

OF PEACE.

1 PET. i. 2. *Grace unto you, and Peace be multiplied.*

HAVING spoken of the first fruit of sanctification, assurance; I proceed to the second, viz. peace, 'Peace be multiplied.'

Q. *What are the several species or kinds of Peace?*

Ans. Peace, in scripture, is compared to a river, Isa. lxvi. 12. this river parts itself into two silver streams.

1st, There is an external peace, and that is either, 1. *Economical*, peace in a family. 2. *Political*, peace in the state. Peace is the nurse of plenty, Psal. cxlvii. 14. 'He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.' How pleasant is it when the waters of blood begin to assuage, and we can see the windows of our ark open, and the dove returning with an olive branch of peace? 3. *Ecclesiastical*, peace in the church. It is Unity in Trinity is the greatest mystery in heaven, and Unity in Verity the greatest mercy on earth. Peace ecclesiastical stands in opposition to schism and persecution.

2^{dly}, *A spiritual peace*, which is twofold; peace above us, or peace with God; and peace within us, or peace with conscience: this is superlative; other peace may be lasting, but this is everlasting.

Q. 2. *Whence comes this peace?*

Ans. This peace hath the whole Trinity for its author, (1.) God the Father is 'the God of peace,' 1 Thess. v. 23. (2.) God the Son is the 'Prince of peace,' Isa. ix. 9. (3.) Peace is said to be the 'fruit of the Spirit,' Gal. v. 22.

1. God the Father is the God of peace. As he is the God of order, 1 Cor. xiv. 33. so the God of peace, Phil. iv. 9. This was the form of the priest's blessing the people, Numb. vi. 27. 'The Lord give thee peace.'

2. God the Son is the purchaser of peace. He had made peace by his blood, Col. i. 20. 'Having made peace by the blood of his cross.' The atonement Aaron made for the people, when he entered into the holy of holies with blood, was a type of Christ our high-priest, who hath by his sacrifice pacified his angry Father, and made atonement for us. Christ purchased our peace upon hard terms; his soul was in an agony, while he was travelling to bring forth peace to the world.

3. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit. He seals up peace to the conscience: The Spirit clears up the work of grace in the heart,

from whence arifeth peace. There was a well of water, near Hagar, but ſhe did not ſee it, therefore wept. A Chriſtian hath grace, but doth not ſee it, therefore weeps. Now the Spirit diſcovers this well of water, it enables conſcience to witneſs to a man that hath the real work of grace, and ſo peace flows into the ſoul. Thus you ſee whence this peace comes, the Father decrees it, the Son purchaſeth it, the Holy Ghoſt applies it.

Q. 3. *Whether ſuch as are deſtitute of grace may have peace?*

A. No. Peace flows from ſanctification; but they, being unregenerate, have nothing to do with peace, Iſa. lvii. 21. 'There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.' They may have a truce, but no peace. God may forbear the wicked a while, and ſtop the roaring of his cannon; but though there be a truce, yet no peace. The wicked may have ſomething which looks like peace, but it is not. They may be fearleſs and ſtupid; but there is a great difference between a ſtupified conſcience, and a pacified conſcience, Luke xi. 21. 'When a ſtrong man keeps his palace, his goods are in peace.' This is the devil's peace; he rocks men in the cradle of ſecurity; he cries, peace, peace, when men are on the precipice of hell. The ſeeming peace a ſinner hath, is not from the knowledge of his happineſs but the ignorance of his danger.

Q. 4. *What are the ſigns of a falſe peace?*

A. 1. A falſe peace hath much confidence in it, but this confidence is conceit. The ſinner doth not doubt of God's mercy; from which preſumptuous confidence arifeth ſome kind of quiet in the mind. The ſame word in the Hebrew, *cajal*, ſignifies both confidence and folly, indeed a ſinner's confidence is folly; how confident were the fooliſh virgins?

2. Falſe peace ſeparates thoſe things which God hath joined together: God joins holineſs and peace, but he who hath a falſe peace ſeparates theſe two. He lays claim to peace, but baniſheth holineſs, Deut. xxix. 19. 'I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenneſs to thirſt.' The wicked are looſe and vain, and yet thank God that they have peace: a deluſion. You may as well ſuck health out of poiſon, as peace out of ſin.

3. Falſe peace is not willing to be tried; a ſign they are bad wares which will not endure the light; a ſign a man hath ſtolen goods, when he will not have his houſe ſearched. A falſe peace cannot endure to be tried by the word: the word ſpeaks of an humbling and refining work upon the ſoul before peace; falſe peace cannot endure to hear of this: the leaſt trouble will ſhake this peace; it will end in deſpair. In a falſe peace, conſcience is aſleep; but, when this lion of conſcience ſhall be awakened

at death, then it will roar upon a man, he will be a terror to himself, and be ready to lay violent hands upon himself.

Q. 5. *How shall we know that ours is a true peace?*

Ans. 1. True peace flows from union with Christ; *Communio fundatur in unione*. The graft or scion must first be inoculated into the tree before it can receive sap and nourishment from it; so we must first be ingrafted into Christ, before we can receive peace from him. Have we faith? By holiness we are made like Christ; by believing we are made one with Christ, and being in Christ we have peace, John xvi. 33.

2. True peace flows from subjection to Christ; where Christ gives peace, there he sets up his government in the heart, Isa. ix. 7. 'Of his government and peace there shall be no end.' Christ is called 'a priest upon his throne,' Zech. vi. 13. Christ as a priest makes peace; but he will be a priest upon his throne, he brings the heart in subjection to him. If Christ be our peace, he is our prince, Isa. ix. 6. Whenever Christ pacifies the conscience, he subdues the lust.

3. True peace is after trouble. First, God lets loose a spirit of bondage, he convinceth and humbleth the soul; then he speaks peace. Many say they have peace, but is this peace before a storm, or after it? True peace is after trouble. First, there was the earthquake, and then the fire, and then the still small voice, 1 Kings xix. 11. Thou who never hadst any legal bruifings, mayst suspect thy peace; God pours the golden oil of peace into broken hearts.

Q. 6. *Whether have all sanctified persons this peace?*

Ans. They have a title to it; they have the ground of it; grace is the seed of peace, and it will in time turn to peace; as the blossoms of a tree to fruit, milk to cream. They have a promise of it, Psal. xxix. 11. 'The Lord will bless his people with peace:' they may have peace with God, though not peace in their own conscience; they have the initials and beginnings of peace. There is a secret peace the heart hath in serving God; such meltings and enlargements in duty as do revive the soul, and bear it up from sinking.

Q. 7. *But why have not all believers the full enjoyment and possession of peace? why is not this flower of peace fully ripe and blown?*

Ans. Some of the godly may not have so full a degree of peace. 1. Through the fury of temptation; the devil, if he cannot destroy us, he will disturb us; Satan disputes against our adoption; he would make us question the work of grace in our hearts, and so troubles the waters of our peace: Satan is like a subtle cheater, who, if he cannot make a man's title to his land void, yet he will put him to many troublesome suits in law. If Satan cannot make us ungodly, he will make us unquiet:

violent winds make the sea rough and stormy; the winds of temptation blowing, disturb peace of spirit, and put the soul into a commotion. 2. The godly may not enjoy peace, through mistake and misapprehension about sin. They find so much corruption, that sure, if there were grace, there would not be such strong workings of corruption: whereas this should be so far from discouraging Christians, and hindering their peace, that it is an argument for them. Let me ask, Whence is it that you feel sin? No man can feel sin, but by grace. A wicked man is insensible: lay an hundred weight upon a dead man, he doth not complain: but the being sensible of corruption, argues a gracious principle, Rom. vii. 21. Again, 'Whence is it that there is a combat with sin, but from the life of grace?' Gal. v. 17. Dead things cannot combat. Whence is it that the saints weep for sin? what are these tears but seeds of faith? The not understanding of this, hinders a Christian's peace. 3. The godly may not enjoy peace, through remissness in duty: they leave their first love. When Christians abate their fervency, God abates their peace: If you slacken the strings of a viol, the music is spoiled; if a Christian slack in duty, they spoil the sweet music of peace in their souls. As the fire decays, so the cold increaseth; as fervency in duty abates, so our peace cools.

Ujé. Labour for this blessed peace, peace with God and conscience. Peace with neighbour-nations is sweet, *Pax una triumphis innumeris melior.* The Hebrew word *shalom*, peace, comprehends all blessings, it is the glory of a kingdom; a prince's crown is more beautiful when it is hung with the white lily of peace, than when it is set with the red roses of a bloody war. O then, how sweet is peace of conscience! It is a bulwark against the enemy, Phil. iv. 7. it shall keep you as in a garrison; you may throw out the gauntlet and bid defiance to the enemies: it is the golden pot and the manna; it is the first fruits of paradise. It is still music; for want of this a Christian is in continual fear, he doth not take that comfort in ordinances. Hannah went up to the feast at Jerusalem, but she wept, and did not eat, 1 Sam. i. 7. So, a poor dejected soul goes to an ordinance, but doth not eat of the feast; he weeps and doth not eat. He cannot take that comfort in worldly blessings, health, estate, relations; he wants that inward peace, which should be a sauce to sweeten his comforts. O therefore labour for this blessed peace. Consider the noble and excellent effects of it. 1. It gives boldness at the throne of grace: guilt of conscience clips the wings of prayer, it makes the face bluish, and the heart faint: but when a Christian hath some lively apprehensions of God's love, and the Spirit whispering peace, then he goes to God with boldness, as a child to his father, Psal. xxv. 1. 'Unto thee, O Lord, I lift my soul.' Time was when

David's soul was bowed down, Pſal. xxxviii. 6. 'I am bowed down greatly;' but now the caſe is altered, he will lift up his ſoul to God in a way of triumph, whence was this? God hath ſpoken peace to his ſoul, Pſal. xxvi. 3. 'Thy loving-kindneſs is before mine eyes.' 2. This divine peace fires the heart with love to Chriſt. Peace is the reſult of pardon; he who hath a pardon ſealed, cannot chuſe but love his prince. How endeared is Chriſt to the ſoul! Now Chriſt is precious indeed. 'O, ſaith the ſoul, how ſweet is this roſe of Sharon! Hath Chriſt waded through a ſea of blood and wrath to purchaſe my peace; Hath he not only made peace, but ſpoke peace to me? How ſhould my heart aſcend in a fiery chariot of love! How willing ſhould I be to do and ſuffer for Chriſt?' This peace quiets the heart in trouble, Mic. v. 5. 'This man ſhall be the peace, when the Aſſyrian ſhall come into our land, and tread in our palaces.' The enemy may invade our palaces, but not our peace; this man Chriſt, ſhall be the peace. When the head aches, the heart may be well; when worldly troubles aſſault a Chriſtian, his mind may be in peace and quiet, Pſal. iv. 8. 'I will lay me down in peace, and ſleep.' 'Twas now a ſad time with David, he was fleeing for his life from Abſalom: it was no ſmall affliction to think that his own ſon ſhould ſeek to take away his Father's life and crown: David wept and covered his face, 2 Sam. xv. 30. Yet at this time, ſaith he, 'I will lay me down in peace, and ſleep.' He had trouble from his ſon but peace from his conſcience; David could ſleep upon the ſoft pillow of a good conſcience: this is a peace worth getting.

Qu. 8. *What ſhall we do to attain this bleſſed peace?*

Anſ. 1. Let us aſk it of God; he is the God of peace, he beats back the roaring lion, he ſtills the raging of conſcience; if we could call all the angels out of heaven, they could not ſpeak peace without God. The ſtars cannot make day without the ſun; none can make day in a dark deſerted ſoul, but the Sun of righteouſneſs. As the wilderneſs cannot water itſelf, but remains dry and parched, till the clouds drop their moiſture; ſo our hearts cannot have peace, till he inſuſe it and drop it upon us by his Spirit. Therefore pray, 'Lord, thou who art the God of peace, create peace, thou who art the Prince of peace, command it. Give me that peace which may ſweeten trouble, yea, the bitter cup of death.'

2. If you would have peace, make war with ſin; ſin is the Achan that troubles us, the Trojan horſe, 1 Kings ix. 22. 'When Joram ſaw Jehu, he ſaid, is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, ſo long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts are ſo many?' What peace as long as ſin remains unmortified? if you would have peace with

God, break the league with sin; give battle to sin, it is a most just war, God hath proclaimed it: nay, he hath promised us victory, 'Sin shall not have dominion,' Rom. vi. No way to peace but by maintaining a war with sin. *Pax nostra bellum contre dæmonem*, Tertul. When Samson had slain the lion; there came honey out of the lion: by slaying sin, we get this honey of peace.

3. Go to Christ's blood for peace. Some go to fetch their peace from their own righteousness, not Christ's, they go for peace to their holy life, not Christ's death; if conscience be troubled, they strive to quiet it with their duties. This is not the right way to peace: duties must not be neglected, nor yet idolized. Look up to the blood of sprinkling, Heb. xii. 24. That blood of Christ which pacified God, must pacify conscience; Christ's blood being sucked in by faith, gives peace, Rom. v. 1. 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.' No balm to cure a wounded conscience, but the blood of Christ.

4. Walk closely with God. Peace flows from purity, Gal. vi. 16. 'As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them.' In the text, grace and peace are put together; grace is the root, and peace is the flower. As balm-water drops from the limbec, so divine peace comes out of the limbec of a gracious heart. Walk very holily; God's Spirit is first a refiner before a comforter.

Branch 2. You who have this peace, peace above, peace within, labour to keep it: it is a precious jewel, do not lose it: it is sad to have the league of national peace broken, but it is worse to have the peace of conscience broken: O preserve this peace. *First*, Take heed of relapses; hath God spoken peace? do not turn again to folly, Psal. lxxxv. 8. Besides the ingratitude, there's folly in relapses. It was long ere God was reconciled and the breach made up; and you will again eclipse and forfeit your peace? hath God healed the wound of conscience, and will you tear it open again? will you break another vein? will you cut a new artery? this is returning indeed to folly. What madness is it to meddle again with that sin, which will breed the worm of conscience! *Secondly*, Make up your spiritual accounts daily; see how matters stand between God and your souls, Psal. lxxvii. 6. 'I commune with my own heart.' Often reckonings keep God and conscience friends; do with your hearts as you do with your watches, wind them up every morning by prayer, and at night examine whether your hearts have gone true all that day, whether the wheels of your affections have moved swiftly toward heaven: Oh call yourselves often to account; keep your reckonings even, and that is the way to keep your peace.