

ing between two soldiers, an angel came and beat off his chains, Acts xii. 7. so, when thou wert sleeping in the devil's arms, that Christ should, by his Spirit, smite thy heart, and cause the chains of sin to fall off, and make thee a subject of his kingdom: O admire free grace! Thou who art a subject of Christ, art sure to reign with Christ for ever.



CHRIST'S HUMILIATION IN HIS INCARNATION.

1 TIM. iii. 16. *Great is the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh.*

Q. XXVII. *WHEREIN did Christ's humiliation consist?*

Ans. In his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross.

Christ's humiliation consisted in his incarnation, his taking flesh, and being born. It was real flesh Christ took: not the image of a body (as the Manichees erroneously held) but a true body; therefore Christ is said to be 'made of a woman,' Gal. iv. 4. As the bread is made of the wheat, and the wine is made of the grape; so Christ is made of a woman, his body was part of the flesh and substance of the virgin. This is a glorious mystery, 'God manifest in the flesh.' In the creation, man was made in God's image; in the incarnation, God was made in man's image.

Q. *How came it about that Christ was made flesh?*

Ans. It was by his Father's special designation, Gal. iv. 4. 'God sent forth his Son made of a woman.' God the Father did, in a special manner, appoint Christ to be incarnate; which shews how needful a call is, to any business of weight and importance: to act without a call, is to act without a blessing. Christ himself would not be incarnate, and take upon him the work of a Mediator till he had a call. 'God sent forth his Son made of a woman.'

Q. *But was there no other way for the restoring of fallen man but this, that God should take flesh?*

Ans. We must not ask a reason of God's will; it is dangerous to pry into God's ark: we are not to dispute but adore. The wise God saw this the best way for our redemption, that Christ should be incarnate; it was not fit for any to satisfy God's justice, but man; none could do it but God; therefore, Christ being both God and man, he is the fittest to undertake this work of redemption.

Q. *Why was Christ born of a woman?*

Ans. 1. That God might fulfil that promise, Gen. iii. 15. 'The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head.' 2. Christ was born of a woman that he might roll away that reproach from the woman, which she had contracted by being seduced by the serpent. Christ, in taking his flesh from the woman, hath honoured her sex; that as at the first the woman had made man a sinner, so now, to make him amends, she should bring him a Saviour.

Q. Why was Christ born of a virgin?

Ans. 1. For decency: it became not God to have any mother but a maid, and it became not a maid to have any other son but a God.

2. For necessity: Christ was to be an high-priest, most pure and holy. Had he been born after the ordinary course of nature, he had been defiled; (all that spring out of Adam's loins have a tincture of sin) but, that 'Christ's substance might remain pure and immaculate,' he was born of a virgin.

3. To answer the type. Melchisedec was a type of Christ; he is said to be 'without father and without mother.' Christ being born of a virgin, answered the type: he was without father and without mother: without mother as he was God, without father, as he was man.

Q. How could Christ be made of the flesh and blood of a virgin yet without sin? The purest virgin that is, her soul is stained with original sin.

Ans. This knot the scripture unties, Luke i. 35. 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.' 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,' that is, the Holy Ghost did consecrate and purify that part of the virgin's flesh whereof Christ was made. As the alchymist extracts and draws away the dross from the gold, so the Holy Ghost did refine and clarify that part of the virgin's flesh separating it from sin. Though the virgin Mary herself had sin, yet, that part of the flesh, whereof Christ was made, was without sin; otherwise it must have been an impure conception.

Q. What is meant by the power of the Holy Ghost overshadowing the virgin?

Ans. Basil saith, "It was the Holy Ghost's blessing the flesh of that virgin, whereof Christ was formed." But there is a further mystery in it; the Holy Ghost having framed Christ in the virgin's womb, did, in a wonderful manner, unite Christ's human nature to his divine, and so of both made one person. This is a mystery, which the angels pry into with adoration.

Q. When was Christ incarnate?

Ans. In the fulness of time, Gal. iv. 4. 'When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman.'

By the fulness of time, we must understand *tempus a patre praeinitum*; so Ambrose, Luther, *Corn. a Lap.* the determinate time that God had set. More particularly, this fulness of time was when all the prophecies of the coming of the Messiah were accomplished; and all legal shadows and figures, whereby he was typified, were abrogated: 'in the fulness of time God sent his Son.' And, by the way, observe, this may comfort us, in regard of the church of God, though at present we do not see that peace and purity in the church, as we could desire, yet in the fulness of time, when God's time is come, and mercy is ripe, then shall deliverance spring up, and God will come riding upon the chariots of salvation: 'When the fulness of time was come, then God sent forth his Son made of a woman.'

Q. *Why was Jesus Christ made flesh?*

Ans. 1. The *causa prima*, and impulsive cause, was free grace; it was love in God the Father to send Christ, and love in Christ that he came to be incarnate. Love was the intrinsecal motive. Christ is God-man, because he is a lover of man. Christ came out of pity and indulgence to us; *non merita nostra, sed misera nostra*, Aug. Not our deserts, but our misery made Christ take flesh. Christ's taking flesh, was a plot of free grace, and a pure design of love. God himself, though Almighty, was overcome with love. Christ incarnate is nothing but love covered with flesh. Christ's assuming our human nature, as it was a master-piece of wisdom, so a monument of free-grace.

2. Christ took our flesh upon him, that he might take our sins upon him. He was, saith Luther, *maximus peccatur*, the greatest sinner, having the weight of the sins of the whole world lying upon him. He took our flesh that he might take our sins, and so appease God's wrath.

3. Christ took our flesh, that he might make the human nature appear lovely to God, and the divine nature appear lovely to man.

(1.) That he might make the human nature lovely to God. Upon our fall from God, our nature became odious to him; no vermin is so odious to us, as the human nature was to God. When once our virgin nature was become sinful, it was like flesh imposthumated, or running into sores, loathsome to behold: such was our nature, when corrupt, odious to God, he could not endure to look upon us. Now, Christ taking our flesh, makes this human nature appear lovely to God. As when the sun shines on the glass, it casts a bright lustre, so Christ being clad with our flesh makes the human nature shine, and appear amiable in God's eyes.

(2.) As Christ being clothed with our flesh, makes the human nature appear lovely to God, so he makes the divine nature ap-

pear lovely to man.' The pure Godhead is terrible to behold, we could not see it and live: but Christ clothing himself with our flesh, makes the divine nature more amiable and delightful to us. Now we need not be afraid to look upon God, seeing him thro' Christ's human nature. It was a custom of old among the shepherds, they were wont to clothe themselves with sheepskins, to be more pleasing to the sheep; so Christ clothed himself with our flesh, that the divine nature may be more pleasing to us. The human nature is a glass, through which we may see the love and wisdom, and glory of God clearly represented to us. Through the lantern of Christ's humanity, we may behold the light of the Deity shining. Christ being incarnate, he makes the sight of the Deity not formidable, but delightful to us.

4. Jesus Christ united himself to man, 'that man might be drawn nearer to God.' God before was an enemy to us, by reason of sin; but Christ taking our flesh, doth mediate for us, and bring us into favour with God. As when a king is angry with a subject, the king's son marries the daughter of this subject, and so mediates for this subject, and brings him into favour with the king again: So, when God the Father was angry with us, Christ married himself to our nature, and now mediates for us with his Father, and brings us to be friends again, and now God looks upon us with a favourable aspect. As Joab pleaded for Absalom, and brought him to king David, and David kissed him, so doth Jesus Christ ingratiate us into the love and favour of God. Therefore he may well be called a peace-maker, having taken our flesh upon him, and so made peace between us and his angry Father.

Use 1. Branch 1. See here, as in a glass, the infinite love of God the Father, and when we had lost ourselves by sin, then God in the riches of his grace, did send forth his Son made of a woman to redeem us. And behold the infinite love of Christ, that he was willing thus to condescend to take our flesh. Surely the angels would have disdained to have taken our flesh, it would have been a disparagement to them. What king would be willing to wear sackcloth over his cloth of gold? but Christ did not disdain to take our flesh. O the love of Christ! had not Christ been made flesh, we had been made a curse; had not he been incarnate, we had been incarcerated, and had been for ever in prison. Well might an angel be the herald to proclaim this joyful news of Christ's incarnation, Luke ii. 10. 'Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy; for unto you is born this day a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.' The love of Christ in being incarnate, will the more appear if we consider;

1. Whence Christ came. He came from heaven, and from the richest place in heaven, his Father's bosom, that hive of sweetness.

2. To whom Christ came. Was it to his friends? No, he came to sinful man. Man that had defaced his image, abused his love; man who was turned rebel; yet he came to man, resolving to conquer obstinacy with kindness. If he would come to any, why not to the angels that fell? Heb. ii. 16. 'He in no wise took upon him the nature of angels.' The angels are of a more noble extract, more intelligible creatures, more able for service; ay, but behold the love of Christ, he came not to the fallen angels, but to mankind. Among the several wonders of the loadstone, this is not the least, that it will not draw gold or pearl, but despising these, it draws the iron to it, one of the most inferior metals; thus Christ leaves the angels, those noble spirits, the gold and the pearl, and he comes to poor sinful man, and draws him into his embraces.

3. In what manner he came. He came not in the majesty of a king, attended with his life-guard, but he came poor: not like the heir of heaven, but like one of an inferior descent. The place he was born in was poor: not the royal city Jerusalem, but Bethlehem, a poor obscure place. He was born in an inn, and a manger was his cradle, the cobwebs his curtains, the beasts his companions; he descended of poor parents. One would have thought, if Christ would have come into the world, he would have made choice of some queen or personage of honour to have descended from: but he comes of mean obscure parents; that they were poor, appears by their offering, Luke ii. 24. 'A pair of turtle-doves,' which was the usual offering of the poor, Lev. xii. 8. Christ was so poor, that when he wanted money, he was fain to work a miracle for it, Matth. xvii. 27. He, when he died, made no will. He came into the world poor.

4. Why he came. That he might take our flesh, and redeem us; that he might institute us into a kingdom. He was poor, that he might make us rich, 2 Cor. viii. 9. He was born of a virgin, that he might be born of God. He took our flesh, that he might give us his Spirit. He lay in the manger, that we might lie in paradise. He came down from heaven, that he might bring us to heaven. And what was all this but love? If our hearts be not rocks, this love of Christ should affect us: behold love that passeth knowledge! Eph. iii. 19.

Branch 2. See here the wonderful humility of Christ: Christ was made flesh, *O sanctu humilitas, tu filiam Dei descendere fecisti in utero, Mariæ Virginis*, Austin. That Christ should clothe himself with our flesh, a piece of that earth which we tread upon; O infinite humility! Christ's taking our flesh, was one of the lowest steps of his humiliation. Christ did humble himself more in lying in the Virgin's womb, than in hanging upon the cross. It was not so much for man to die, but for

God to become man, that was the wonder of humility, Phil. ii. 7. 'He was made in the likeness of man.' For Christ to be made flesh, was more humility, than for the angels to be made worms. Christ's flesh is called a veil, Hebrews x. 20. 'Through the veil,' that is, his flesh, Christ's wearing our flesh, veiled his glory. For him to be made flesh, who was equal with God, O humility! Phil. ii. 6. 'Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God.' He stood upon even ground with God, he was co-essential and con-substantial with his Father, as Austin and Cyril, and the council of Nice express it; yet, for all this, he takes flesh. Christ stript himself of the robes of his glory, and covered himself with the rags of our humanity. If Solomon did so wonder that God should dwell in the temple, which was enriched and hung with gold, how may we wonder that God should dwell in man's weak and frail nature? Nay, which is yet more humility, Christ not only took our flesh, but took it when it was at the worst, under disgrace; as if a servant should wear a nobleman's livery, when he is impeached of high treason. Nay, besides, Christ took all the infirmities of our flesh. There are two sorts of infirmities! Such as are sinful without pain, or such as are painful without sin. The first of these infirmities Christ did not take upon him, sinful infirmities, to be covetous or ambitious, Christ never took these upon him: But Christ took upon him painful infirmities; as, 1. Hunger, Matth. xxi. 18. He came to the fig-tree, and would have eaten. 2. Weariness; as when he sat on Jacob's well to rest him, John iv. 6. 3. Sorrow, Matth. xxvi. 38. 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' It was a sorrow guided with reason, not disturbed with passion. 4. Fear, Heb. v. 7. 'He was heard in that he feared.' Nay, yet a further degree of Christ's humility, he not only was made flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh, 'He knew no sin, yet he was made sin,' 2 Cor. v. 21. He was like a sinner; he had all sin laid upon him, but no sin lived in him. Isa. liii. 12. 'He was numbered among transgressors.' He who was numbered among the persons of the Trinity, he is said to bear the 'sins of many,' Heb. ix. 28. Now, this was the lowest degree of Christ's humiliation: For Christ to be reputed as a sinner, never such a pattern of humility. That Christ, who would not endure sin in the angels, should himself endure to have sin imputed to him, it is the most amazing humility that ever was.

From all this learn to be humble. Dost thou see Christ humbling himself, and art thou proud? 'Tis the humble saint that is Christ's picture. Christians, be not proud of your fine feathers: 1. Hast thou an estate! be not proud, the earth thou treadest on is richer than thou: it hath mines of gold and silver in the bowels of it. 2. Hast thou beauty? be not proud: it

is but air and dust mingled. 3. Hast thou skill and parts? be humble: Lucifer hath more knowledge than thou. 4. Hast thou grace? be humble: thou hast it not of thy own growth, it is borrowed. Were it not folly to be proud of a ring that is lent? 1 Cor. iv. 7. Thou hast more sin than grace, spots than beauty. O look on Christ, this rare pattern, and be humbled! It is an unseemly fight to see God humbling himself, and man exalting himself; to see an humble Saviour, and a proud sinner. God hates the very resemblance of pride, Lev. ii. 11. He would have no honey in the sacrifice. Indeed leaven is four; but why no honey? because, when honey is mingled with meal or flour, it makes the meal to rise and swell; therefore no honey. God hates the resemblance of the sin of pride; better want parts, comforts of Spirit, than humility. *Si Deus superbientibus angelis non pepercit*: If God, saith Austin, spared not the angels, when they grew proud, will he spare thee, who art but dust and rottenness?

Branch 3. Behold here a sacred riddle or paradox; 'God manifest in the flesh.' The text calls it a mystery. That man should be made in God's image, was a wonder; but that God should be made in man's image, is a greater wonder. That the Ancient of days should be born, that he who thunders in the heaven should cry in the cradle: *Qui tonitruat in calis, clamat in cunabulis*; *qui regit sidera, fugit ubera*; that he who rules the stars, should suck the breast; that a virgin should conceive, that Christ should be made of a woman, and of that woman which himself made; that the branch should bear the vine; that the mother should be younger than the child she bare, and the child in the womb bigger than the mother; that the human nature should not be God, yet one with God: this was not only *mirum* but *miraculum*. Christ taking flesh is a mystery we shall never fully understand till we come to heaven, when our light shall be clear, as well as our love perfect.

Branch 4. From hence, 'God manifest in the flesh, Christ born of a virgin,' a thing not only strange in nature, but impossible, learn, 'That there are no impossibilities with God: God can bring about things which are not within the sphere of nature to produce; that iron should swim, that the rock should gush out water, that the fire should lick up the water in the trenches, 1 Kings xviii. 28. 'Tis natural for the water to quench the fire, but for the fire to consume the water, this is impossible in the course of nature: but God can bring about all this, Jer. xxxii. 27. 'There is nothing too hard for thee.' Zech. viii. 6. 'If it be marvellous in your eyes, should it be marvellous in my eyes? saith the Lord.' How should God be united to our flesh? it is impossible to us, but not with God; he can do what transcends reason, and exceeds faith. He

would not be our God, if he could not do more than we can think, Eph. iii. 20. He can reconcile contraries. How apt are we to be discouraged with seeming impossibilities? How do our hearts die within us, when things go cross to our sense and reason? We are apt to say as that prince, 2 Kings vii. 1, 2. 'If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?' It was a time of famine, and now that a measure of wheat, which was a good part of a bushel, should be sold for a shekel, viz. half an ounce of silver, how can this be? So, when things are cross, or strange, God's own people are apt to question, how they should be brought about with success? Moses, who was a man of God, and one of the brightest stars that ever shined in the firmament of God's church, yet he was apt to be discouraged with seeming impossibilities, Numb. xi. 21. 'And Moses said, the people among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen, and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat for a whole month: shall the flocks and herds be slain for them to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered for them, to suffice them?' As if he had said, in plain language, he did not see how the people of Israel, being so numerous, could be fed for a month, ver. 23. 'And the Lord said, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?' Surely, that God who brought Isaac out of a dead womb, and the Messiah out of a virgin's womb, what cannot he do? O let us rest upon the arm of God's power, and believe in him, in the midst of seeming impossibilities. Remember, 'there are no impossibilities with God.' He can subdue a proud heart, He can raise a dying church. Christ born of a virgin, that wonder-working God that wrought this, can bring to pass the greatest seeming impossibilities.

Use 2. Of exhortation. Branch 1. Seeing Christ took our flesh, and was born of a virgin, let us labour that he may be spiritually born in our hearts. What will it profit us, that Christ was born into the world, unless he be born in our hearts; that he was united to our nature, unless he be united to our persons? Marvel not that I say to you, Christ must be born again, viz. in our hearts, Gal. iv. 19. 'Till Christ be formed in you.' Now, then, try if Christ be born in your hearts.

Q. How shall we know that?

Ans. 1. There are pangs before the birth; so, before Christ be born in the heart, there are spiritual pangs. Some pangs of conscience, deep convictions, Acts ii. 37. 'They were pricked at their heart.' I grant the new-birth doth *recipere magis et minus*—all have not the same pangs of sorrow and humiliation, yet all have pangs. If Christ be born in thy heart, thou hast been deeply afflicted for sin. Christ is never born in the heart without pangs. Many thank God they never had any trouble

of spirit, they were always quiet; a sign Christ is not yet formed in them.

2. As, when Christ was born into the world, he was made flesh; so, if he be born in thy heart, he makes thy heart an heart of flesh, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Is thy heart incarnate? before it was a rocky heart and would not yield to God, or take the impressions of the word; *durum est quod non cedit tactui*; now it is fleshly and tender, like melted wax, to take any stamp of the Spirit. This is a sign Christ is born in our hearts; when they are hearts of flesh, they melt in tears and in love. What is it the better Christ was made flesh, unless he hath given thee an heart of flesh?

3. Christ was conceived in the womb of a virgin; so, if he be born in thee, thy heart is a virgin-heart, in respect of sincerity and sanctity. Art thou purified from the love of sin? If Christ be born in thy heart, it is a *sanctum sanctorum*, an holy of holies. If thy heart be polluted with the predominant love of sin, never think Christ is born there; Christ will never lie any more in a stable. If he be born in thy heart, it is consecrated by the Holy Ghost.

4. If Christ be born in thy heart, then it is with thee as in a birth: 1. There is life. Faith is *principium vivens*, it is the vital artery of the soul, Gal. ii. 20. 'The life that I live in the flesh, is by the faith of the Son of God.' 2. There is appetite, 1 Pet. ii. 7. 'As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word.' The word is like breast-milk, pure, sweet, nourishing; the soul in which Christ is formed, desires this breast-milk. St. Bernard, in one of his soliloquies, comforts himself with this, That sure he had the new birth in him, because he found in his heart such strong anhelations and thirstings after God. 3. Motion. After Christ is born in the heart, there is a violent motion; there is striving 'to enter in at the strait gate,' and offering violence to the kingdom of heaven, Matth. xii. 11. By this we may know Christ is formed in us. This is the only comfort, that as Christ was born into the world, so he is born in our hearts; as he was united to our flesh, so he is united to our person.

Branch 2. As Christ was made in our image, let us labour to be made in his image: Christ being incarnate was made like us, let us labour to be made like him. There are three things in which we should labour to be like Christ. 1. In disposition. He was of a most sweet disposition *delicie humani generis*, Tit. Vespasian. He invites sinners to come to him. He hath bowels to pity us, breasts to feed us, wings to cover us. He would not break our heart, but with mercy. Was Christ made in our likeness? let us labour to be made in his likeness. Let us be like him in this sweetness of disposition: be not of a mo-

rose spirit. It was said of Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 18. 'He is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.' Some are so barbarous, as if they were a-kin to the ostrich, they are fired with rage, and breathe forth nothing but revenge; like those two men in the gospel 'possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce,' Matth. viii. 28. Let us be like Christ in mildness and sweetness. Let us pray for our enemies, and conquer them by love. David's kindness melted Saul's heart, 1 Sam. xxiv. 16. A frozen heart will be thawed with the fire of love.

2. Be like Christ in grace. He was like us in having our flesh, let us be like him in having his grace. In three graces we should labour to be like Christ: 1. In humility, Phil. ii. 8. 'He humbled himself;' he left the bright robes of his glory, to be clothed with the rags of our humanity: a wonder to humility! Let us be like Christ in this grace. Humility, saith St. Bernard, is *contemptus propriæ excellentiæ*, a contempt of self-excellency, a kind of self-annihilation. This is the glory of a Christian. We are never so comely in God's eyes, as when we are black in our own. In this let us be like Christ. True religion is to imitate Christ. And indeed, what cause have we to be humble, if we look within us, about us, below us, above us?

(1.) If we look *intra nos*, within us, here we see our sins represented to us in the glass of conscience; lust, envy, passion. Our sins are like vermin crawling in our souls, Job xiii. 23. 'How many are my iniquities?' Our sins are as the sands of the sea for number, as the rocks of the sea for weight. Austin cries out, *Vae mihi, fœcibus peccatorum polluitur templum Domini*.—My heart, which is God's temple, is polluted with sin.

(2.) If we look *juxta nos*, about us; here is that may humble us. We may see other Christians out-shining us in gifts and graces, as the sun out-shines the lesser planets. Others are laden with fruit, perhaps we have but here and there an olive-berry growing, to shew that we are of the right kind, Isa. xvii. 6.

(3.) If we look *infra nos*, below us; here is that may humble us. We may see the mother earth, out of which we came. The earth is the most ignoble element, Job xxx. 8. 'Thou art viler than the earth.' Thou that dost set up thy scutcheon, and blaze thy coat of arms, behold thy pedigree; thou art but *pulvis animatus*, walking ashes: and wilt thou be proud! What is Adam? He is the son of dust; and what is dust? the son of nothing.

(4.) If we look *supra nos*, above us; here is that may humble us. If we look up to heaven, there we may see God resisting the proud, *Superbos sequitur ultor a tergo Deus*—The proud

man is the mark which God shoots at, and he never misses the mark. He threw proud Lucifer out of heaven; he thrust proud Nebuchadnezzar out of his throne, and turned him to eat grass, Dan iv. 29. O then be like Christ in humility.

3. Did Christ take our flesh? was he made like to us? let us be made like to him in zeal, John ii. 16. 'The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.' He was zealous when his Father was dishonoured. In this let us be like Christ, zealous for God's truth and glory, which are the two orient pearls of the crown of heaven. Zeal is as needful for a Christian, as salt for the sacrifice, or fire on the altar. Zeal without prudence, is rashness; prudence without zeal, is cowardliness. Without zeal, our duties are not acceptable to God. Zeal is like rosin to the bow-strings, without which the lute makes no music.

4. Be like Christ, in the contempt of the world. When Christ took our flesh, he came not in the pride of flesh, he did not descend immediately from kings and nobles, but was of mean parentage. Christ was not ambitious of titles of honour. Christ did as much decline the worldly dignity and greatness, as others seek it. When they would have made him a king, he refused it; he chose rather to ride upon the foal of an ass, than to be drawn in a chariot; and to hang upon a wooden cross, than to wear a golden crown. Christ scorned the pomp and glory of the world; he waved secular affairs, Luke xii. 13. 'Who made me a judge?' His work was not to arbitrate matters of law; he came not into the world to be a magistrate, but a Redeemer. Christ was like a star in an higher orb, he minded nothing but heaven. Was Christ made like us? let us be made like him, in heavenliness and contempt of the world. Let us not be ambitious of the honours and preferments of the world; let us not purchase the world with the loss of a good conscience. What wise man would damn himself, to grow rich? or pull down his soul, to build up an estate? Be like Christ in an holy contempt of the world.

5. Be like Christ in conversation. Was Christ incarnate? was he made like us? let us be made like him in holiness of life. No temptation could fasten upon Christ. John xiv. 30. 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.' Temptation to Christ was like a spark of fire upon a marble pillar, which glides off. Christ's life, saith Chrysostom, was brighter than the sun beams. Let us be like him in this, 2 Pet. i. 16. 'Be ye holy in all manner of conversation.' We are not, saith Austin, to be like Christ in working miracles, but in a holy life. A christian should be both a loadstone and a diamond: a loadstone, in drawing others to Christ; a diamond, casting a sparkling lustre of holiness in his life. O let us be so just in our dealings, so true in our promises, so devout in our

worship, so unblameable in our lives, that we may be the walking pictures of Christ. Thus as Christ was made in our likeness, let us labour to be made in his likeness.

Branch 3. If Jesus Christ was so abased for us; he took our flesh, which was a disparagement to him; it was mingling dust with gold: if he, I say, abased himself so for us, let us be willing to be abased for him. If the world reproach us for Christ's sake, and cast dust on our name, let us bear it with patience. The Apostles, Acts v. 41. departed from the council 'rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name:' that they were graced to be disgraced for Christ. That is a good saying of St. Austin, *Quid sinit detrahit famæ, meæ addet mercedi meæ*; they who take away from a saint's name, shall add to his reward; and while they make his credit weigh lighter, they make his crown weigh heavier. O was Christ content to be humbled and abased for us, to take our flesh, and to take it when it was in disgrace! Let us not think much to be abased for Christ. Say as David, 2 Sam. vi. 22. 'If this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile.' If to serve my Lord Christ, if to keep my conscience pure, if this be to be vile, I will yet be more vile.

Use 3d, of comfort. Jesus Christ having taken our flesh, hath ennobled our nature, *naturam nostrum nobilitavit*. Our nature is now invested with greater royalties and privileges than in time of innocency. Before, in innocency, we were made in the image of God; but now, Christ having assumed our nature, we are made one with God; our nature is ennobled above the angelical nature. Christ taking our flesh, hath made us nearer to himself than the angels. The angels are his friends, believers are flesh of his flesh, his members, Eph. v. 30. and chap. i. 23. And the same glory which is put upon Christ's human nature, shall be put upon believers.

CHRIST'S EXALTATION.

PHIL. ii. 9. *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, &c.*

BEFORE, we have spoken of Christ's humiliation, now of his exaltation: before you saw the Sun of righteousness in the eclipse; now you shall see it coming out of the eclipse; and shining in its full splendor and glory: 'Wherefore God hath highly exalted him;' *super exaltavit*, Ambr. "Above all exaltation."

Q. XXVIII. *Wherein consists Christ's exaltation?*