himself, that he may take the more delight in us. We shall judge of things as he judgeth of them, we shall judge meanly of outward things. There will be a delight to do our Father’s will, as it was his meat and drink to do his Father’s will, John iv. 34. We shall have a spirit of obedience, as he had, to look to our Father’s glory, and to his commandment in all things. We shall have compassion and melting hearts to the misery of others, as he had bowels yearning to see sheep without a shepherd. We shall have humble

and meek hearts, as he had. 'Come, learn of me, for I am humble and meek,' Mat. xi. 29. For where he dwells, I say, and takes up his throne, he alters and changes the disposition in all things to be like his own. For when he comes to the soul, he takes up all the parts thereof, and keeps out all that may hinder his work. He takes up the eyes, the ears, the understanding, and the affections; and even as we shut up the doors and windows against all that is contrary to us, so the Spirit of Christ, where he is, shuts the door of the senses both to Satan and all his suggestions, and whatsoever else might hurt us.

6. Where he enters likewise, *he possesseth the whole inward and outward man to himself*. He changeth it like to himself; he rules the eyes, the ears, the hands; he renews all, that our delights are clean other than they were before. If there be such a power in his truth, that, like a scion engrafted, it doth change us into itself, certainly where Christ dwells, he hath as much power as his word. His word is like leaven, which alters the whole lump to be like itself. For the word engrafted makes the soul that believes it heavenly like itself, 1 Cor. v. 6. How is this? Because Christ comes with his word, leavens, alters, changeth, and turns the soul. Christ by his Spirit and word is said to do it, because the Spirit of Christ comes with the word, which doth all. Those therefore whose dispositions are contrary to Christ, Christ is not begotten in them. For certainly he doth alter and change and fit his temple for himself, and drives out and chaseth thence, as I said before, all that is contrary; and keeps the door of the senses, and possession against all. He useth every member as an instrument of the Spirit and weapon of defence.

7. Again, You may know who dwells within, *by what servants come out of the house, and who comes in*. Would you know who dwells in the soul? See what comes from within the house: filthy thoughts, blasphemous words, oaths, rotten discourse; eyes full of adultery, ears open to receive that which may taint the soul. Who dwells here? Christ? No; where nothing but filth comes out, the devil dwells there. These two are immediate opposites; there is no third; either Christ or the devil dwells in us. Now when nothing comes out of a man but scorning of goodness, and that which is rotten and offensive—if there be other things, they come from the brain, and not from the heart; they have no seat there—the devil is there; Christ and his messengers are not there. There come no good thoughts, no good desires, no good speeches; and is Christ there? Is Christ in the heart, that drinks in corruption at all the senses? that lets open all the senses to all that is naught,* to hear all kinds of things that may cherish corruption, that will be at these corrupting exercises, that will see all that may blow up the flesh? What is this within that is thus cherished? Is Christ fed with filthy discourse, with filthy spectacles? Doth Christ, in us, delight in these things? Oh no! Who dwells there, then, that is thus fed? Sure the spirit that is there fed is the devil. The devil dwells in our spirits, and in our corruptions, which are like the devil, in that proportion that he dwells in us, and stirs us up to feed him with these things, to the destruction of the soul. No, no, from the heart where Christ is proceed often prayer, sighs, and groans to God, and fruitful discourses to others; and all the senses and passages of the body are open for good things. He hath desires to see that which is good, which may edify. He desires to speak, and to have others to speak, that which may feed the soul. The lips of the wise feed many,' saith Solomon, Prov. x. 21. So where

* That is, 'naughty,' wicked.—G.

Christ is, Christ's Spirit is thus fed. Thus familiarly have I discovered to you how you may know whether Christ be in you or no.

Quest. What if he be not?

Sol. He must be, or else you are reprobates. So saith the apostle, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, 'Know you not that Christ is in you, except you be reprobates?' He means not eternal reprobates, but this, If Christ be not in you, the devil and corruption are. Anatomise a carnal man, and what is in him? In his brain, a company of wicked plots and devices of the world; in his heart, a deal of love of the world, and of money; in his memory, matter of revenge; in his conscience, that which will stare upon him at the day of death, and that which will damn him unless he repent. Examine yourselves, therefore. If Christ be not in you, you are reprobates; and he that hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. I beseech you, therefore, take a trial, and enlarge the point in your own meditations. Examine what spirit is in you. If we find the Spirit of Christ to be in us, as, indeed, he is in all his in some measure, what a comfortable state is this! He is the best guest that ever we could entertain in this world, for he doth that to the soul that the soul doth to the body. What doth the soul to the body? Whence hath the body the beauty that it hath? whence the vigour that it hath to work with? to move from place to place? whence hath it government to rule itself? whence all that is excellent, good and useful? From the guest that dwells in it, the soul—the reasonable, understanding soul. For as soon as the soul is out of the body, the body is an ugly, deformed thing, a dead creature, unfit for anything. It cannot stir itself, a loathsome thing; it cannot rule itself, a mere lump of earth. Now, as the soul is to the body, so is Christ to the soul, if he dwell there. For he gives beauty and loveliness unto it. He transforms it to his own likeness and image, that it may be the object of God's love; that he may love us, not only because we are in his Son, but because his Son's image is in us. We have not only beauty from Christ dwelling in us, but where he is he works and stirs us to all holy and heavenly duties.

8. Where the Spirit is, *there is often prayer*, as Christ often prayed; a perpetual endeavour of doing good, as his Spirit in him stirred him to go from place to place to do good. Where his Spirit is, there is holiness. If we consider what a sweet guest Christ is, where he is there is all beauty, work, comfort, strength, and all. And where he is, he is for ever. He never forsakes his lodging, he never forsakes his house and temple. He had two temples built with stone; one by Solomon, and another after the captivity. Both lie now in the rubbish, and are demolished for ever, and shall never be repaired again. But his spiritual temples he never leaves wholly; for whose souls he now dwells in, he will take them by that Spirit that dwells in them, and carry them to heaven, to be where he is. The divine Spirit, that dwells in our souls now, shall quicken our dead bodies, and make them like to his glorious body.

What an excellent honour and happiness is this, to entertain such an one as will rule, govern, and adorn our souls while we live, and carry them to himself and to his Father in heaven, and will quicken our bodies likewise! An everlasting inhabitant he is. If Christ be in us, therefore, we may comfort ourselves. But here must be an objection answered.

Obj. Christ doth seem oftentimes to be absent from the soul to which he was present before; he seems to leave his house and his temple sometimes.

Sol. I answer, He is said to leave that soul into which, shutting the door to his knocks, and resisting the sweet motions of his Holy Spirit, he

never actually entered. But he never leaves that soul into which he is once entered to dwell. Indeed, sometimes he conveys himself into a corner of the soul; for when he does not entertain him and respect him as he should, and preserve the motions, comforts, and graces of his Spirit, but give way to the suggestions and temptations of the devil and ill company, &c., then he retires himself; but he is still in the soul. For even as God the Father, when he would have his own beloved Son Christ Jesus to be abased on the cross, withdrew not his divinity, but the sense and comforts thereof from Christ's human nature, that he might suffer for us on the cross, Matt. xxvii. 46—loving him still notwithstanding, so that the divinity did not forsake him, but only did rest and cease to support and comfort him at that time, that he might perform the work of satisfaction for our sins—so it is with us, though it be a different case, when God humbles us for our rashness, want of reverence, of careful walking before God, and preserving the sweet work of his Holy Spirit: then Christ hides himself only, takes not himself away.

Christ was God on the cross, but the comfort was withdrawn, that he might suffer. So the comfort of Christ's presence is withdrawn, that he may humble us for our former sins; that we might make more of this guest than we did before; that we may be stirred up to entertain him better, and might be more careful for the time to come, to cleave closer unto him. So much for the answer of that, that Christ is oftentimes in the soul, when he discovers not himself to be there; as he was near unto Mary, though her eyes being full of tears, she could not discern him, John xx. 15.

Quest. But how shall I know that he is there by any discovery at all, that he hath any being at all in the soul at such a time?

Sol. 1. Yes; a man may know he is there. There will be some pulses, some beating of the soul. Where Christ and the love of God is, they ever go together. Is there any love of God, any love to him? Again, Is there a longing after Christ's presence? Is there a grieving, when we feel not the comfort we had before? Oh this is a sign he hath been there. He hath left somewhat there by his Spirit. Though he be retired into a corner of the soul, yet he hath left somewhat behind him to work a desire of further communion and fellowship with him. As it is Cant. v. 5, when he left knocking at the door, when the spouse would not open, he left somewhat behind, the droppings of his fingers, that drew the love of the spouse to him. So that he never leaves us, no, not for to humble and abase us for our bold walking, but he leaves somewhat in the soul, some desires, some sense of his love, that they think their estate is not good till they have recovered their former estate. They linger after him, they are never pleased with earthly contentments in this temper of the soul. In desertion they are not themselves, they are not quiet, because they think Christ is lost. As Christ's mother, when she thought he was lost, was full of woe, Luke ii. 48, so a Christian soul, when it conceits that it hath lost Christ, it is never quiet till it have found him again.

Sol. 2. Again, Christ may be very near, and dwell in us sometimes, and we see him not: because we may so dwell upon corruption, and be so full [of] grief in affliction, that we forget Christ; as Mary, who, though Christ was near her, yet could not discern him, her eyes were so full of tears, John xx. 15; and as Hagar, who was so full of grief, that she could not see the fountain appear, Gen. xxi. 16. There may be, I say, in desertion of soul such grief for our other things, crosses, losses, fears, &c., that a man may forget Christ, till he recover himself by meditation, prayer, and

conference with others that are more skilful than himself, that can tell what is in him by his pulses, discourse, and desires. Sometimes we must trust the judgment of others better than our own, to know what is in us. But I will not enlarge myself in this. Thus we may know that Christ is in us, which is a point of especial comfort.

Obj. But the soul thinks, Is the Spirit of Christ in us? Will such an Holy Spirit, as that we cannot conceive him in the height of his holiness and greatness, vouchsafe to dwell in such sinful spirits? We cannot conceive how the Spirit of Christ should dwell in us, that are so corrupt as we are.

Sol. Indeed, I must needs say, it is an argument of wonderful love, that infinite holiness should be joined with such corruption, that greatness will be in such narrow straits, that glory will be in such an obscure place and habitation as our souls. Here is a wondrous condescending; admirable mercy it must needs be. But let us not be discouraged; Christ by his Spirit is in us, notwithstanding our corruption, because he cannot be a whit corrupted by it. The Spirit is an active thing, it suffers nothing. The spirit is as fire, which endures nothing: it is always doing, always in action, it is an active element. So the Spirit of Christ in us, though it be in us, yet it joins not with our corruptions. As the sunbeams are pure still, though they shine upon impure and filthy places, so Christ's Spirit, it is a working, fiery thing. As fire consumes dross, so the Spirit, being like fire, though it be where corruption is, yet it is there, as an enemy to it, opposing, consuming, and wasting it by little and little.

Quest. But why doth he not do it all at once?

Sol. There are divers reasons: God will have us to have matter of abasement here, to make us desire to be with him. Yet in the mean time Christ will be so in the Church his spouse, cleansing and fitting her for himself, as that by his Spirit dwelling in her she shall daily oppose, and by little and little subdue and bring under all corruption whatsoever, till at last she have gotten a full and perfect conquest and triumph over all. All the imaginations, desires, and lusts, that exalt themselves against the Spirit of Christ, shall be brought down at last; the Spirit will subdue all. Stronger is the Spirit that is in us, than the spirit that is in the world, 1 John iv. 4, though it be in never so little a measure; and therefore by little and little will conquer all within us, without us, the devil and all at the last. Thus much to answer that doubt.

Use 1. That which further ariseth from hence, that Christ is in us, is not only matter of comfort, but likewise *it shews and directs us how to look on other Christians; to look upon them as the temples and houses where Christ dwells.* Why should we not reverence and respect Christians for the guest that is in them, the Spirit of Christ? If Christ vouchsafe to dwell in such a man, shall he not dwell in our love? Shall not one place contain us here, that heaven must contain ere long? We shall be all together in heaven, and shall we not be loving together here? Thus considering that Christ is in all his, how should we respect Christians, that are the habitation of Christ, the second heaven? For Christ hath but two heavens; the heaven where he is, and the heart of a believing Christian, where Christ is, and rules in a comfortable measure, and will rule more and more. How should we value such! Not as many cursed devilish spirits, that disgrace and oppose Christ in his members. That which they do to his image in his children, that they would to him himself, if they had him in their power.

Use 2. The last use shall be an use of direction, *how to keep Christ, and to preserve him, and the sense of his being in us with comfort*, seeing it is so comfortable an estate to have Christ in us, and that yet oftentimes we want the sweet comfort of his presence. In a word, mark here the dependence, 'I have manifested thy name. that thy love may be in them and I in them.' Christ is in us then, by manifesting of divine truth. He conveys himself into our hearts, by our understandings; he manifests his truth, the means of salvation, by his ordinance; he manifests divine truths to the understanding by his Spirit, which goes together with his word. From the understanding he goes to the heart, and there he dwells; for manifesting of divine truths, and Christ being in us, go together.

1. *Those that care not for the discovery and manifesting of Christ's truth in the gospel, let them never think to entertain Christ into their hearts*, for he will come with his word and with his own ordinance; his word and Spirit always go together. Therefore let this be one chief direction. If we will have Christ to be in us, to fill our hearts, and remain with us, let us attend upon the blessed means of salvation, and be where he is, and then he will be with us. He is in the church, and he is in every particular member; but especially where his ordinance is, there is he with the Spirit. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are all there if we have Christ in us. And therefore oft attend upon the ordinances of God, and communion of saints, and then you shall find experience of Christ. Christ joined with the two disciples when they were talking of him, as they were going to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 15; so let us oft stir up the grace of Christ in us by conferring of good things, and Christ will be with us, joining with good company, &c.

2. Again, Would we preserve Christ's presence in us? *Labour then that he may dwell largely in our hearts.* Now that which enlargeth the soul is humility. For it empties the soul, and makes it large. * Pride swells the soul up, and drives out Christ. God gives grace to the humble; Christ dwells in the humble soul. You know he was born in an humble virgin's womb, and he is new born in the womb of an humble soul. Preserve therefore humble, base conceits of ourselves; that in us there is nothing that is good, nothing worthy to be respected, that so Christ may dwell largely in our hearts. Let us have no wit, no reason of our own, contrary to Christ. Let us have no wills, no desires contrary to his. Let us even give up the keys and the regiment* of our souls to him, and then he will dwell largely there. Humility keeps him there. If his word be our reason, his commandment our will, and his comfort our joy and delight, then he will dwell largely in us, for there is nothing in us to oppose him. But if we have several states of soul, distinct from his government, it is no wonder we banish him, when we will not live by faith in him, but by our wits, shifts, tricks, lusts, the examples of others, and by the spirit of the world. It is no wonder, I say, that we savour only of earthly things if we live thus. It is no wonder that Christ is not preserved in us if we be not ruled by his Spirit. It is no wonder that he departs from us when we set ourselves contrary to him, and have wills and reasons of our own repugnant and disagreeable to his, and ways to get wealth, and to raise ourselves contrary to his gospel and truth. Will Christ rule in such a soul? No. He subdues all. The Spirit of Christ is like a mighty wind, as it is compared by Christ to Nicodemus, John iii. 8, that beats all down before it. If we cherish contrary desires and contrary delights to Christ, it is no wonder if he delight not to dwell in such a soul.

* That is, 'government.'—G.

3. *Be of Christ likewise that he would stay with us*; as they in the gospel, when he made as if he would have gone forward from them, Luke xxiv. 29, constrained him to stay, saying, 'Abide with us: for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent;' and he went in to tarry with them. So, lay we hold on Christ, by the means of salvation; stay him with us by prayer and importunity, especially when the night of death, and error, and superstition comes. Say, 'Lord, night is near, stay with us, depart not from us.' Lay an holy violence upon God, as Jacob did: 'Thou shalt not go hence.' Lay hold on him by prayer, and do not leave him till we have drawn virtue and got some blessing from him; he must be kept by entreaty.

4. *And then desire him to perfume our souls for his dwelling*, as the church, Cant. iv. 16, 'Arise, O north wind; and blow, O south; that my beloved may come into his garden.' Desire Christ by his Spirit to blow upon us, that our beloved may come into his garden, that he may find somewhat there to solace himself withal—humility, love, pity, large and loving hearts, as himself had, to do all good. Desire him to plant those blessed spices of grace in our hearts, and that he would blow upon them by his Spirit, that they may prosper and thrive, that so he may come into his garden and solace himself. Let us still desire further and further communion with him; never be content. As the church, Cant. i. 1, 'Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.' He hath been familiar, but I desire more still. So every Christian soul that hath once entertained Christ is never content till it be with Christ in heaven, but still desires a fuller measure of comfort, grace, strength, and assurance. And why doth the soul thus desire after him? 'Oh his love is better than wine,' Cant. i. 2. So saith the church, having had a sense and feeling of his love. 'Thy love is sweeter than wine,' and therefore 'let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.' Desire therefore a more nearer communion in his love; for it is sweeter than wine, being once tasted.

5. And having got enjoyment of communion with God, *shut the soul to other things*. The comfort of his presence is a heaven upon earth, sweeter than wine, and above all other things to be desired. Take we heed therefore that we grieve not his good Spirit, and force him to retire himself; that we quench not his sweet motions by anything contrary to him. Those that have guests which they respect will do nothing that may be offensive to them. So let us watch over our souls, that nothing come in that may grieve Christ, nor anything come forth to grieve his Spirit in us. Let us not thrust ourselves into such occasions and company as may do or speak such things as may grieve the Spirit of God in us. Let us neither grieve the Spirit in ourselves, by cherishing that which is evil in our own hearts, nor by thrusting ourselves into the company of those whom we know by experience will grieve the Spirit. A man cannot go into bad company, but he must either be grieved, or tainted, and corrupted. Who would redeem familiarity and favour with them? exchange comfort and sense of Christ's Spirit for the favour of such men as grieve the Spirit in us? No; a soul that walks in the strength of the comfort of Christ's dwelling in him must be watchful and jealous over himself, and preserve heavenly motions, cherish them, and make them strong, and banish all that is contrary.

Quest. But how shall I recover him again, if I have grieved the Spirit, and lost the sense of his being in me?

Sol. I will name but one means. *Observe how thou lost it, and recover him by the contrary*. If thou wilt renew the experience of his love, and his dwelling in thee comfortably, consider how didst thou lose him? Was it

by negligence? by omission of duties? Didst thou not read when thou mightest, or hear when thou mightest? or gavest thou thy thoughts liberty to range? or didst thou not walk with God as thou shouldst? didst thou cast thyself into ill company, or cherish carnal desires? Take a contrary course then; converse with those that are good; stir up the grace of God in thee by meditation, and by renewing thy purposes and resolutions; hear as much as thou canst; speak to God as much as thou canst; maintain communion with saints, &c. As thou lost it, so endeavour the recovery by a contrary way, and then Christ will come again to the soul. We see, Cant. v. 3-6, that after Christ had stood knocking and calling to his spouse, 'Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled,' till his head was filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, but found no entrance, he retired, and withdrew himself, because she would not rise and put on her coat. But afterward, when she endeavoured herself, and used contrary means to her former sluggishness, seeking him, and saying, 'What is become of my beloved?' &c., then Christ came again into his garden, returned to his spouse, and forgot the former unkindness.

We deal with such a Saviour, that though we lose the sense of his presence for a time, yet if we use contrary means, and knit ourselves to his ordinances, at last we shall refind his love to our souls. Nay, he is so loving, so indulgent, that he never upbraids us with our former sins; as we see in Peter, whom he upbraided not with his former denial. Who would not maintain love, respect, and communion with such a Saviour as this, especially considering what a sweet estate it is to have Christ with us at all times, and in all estates, and so to have the love of God, for both go together? And what are all discouragements where the love of God in Christ is? What are all the creatures to God's love, to Christ? Where the soul is persuaded that it is in covenant and peace with God through Christ, and when it knows that Christ's Spirit is in it, this is a comfort above all discouragements whatsoever. Discouragements are carnal, outward things; the comforts are the presence of divine things. The Spirit of Christ, whose presence drowns all things, it is precious above all creatures, strength, beauty, wit, &c., yea, and prevalent above all the afflictions and sufferings in the world.

All afflictions cannot hinder the life of reason, and can they hinder the life of grace? No. Paul saith excellently, the more 'our outward man decays,' the more we suffer in our outward man, 'the more the life of Christ is manifest in us,' 2 Cor. iv. 16. So far are we from being hurt by any outward sufferings in the world, or discouraged by them, that the life and presence of Christ in us is thereby made more glorious, Christ triumphs and rules the more, by how much the more outward opposition we have.

If God's love, and consequently Christ, be in us, what if all the creatures were against us? Is there not more in God and Christ, than in all the creatures? Made he not all things of nothing? What made the martyrs in the primitive church to sacrifice their blood so willingly and cheerfully? Because the love of God was manifested to them in Christ Jesus. His name was manifested and declared as a sweet ointment poured forth, which caused those virgins to follow him. The sense and apprehension of the love of God, manifested by the Spirit of Christ, begat in them such a love to God again, that was strong even to death. It engendered such an heat within, that made them endure all the heat and flame without; so that all the torments which the malice and wit of persecutors could devise, could not daunt

their invincible spirit ; but in all these things they were more than conquerors, through him that loved them. A sweet state it is.

I beseech you, therefore, every day examine whether Christ be in you, and in what measure he is in you ; and labour to give him more room in your hearts. Will not the contrary daunt us ? else we are reprobates, refuse creatures, and the devil is in us. But contrariwise, if he be in us, he will fit us to be with him. He comes to us, that we may come to be with him ; for why doth he dwell in us ? One main reason is, to fit us for heaven. Let us labour, then, that he may be in us, that he may fit us for himself, to dwell with him in heaven. Labour that none may rule us but his Spirit. In death, what a comfort will it be, that Christ is in us. The Spirit of Christ, that hath ruled me all my life, shall carry my soul to heaven, and shall raise my dead body. If Christ be in us, what need we fear judgment ? Will the head condemn the members ? Christ is in us while we live, and therefore joyfully we may expect judgment. Why ? Our Redeemer, our Saviour, our Head, our Husband, will be our Judge. Therefore, of all estates in the world, get into Christ, and labour by all means to get Christ into us, by prayer, by getting grace, &c., that he may delight and solace himself in us. It is the best estate in the world.

Out of Christ, a man is as a branch cut from the vine, subject to the fire. Out of him, a man is as a member cut from the head, cut from the body, good for nothing, neither lively nor fruitful. Get into Christ : it is a state of all grace, for all grace is derived to us from him. It is a state of comfort in life and death, and for ever. He is the 'second Adam ;' and as all our misery is derived and communicated by being born of the first, from whom sin and corruption is derived, and misery with sin, mortal diseases, and all other misery, so, as soon as the 'second Adam,' Christ, is got into us, his Spirit reigns to glory with us : he never leaves us till he have made us as himself. It should be our main endeavour in this world, therefore, to get out of the cursed estate we are in by nature, and to get into Christ, the 'second Adam,' and then we are safe. For there is more comfort in him than there was sin and misery in the first.