

Sermon 1

Sermon 2

Sermon 3

on the one hand, and so many formal Protestants on the other, that we may conclude the major part of the world goes to hell. 1. The scripture compares the wicked to briars, Isa. x. 17. There are but few lilies in your fields, but in every hedge thorns and briars. 2. To 'the mire in the streets,' Isa. x. 6. Few jewels or precious stones in the street, but you cannot go a step but you meet with mire. The wicked are as common as the dirt in the street: look into the generality of people, how many drunkards for one that is sober? how many adulterers for one that is chaste? how many hypocrites for one that is sincere? The devil hath the harvest, and God only a few gleanings. Oh then, such as are delivered from the house of bondage, hell, have infinite cause to admire and bless God. How should the vessels of mercy run over with thankfulness? when most are carried prisoners to hell, they are delivered from wrath to come.

Qu. *How shall I know I am delivered from hell?*

Ans. 1. Those whom Christ saves from hell, he saves from sin, Matth. i. 21. 'He shall save his people from their sins.' Hath God delivered you from the power of corruption, from pride, malice, lust? if he hath delivered you from the hell of sin, then he hath delivered you from the hell of torment.

2. If you have got an interest in Christ, prizing, confiding, loving him, then you are delivered from hell and damnation. Rom. viii. 1. 'No condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.' If you are in Christ, then he hath put the garment of his righteousness over you, and hell-fire can never singe this garment. Pliny observes, nothing will so soon quench fire as salt and blood: the salt tears of repentance and the blood of Christ will quench the fire of hell, that it shall never kindle upon you.

OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

EXOD. XX. 3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me, &c.*

BEFORE I come to the commandment, I shall premise some things about the moral law: viz. answer questions, and lay down rules.

Qu. 1. *What is the difference between the moral law and the gospel?*

Ans. 1. The law requires that we worship God as our Creator: the gospel requires that we worship God in and through Christ. God in Christ is propitious: out of Christ we may see God's power, justice, holiness; in Christ we see his mercy displayed.

2. The moral law requires obedience, but gives no strength

(as Pharaoh required brick, but gave no straw) but the gospel gives strength; the gospel bestows faith upon the elect, the gospel sweetens the law, it makes us serve God with delight.

Qu. 2. *Of what use then is the moral law to us?*

Ans. The law is a glass to shew us our sins, that so, seeing our pollution and misery, we may be forced to flee to Christ to satisfy for former guilt, and save from future wrath, Gal. ii. 21. 'The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.'

Qu. 3. *But is the moral law still in force to believers? is it not abolished to them?*

Ans. In some sense it is abolished to believers. 1. In respect of justification; they are not justified by their obedience to the moral law. Believers are to make great use of the moral law (as I shall shew) but they must trust only to Christ's righteousness for justification; as Noah's dove made use of her wings to fly, but trusted to the ark for safety. If the moral law could justify, what need were there of Christ's dying? 2. The moral law is abolished to believers, in respect of the malediction of it: they are freed from the curse and damnatory power of it, Gal. iii. 13. 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.'

Qu. 4. *How was Christ made a curse for us?*

Ans. Christ may be considered, 1. As the Son of God, and so he was not made a curse. 2. As our pledge and surety, Heb. vii. 22. and so he was made a curse for us: this curse was not upon his Godhead, but upon his manhood. This curse was the wrath of God lying upon him; and thus Christ hath taken away from believers the curse of the law, by being made a curse for them. But tho' the moral law is thus far abolished, yet it remains as a perpetual rule to believers: though the moral law be not their Saviour, yet it is their guide: though it be not *fœdus*, a covenant of life; yet it is *norma*, a rule of living: every Christian is bound to conform to the moral law; and write, as exactly as he can, after this copy, Rom. iii. 31. 'Do we then make void the law through faith, God forbid.' Though a Christian is not under the condemning power of the law, yet he is under the commanding power; to love God, to reverence and obey him, this is a law always binds, and will bind in heaven. This I urge against the Antinomians, who say, the moral law is abrogated to believers; which, as it contradicts scripture, so it is a key to open the door to all licentiousness. They who will not have the law to rule them, shall never have the gospel to save them. Having answered these questions, I shall in the next place, lay down some general rules for the right understanding of the Decalogue, or Ten commandments: these rules may serve to give us some light into the sense and meaning of the commandments.

Rule 1. The commands and prohibitions of the moral law reach the heart.

1. The commands of the moral law reach the heart: the commandments require not only outward actions but inward affections; they require not only the outward act of obedience, but the inward affection of love, Deut. vi. 5. ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart.’

2. The threats and prohibitions of the moral law reach the heart; the law of God forbids not only the act of sin, but the desire and inclination; not only doth it forbid adultery, but lusting, Matth. v. 28. Not only stealing, but coveting, Rom. vii. 7. *Lex humana ligat manum, lex divina comprimet animam*: man’s law binds only the hands, God’s law binds the heart.

Rule 2. In the commandments there is a *synechdoche*, more is intended than is spoken. 1. Where any duty is commanded, there the contrary sin is forbidden, &c. When we are commanded to keep the sabbath-day holy, there we are forbidden to break the sabbath: when we are commanded to live in a calling, ‘Six days shalt thou labour,’ there we are forbidden to live idly, and out of a calling. 2. Where any sin is forbidden, there the contrary duty is commanded: when we are forbidden to take God’s name in vain, the contrary duty is commanded, that we should reverence his name, Deut. xxviii. 58. ‘That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, The Lord thy God.’ Where we are forbidden to wrong our neighbour, there is the contrary duty included, that we should do him all the good we can, by vindicating his name, and supplying his wants.

Rule 3. Where any sin is forbidden in the commandment, there the occasion of it is also forbidden. Where murder is forbidden, there envy and rash anger are forbidden, which may occasion it. Where adultery is forbidden in the commandment, there is forbidden all that may lead to it, as wanton glances of the eye, or coming into the company of an harlot, Prov. v. 8. ‘Come not nigh the door of her house:’ he who would be free from the plague, must not come near the infected house. Under the law the Nazarite was forbidden to drink wine; nor might he eat grapes of which the wine was made.

Rule 4. *In relato subintelligitur correlatum.* Where one relation is named in the commandment, there another relation is included. Where the child is named, there the father is included: where there is the duty of children to parents mentioned, there is included also the duty of parents and children: where the child is commanded to honour the parent, there is implied that the parent is also commanded to instruct, to love, to provide for the child.

Rule 5. Where greater sins are forbidden, there lesser sins are also forbidden. Though no sin in its own nature is little,

yet comparatively one may be less than another: where idolatry is forbidden, there is forbidden superstition, of bringing any innovation into God's worship, which he hath not appointed. As the sons of Aaron were forbidden to worship an idol, so to sacrifice to God with strange fire, Lev. x. 1. Mixture in sacred things, is like a dash in the wine, which though it gives it a colour, yet doth but debase and adulterate it. It is highly provoking to God, to bring any superstitious ceremony into his worship, which he hath not prescribed; it is to tax God's wisdom, as if he were not wise enough to appoint the manner how he will be served.

Rule 6. The law of God is copulative; *Lex est copulativa*: the first and second tables are knit together; piety to God, and equity to our neighbour: these two tables, which God hath joined together, must not be put asunder. Try a moral man by the duties of the first table, piety to God, and there you will find him negligent; try an hypocrite by the duties of the second table, equity to his neighbour, and there you will find him tardy. He who is strict in the second table, but neglects the first, or he who is zealous in the first table, but neglects the second, his heart is not right with God. The Pharisees were the highest pretenders to the first table, zeal and holiness: but Christ detects their hypocrisy, Matth. xxiii. 23. 'Ye have omitted judgment, mercy and faith.' They were bad in the second table; they omitted judgment, that was, being just in their dealing; mercy, in relieving the poor; and faith, that is faithfulness in their promises and contracts with men. God wrote both the tables, and our obedience must set a seal to both.

Rule 7. God's law forbids not only the acting of sin in our own persons, but being accessary to, or having any hand in the sins of others.

Qu. How and in what sense may we be said to partake of, and have an hand in the sins of others?

Ans. 1. By decreeing unrighteous decrees, and imposing on others that which is unlawful. Jeroboam made the people of Israel to sin: he was accessary to their idolatry, by setting up golden calves: so David, though he did not in his own person kill Uriah, yet because he wrote a letter to Joab, to set Uriah on the fore-front of the battle, and it was done by his command, therefore he was accessary to Uriah's death, and the murder of him was laid to David's charge by the prophet, 2 Sam. xii. 9. 'Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword.'

2. We become accessary to the sins of others by not hindering them when it is in our power, *Qui non prohibet cum potest, jubet*. If a master of a family see his servant break the sabbath, or hear him swear, and let him alone, doth not use the power he hath to suppress him, he becomes accessary to his sin. Eli,

for not punishing his sons when they made the offering of the Lord to be abhorred, made himself guilty, 1 Sam. iii. 14. He that suffers an offender to pass unpunished, makes himself an offender.

3. By counselling, abetting, or provoking others to sin. Aithophel made himself guilty of the fact, by giving counsel to Absalom to go in and defile his father's concubines, 2 Sam. xvi. 21. He who shall tempt or solicit another to be drunk though himself be sober, yet being the occasion of another's sin, he is accessory to it, Hab. ii. 15. 'Wo unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him.'

4. By consenting to another's sin; Saul did not cast one stone at Stephen, yet the scripture saith, 'Saul was consenting to his death,' Acts viii. 1. Thus he had a hand in it. If several did combine to murder a man, and they should tell another of their intent, and he should give his consent to it, he were guilty: though his hand were not in the murder, yet his heart was in it: though he did not act it, yet he did approve it, so it became his sin.

3. By example, *vivitur exemplis*. Examples are powerful and cogent; setting a bad example occasions another to sin; and so a person becomes accessory. If the father swears, and the child by his example, learn to swear, the father is accessory to the child's sin; he taught him by his example. As there are diseases hereditary, so there are sins.

Rule 8. The last rule about the commandments, is this, that though we cannot, by our own strength, fulfil all these commandments, yet doing, *quoad posse*, what we are able, the Lord hath provided encouragement for us. There is a threefold encouragement.

1. That though we have not ability to obey any one command, yet God hath, in the new covenant, promised to work that in us, which he requires, Ezek. xxxvi. 27. 'I will cause you to walk in my statutes.' God commands us to love him: alas, how weak is our love! it is like the herb that is not only in the first degree; but God hath promised to circumcise our hearts, that we shall love him, Deut. xxx. 6. He that doth command us, will enable us. God commands us to turn from sin, but alas! we have not power to turn; therefore God hath promised to turn us, to put his Spirit within us, and turn the heart of stone into flesh, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. There is nothing in the command, but the same is in the promise. Therefore, Christian, be not discouraged tho' thou hast no strength of thy own, yet God will give thee this strength. The iron hath no power to move, but when the loadstone draws it, it can move, Isa. xxvi. 12. 'Thou hast wrought all our works in us.'

2. Though we cannot exactly fulfil the moral law, yet God

will, for Christ's sake, mitigate the rigour of the law, and accept of something less than he requires. God in the law requires exact obedience, yet he will accept of sincere obedience: he will abate something of the degree, if there be truth in the inward parts; God will see the faith, and pass by the failing; the gospel remits something of the severity of the moral law.

3. Wherein our personal obedience comes short, God will be pleased to accept us in our surety, Eph. i. 6. 'He hath accepted us in his beloved.' Though our obedience be imperfect, yet, through Christ our surety, God looks upon it as perfect. And that very service which God's law might condemn, God's mercy is pleased to crown, by virtue of the blood of our Mediator. Having given you these rules about the commandments, I shall come next to the direct handling of them.

OF THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. XX. 3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

Qu. XLV. *WHY doth the commandment run in the second person singular, Thou? why doth not God say, You shall have no other gods, but, Thou?*

Ans. Because the commandment concerns every one, and God would have you take it as spoken to you by name. Though we are forward to take privileges to ourselves, yet we are apt to shift off duty from ourselves to others: therefore the commandment runs in the second person, *Thou* and *Thou*, that every one may know that the commandment is spoken to him, as it were, by name. And so I come to the commandment, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me:' this commandment may well lead the van, and be set in the front of all the commandments, because it is the foundation of all true religion. The sum of this commandment is, that we should sanctify God in our hearts, and give him a precedency above all created beings. There are two branches of this commandment: 1. That we must have one God. 2. That we must have but one. Or thus, (1.) That we must have God for our God. (2.) That we must have no other. 1. That we must have God for our God: it is manifest that we must have a God, and 'who is God save the Lord?' 2 Sam. xxii. 32. The Lord Jehovah (one God in three persons) is the true, living, eternal God; and him must we have for our God.

Qu. 1. *What is it to make God to be a God to us?*

Ans. 1. To make God to be a God to us, is to acknowledge

him for a God : the gods of the heathens are idols, Pſal. xvi. 5. and we ‘ know that an idol is nothing,’ 1 Cor. viii. 4. that is, it hath nothing of deity in it : if we cry, *Help, O Idol*, an idol cannot help; the idols were themſelves carried into captivity, Iſa. xlvi. 2. ſo that an idol is nothing; vanity is aſcribed to it, Jer. xiv. 22. we do not acknowledge it to be a God. But this is to make God to be a God to us, when we do, *ex animo*, acknowledge him to be God, 1 Kings xviii. 39. All the people fell on their faces, and ſaid, ‘ The Lord he is the God! the Lord he is the God!’ Yea, we acknowledge God to be the only God, 2 Kings xix. 15. ‘ O Lord God of Iſrael which dwelleſt between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone.’ Deity is a jewel that belongs only to his crown. Yet further, we acknowledge that there is no God like him, 1 Kings viii. 22, 23. ‘ And Solomon ſtood before the altar of the Lord; and he ſaid, Lord God of Iſrael, there is no god like thee.’ Pſal. lxxxix. 6. ‘ For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord.’ In the Chaldee it is, Who among the angels; None can do as God: he brought the world out of nothing? ‘ And hangeth the earth upon nothing,’ Job xxvi. 7. This is to make God to be a God to us, when we are perſuaded in our hearts, and confeſs with our tongues, and ſubſcribe with our hand, that God is the only true God, and that there is none comparable to him.

2. To make God to be a God to us, is to chooſe him, Joſh. xxiv. 15. ‘ Chooſe ye this day whom you will ſerve; but as for me and my houſe we will ſerve the Lord:’ that is, we will chooſe the Lord to be our God. It is one thing for the judgment to approve of God, and another for the will to chooſe him. Religion is not a matter of chance, but choice.

Qu. *What is antecedent to, or goes before this choice?*

Anſ. 1. Before this chooſing God for our God, there muſt be knowledge: we muſt know God, before we can chooſe him; before one chuſe the perſon he will marry, he muſt firſt have ſome knowledge and cognizance of the perſon: ſo we muſt know God, before we can chooſe him for our God, 2 Chron. xxviii. 9. ‘ Know thou the God of thy father.’ We muſt know God in his attributes, glorious in holineſs, rich in mercy, faithful in promiſes. We muſt know God in his ſon: as in a glaſs a face is repreſented, ſo in Chriſt, as in a transparent glaſs, we ſee God’s beauty and love ſhine forth. This knowledge muſt go before our chooſing of God. Lactantius ſaid, all the learning of the philoſophers was without a head, becauſe it wanted the knowledge of God. 2. Wherein our chooſing of God conſiſts: it is an act of mature deliberation; a Chriſtian having viewed the ſuperlative excellencies in God, and being

stricken into an holy admiration of his perfections, he singles out God from all other objects to set his heart upon: he saith as Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 21. 'The Lord shall be my God.' 3. The effect of choosing God: the soul that chooseth God, devotes himself to God, Psal. cxix. 38. 'Thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.' As the vessels of the sanctuary were consecrated and set apart from common to holy uses; so the soul who hath chosen God to be his God, hath dedicated and set himself apart for God, and will be no more for profane uses.

3. To make God to be a God to us, is to enter into solemn covenant with him, that he shall be our God: after choice follows the marriage-covenant. As God makes a covenant with us, Isa. liii. 3. 'I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David:' so we make a covenant with him, 2 Chron. xv. 12. 'They entered into covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers.' And Isa. xlv. 5. 'One shall say, I am the Lord's: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord;' like soldiers, that subscribe their names in the muster roll. This covenant, 'That God shall be our God,' we have often renewed in the Lord's supper: and it is like a seal to a bond, to bind us fast to God, and to keep us that we do not depart from him.

4. To make God to be a God to us, is to give him adoration; which consists, 1. In reverencing of him, Ps. lxxxix. 7. 'God is to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.' The Seraphims, who stood about God's throne covered their faces, Isa. vi. And Elijah wrapt himself in a mantle, when the Lord passed by, in token of reverence. This reverence shews the high esteem we have of God's sacred Majesty. 2. Adoration is in bowing to him, or worshipping him, Ps. xxix. 2. 'Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.' Neh. viii. 6. 'They bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.' Divine worship is the peculiar honour belonging to the Godhead: this God is jealous of, and will have no creature share in, Isa. xlii. 8. 'My glory will I not give to another.' Magistrates may have a civil respect or veneration, God only a religious adoration.

5. To make God to be a God to us, is to fear him, Deut. xxviii. 58. 'That thou mayst fear this glorious and fearful name, The Lord thy God.' This fearing of God is, (1.) To have God always in our eye, Ps. xvi. 8. 'I have set the Lord always before me.' And Ps. xxv. 15. 'Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord.' He who fears God, imagines, that whatever he is doing, God looks on, and, as a judge, weighs all his actions. (2.) To fear God, is, when we have such an holy awe of God upon our hearts, that we dare not sin, Ps. iv. 4. 'Stand in awe and sin not.' The wicked sin and fear not; the godly fear

and sin not, Gen. xxxix. 9. 'How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' bid me sin, bid me drink poison. It is a saying of Anselm, "If hell were on one side, and sin on the other, I would rather leap into hell, than willingly sin against my God." 1. This glorious and fearful name: he who fears God will not sin, though it be never so secret, Lev. xix. 14. 'Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God.' Suppose you should curse a deaf man, he cannot hear you curse him: or if you lay a block in a blind man's way, and make him fall, he cannot see you lay it: ay, but the fear of God will make you forsake these sins which can neither be heard nor seen by men. 2. Where the fear of God is, it destroyes the fear of man: the three children feared God, therefore they feared not the king's wrath, Dan. iii. 16. The greater noise drowns the less; the noise of thunder drowns the noise of a river? so when the fear of God is superintendent in the soul, it drowns all other carnal fear. This is to make God to be a God to us, when we have an holy filial fear of him; *That thou mayest fear.*

6. To make God to be a God to us, is to trust in him, Psa. cxli. 8. 'Mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee will I trust.' 2 Sam. xxii. 3. 'The God of my rock, in him will I trust.' There is nothing we can trust in but God; all the creatures are a refuge of lies; they are like the Egyptian reed, too weak to support us, but strong enough to wound us. *Omnis motus fit super immobili.* God only is a sufficient foundation to build our trust upon; and then when we trust, we make him a God to us, else we make him an idol, if we do not trust in him. Trusting in God, is when we rely on his power as a Creator, and on his love as a Father. Trusting in God, is, when we commit our chief treasure to him: our soul is our chief treasure, we commit our soul to him, Ps. xxxi. 5. 'Into thy hands I commit my spirit.' As the orphan trusts his estate with his guardian, so we trust our souls with God: this is to make him a God to us.

Q. 1. *How shall we know that we trust in God aright?*

Ans. If we trust in God aright, then we will trust in God at one time as well as another, Ps. lxvii. 8. 'Trust in him at all times.' Can we trust God, 1. In our straits? when the fig-tree doth not flourish, when our earthly crutches are broken, can we now lean upon God's promise? when the pipes are cut off that used to bring us comfort, can we live upon God, in whom are all our fresh springs? when we have no bread to eat but the bread of carefulness, Ezek. xix. 8. when we have no water to drink unless tears, Ps. lxxx. 5. 'Thou gavest them tears to drink in great measure;' Can we now trust in God's providence, to make supply for us; A good Christian believes, that

if God feed the ravens, he will feed his children : he lives upon God's all-sufficiency, not only for grace, but food ; he believes if God will give him heaven, he will give daily bread : he trusts God's bond, Pfal. xxxvii. 3. ' Verily thou shalt be fed.' 2. Can we trust God in our fears ? fear is the age of the soul. When adversaries begin to grow high, can we now display the banner of faith ? Pfal. lvi. 3. ' What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.' Faith cures the trembling at the heart : faith gets above fear, as the oil swims above the water. This is to trust in God, and it is to make him to be a God to us.

7. To make God to be a God to us, is to love him ; in the godly, fear and love kiss each other.

8. To make him a God to us, is to obey him : but I forbear to speak of these, because I shall be large upon them in the second commandment : ' Shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.'

Q. Why must we cleave to the Lord as our God ?

Ans. 1 From the equity of it : it is but equal we should cleave to him as our God, from whom we receive our being ; who can have a better right to us than he that gives us our breath ? Pf. c. 3. ' For it is he that made us, and not we ourselves.' It is unequal, yea ungrateful, to give away our love or worship to any but God.

2. From the utility. If we cleave to the Lord as our God ; then (1.) He will bless us, Pf. lxxvii. 6. ' God, even our own God, will bless us.' He will bless us, 1. In our estate, Deut. xxviii. 4, 5. ' Blessed shall be the fruit of thy ground : blessed shall be thy basket and thy store ;' we shall not only have our sack full of corn, but it shall be blessed ; here is money in the mouth of the sack. (2.) He will bless us with peace, Pf. xxix. 11. The Lord will bless his people with peace : ' outward peace, which is the nurse of plenty, Pf. cxlvii. 14. ' He maketh peace in thy borders ; inward peace, a smiling conscience ; this is sweeter than the dropping honey. (3.) God will turn all evils to our good, Rom. viii. 28. He will make a treacle of poison. Joseph's imprisonment was a means for his advancement, Gen. l. 20. Out of the bitterest drug, God will distil his glory and our salvation. In short God will be our guide to death, our comfort in death, our reward after death. So then the utility of it may make us cleave to the Lord as our God, Pf. cxliv. 15. ' Happy is that people who have the Lord for their God.'

1. From the necessity, 1st, If God be not our God, he will curse our blessings ; Mal. ii. 2. and God's curse blasts wherever it comes. 2^{dly}, If God be not our God, we have none to help us in misery : will God help his enemies ? will he assist them who disclaim him ? 3^{dly}, If we do not make God to be our

God, he will make himself to be our judge; and if he condemns, there is no appealing to a higher court. So that, there is a necessity of having God for our God, unless we intend to be eternally espoused to misery.

Use 1. If we must have one God, and the Lord Jehovah for our God, it condemns the Atheists who have no God, Pf. xiv. 1. 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.' There is no God he believes in, or worships: such Atheists were Diagoras and Theodorus. When Seneca had reprov'd Nero for his impieties, saith Nero, 'Dost thou think I believe there is any God, when I do such things?' The duke of Silesia was so infatuated, That he affirmed, *Neque inferos neque superos esse*; that there was neither God nor devil. We may see God in the works of his fingers. The creation is a great volume, in which we may read a Godhead; and he must needs put out his own eyes that denies a God. Aristotle, tho' an heathen, did not only acknowledge God, when he cried out, "Thou Being of Beings, have mercy on me;" but he thought, he that did not confess a Deity was not worthy to live. They who will not believe a God, shall feel him. Heb. x. 31. 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'

Use 2. It condemns Christians, who profess to own God for their God, yet they do not live as if he were their God. (1.) They do not believe in him as a God: when they look upon their sins, they are apt to say can God pardon? when they look upon their wants, can God provide? can he prepare a table in the wilderness? (2.) They do not love him as a God: they do not give him the cream of their love, but are apt to love other things more than God; they say, they love God, but will part with nothing for him. (3.) They do not worship him as a God: they do not give him that reverence, nor pray with that devotion, as if they were praying to a God. How dead are their hearts? if not dead in sin, yet dead in duty: 'tis as if praying to a god that hath eyes and sees not; ears and hears not: in hearing the word, how much distraction, what regardless hearts have many? they are thinking of their shop and drugs. Would a king take it well at our hands, if, when he is speaking to us, we should be playing with a feather? when God is speaking to us in his word, and our hearts are taken up with thoughts about the world, is not this playing with a feather? O how may this humble most of us, we do not make God to be a God to us! We do not believe in him, love him, worship him as a God. Many heathens have worshipp'd their false gods with more seriousness and devotion, than some Christians do the true God. O let us chide ourselves; did I say chide? let us abhor ourselves for our deadness and formality in religion, how we have profess'd God, yet we have not worshipp'd him as God.

So much for the first, ' We must have God for our God.' I should come to the second, ' We must have no other God.'

EXOD. XX. 3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

1. THAT we must have ' no other god ;' ' Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'

Qu. *What is meant by this word, Before me ?*

Ans/. That is before my face ; in *conspicū meo*, in my sight, Deut. xxvii. 15. ' Cursed be he that makes a graven image, and puts it in a secret place.' Some would not bow to the idol that others might see, but they would secretly bow to it ; but though this was out of man's sight, it was not out of God's sight ; ' Cursed therefore (saith God) be he that puts the image in a secret place.' ' Thou shalt have no other gods.' 1. There is really no other God. 2. We must have no other.

(1.) *There is really no other God.* The Valentinians held there were two gods ; the Polytheites that there were many ; the Persians worshipped the sun ; the Egyptians the ox and elephant ; the Grecians Jupiter ; but there is no other than the true God, Deut. iv. 39. ' Know therefore, this day, and consider it in thy heart, that the Lord is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath ; there is no other.' For, 1. There is but one *First Cause*, that hath its being of itself, and on which all others beings depend ; as in the heavens the *Primum Mobile* moves all the other orbs, so God is the *Great Mover*, he gives life and motion to every thing existent.

2. There is but one *Omnipotent power*. If there be two Omnipotents, then we must always suppose a contest between these two ; that which one would do, the other Power, being equal, would oppose ; and so all things would be brought into a confusion. If a ship should have too pilots of equal power, one would be ever crossing the other ; when one would fail, the other would cast anchor ; here were a confusion, and the ship must needs perish. The order and harmony in the world, the constant and uniform government of all things, is a clear argument that there is but one Omnipotent, one God, that rules all, Isa. xlv. 6. ' I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God.'

(2.) *We must have no other God.* ' Thou shalt have no other gods before me ;' this commandment forbids, (1.) Serving a false god, and not the true, Jer. ii. 27. ' Saying to a stock, thou art my father ; and to a stone, thou hast brought me forth.' Or, (2.) Joining a false god with a true, 2 Kings xviii. 33. ' They feared the Lord, and served their own gods ; both these

are forbidden in the commandment ; we must adhere to the true God, and no other? God is a jealous God,' and he will endure no corival. A wife cannot lawfully have two husbands at once ; nor may we have two gods, Exod. xxxiv. 14. ' Thou shalt worship no other God, for the Lord is a jealous God.' Pſal. xvi. 4. ' Their sorrows ſhall be multiplied that haſten after another god.' The Lord interprets it a ' Forſaking of him,' to eſpouſe any other god, Judges ii. 12. ' They forſook the Lord, and followed other gods.' God would not have his people ſo much as make mention of idol-gods, Exod. xxiii. 13. ' Make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.' God looks upon it as a breaking of the marriage-covenant, to go after other gods. Therefore, when Iſrael committed idolatry with the golden calf, God diſclaims his intereſt in them, Exod. xxxii. 7. ' Thy people have corrupted themſelves.' Before, God called Iſrael his people ; but when they went after other gods, ' Now (ſaith the Lord to Moſes) they are no more my people but thy people.' Hoſ. ii. 2. ' Plead with your mother, plead ; for ſhe is not my wife.' She doth not keep faith with me ; ſhe hath ſtained herſelf with idols, therefore I will divorce her ; ' ſhe is not my wife.' To go after other gods, is what God cannot bear ; it makes the fury riſe up in his face, Deut. xiii. 6, 8, 9. ' If thy brother, or thy ſon, or the wife of thy boſom, or thy friend, which is as thine own ſoul, entice thee ſecretly, ſaying, let us go and ſerve other gods : thou ſhalt not conſent unto him, neither ſhall thine eye pity him.' But thou ſhalt ſurely kill him ; thine hand ſhall be firſt upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

Qu. But what is it to have other gods beſides the true God ? I fear, upon ſearch, we have more idolaters among us than we are aware of.

Anſ. To truſt in any thing more than God, is to make it a god. 1. If we truſt in our riches, then we make riches our god : we may take comfort, not put confidence in them. It is a fooliſh thing to truſt in them. (1.) They are deceitful riches, Matth. xiii. 2. and it is fooliſh to truſt to that which will deceive us. *1ſt*, They have no ſolid conſiſtency, they are like landſkips or golden dreams, which leave the ſoul empty when it awakes or comes to itſelf. *2dly*, They are not what they promiſe ; they promiſe to ſatiſfy our deſires, and they increaſe them ; they promiſe to ſtay with us, and they take wings. (2.) They are hurtful, Eccl. i. 13. ' Riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.' It is fooliſh to truſt to that which will hurt one : who would take hold of the edge of a razor to help him ? they are oft fuel for pride and luſt, Ezek. xxviii. 5. Jer. v. 7. So that it is folly to truſt in our riches ; but ſome do,

and so make money their god, Prov. x. 15. 'The rich man's wealth is his strong tower.' He makes the wedge of gold his hope, Job xxxi. 24. God made man of the dust of the earth, and man makes a god of the dust of the earth. Money is his creator, redeemer, comforter: his creator; if he had money, now he thinks he is made: his redeemer; if he be in danger, he trusts to his money to redeem him: his comforter; if he be sad, money is the golden harp to drive away the evil spirit. Thus, by trusting to money, we make it a god.

2. If we trust in the arm of flesh, we make it a god, Jer. xvii. 5. 'Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.' The Syrians trusted in their army, which was so numerous, that it filled the country, 1 Kings xx. 27. but this arm of flesh withered, *verse* 29. What we make our trust, God makes our shame. The sheep run to the hedges for shelter, and they lose their wool; we have run to second causes to help us, and we have lost much of our golden fleece; they have not only been reeds to fail us, but thorns to prick us. We have broken our parliament-crutches, by leaning too hard upon them.

3. If we trust in our wisdom, we make it a god. Jer. ix. 23. 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.' Glorifying is the height of confidence. Many a man doth make an idol of his wit and parts; he defiles himself, but how oft doth God take the wise in their own craftiness, Job vi. 13. Ahithophel had a great wit, his counsel was the oracle of God; but his wit brought him to the halter, 2 Sam. xvii. 23.

4. If we trust in our civility, we make it a god: many trust to this, none can charge them with gross sin. Civility is but nature refined and cultivated; a man may be washed, and not changed; his life may be civil, yet there may be some reigning sin in his heart: the Pharisee could say, 'I am no adulterer,' Luke xviii. 11. but he could not say, 'I am not proud,' To trust to civility, is to trust to a spider's web.

5. If we trust to our duties to save us, we make them a god, Isa. lxiv. 6. 'Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags:' they are fly-blown with sin. Put gold in the fire, and there comes out much dross; our most golden duties are mixed with infirmity: we are apt either to neglect duty, or idolize it. Use duty, but do not trust to it; for then you make it a god. Trust not to your praying and hearing these are the means of salvation, but they are not saviours. If you make duties bladders to trust to, you may sink to hell with these bladders.

6. If we trust in our grace, we make a god of it. Grace is but a creature; if we trust to it, we make it an idol. Grace is imperfect, we cannot trust to that to save us which is imperfect, Psal. xxvi. 1. 'I have walked in my integrity: I have trusted also in the Lord.' David did walk in his integrity; but did

not trust in his integrity; 'I have trusted in the Lord.' If we trust in our graces, we make a Christ of them. They are good graces but bad Christs. To love any thing more than God, is to make it a god.

1st, If we love our estate more than God, then we make it a god. The young man in the gospel loved his gold better than his Saviour; the world lay nearer his heart than Christ, Matth. xix. 22. *Fulgens hoc aurum præstringit oculos*, Var. Hence it is, the covetous man is called an idolater, Eph. v. 5. Why so? Because he loves his estate more than God, and so he makes it his god: tho' he doth not bow down to an idol, yet he worships the graven image in his coins; he is an idolater. That which hath most of the heart, that we make a god.

2^{dly}, If we love our pleasures more than God, we make a god of pleasure, 2 Tim. iii. 4. 'Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' Many let loose the reins, and give themselves up to all manner of sensual delights; they idolize pleasure, Job xxi. 12, 13. 'They take the timbrel, and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in mirth.' I have read of a place in Africa, where the people spend all their time in dancing, and making merry: and have not we many who make a god of pleasure, who spend their time in going to plays, and visiting stews, as if God had made them like the Leviathan, to play in the water? Psal. civ. 26. In the country of Sardinia there is an herb like balm, that if one eat too much of it, he will die laughing; such an herb is pleasure; if one feeds immoderately on it, he will go laughing to hell. Such as make a god of pleasure, let them read but two scriptures, Eccl. vii. 4. 'The heart of fools is in the house of mirth.' And, Rev. xviii. 7. 'How much she hath lived deliciously, so much torment give her.' Sugar laid in a damp place turns to water; so all the sugared joys and pleasures of sinners will turn to the water of tears at last.

3^{dly}, If we love our belly more than God, we make a god of it, Phil. iii. 19. 'Whose god is their belly.' Clemens Alexandrinus writes of a fish that had its heart in its belly: an emblem of epicures, their heart is in their belly; they do *sacrificare lari*, their belly is their god, and to this god they pour drink-offerings. The Lord allows what is fitting for the recruit of nature, Deut. xi. 15. 'I will send grass, that thou mayest eat and be full.' But, to mind nothing but the indulging of the appetite, is idolatry; 'Whose god is their belly.' What pity is it, that the soul, that princely part, which sways the sceptre of reason, and is a kin to angels, should be enslaved to the brutish part.

4^{thly}, If we love a child more than God, we make a god of it. How many are guilty in this kind! they think of their

children, and delight more in them than in God ; they grieve more for the loss of their first born, therefore the loss of their first love. This is to make an idol of a child, and to set it in God's room. Thus God is oft provoked to take away our children : if we love the jewel more than him that gave it, God will take away the jewel, that our love may return to him again.

Use 1. It reproves such as have other gods, and so renounce the true God. (1.) Such as set up idols, Jer. ii. 28. 'According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Israel.' Hof. xii. 11. 'Their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the field.' (2.) Such as seek to familiar spirits. This is a sin condemned by the law of God, Deut. xviii. 11. 'There shall not be found among you any that consult with familiar spirits.' It is ordinary, that if people have lost any of their goods, they send to wizards and soothsayers, to know how they may come by their goods again ; what is this but for people to make a god of the devil, by consulting with him, and putting their trust in him ? what ? because you have lost your goods, will you lose your souls too ? 2 Kings i. 6. So, is it not because you think there is not a God in heaven, that you ask counsel of the devil ? If any be guilty, be humbled.

Use 2. It sounds a retreat in our ears. Let it call us off from the idolizing any creature ; and renouncing other gods, let us cleave to the true God and his service. If we go away from God, we know not where to mend ourselves.

1. It is honourable serving of the true God ; *Servire Deo est regnare.* It is more honour to serve God, than to have kings serve us. 2. Serving the true God is delightful, Isa. lvi. 7. 'I will make them joyful in my house of prayer.' God oft displays the banner of his love in an ordinance, and pours in the oil of gladness into the heart. All God's ways are pleasantness, his paths are strewed with roses, Prov. iii. 17. 3. Serving the true God is beneficial : they have great gain here, the hidden manna ; inward peace, and a great reward to come : they that serve God shall have a kingdom when they die, Luke xii. 32. and shall wear a crown made of the flowers of paradise, 1 Pet. v. 4. To serve the true God is our true interest. God hath twisted his glory and our salvation together : he bids us believe ; and why ? that we may be saved. Therefore, renouncing all others, let us cleave to the true God.

2. You have covenanted to serve the true **JEHOVAH**, renouncing all others. When one hath entered into covenant with his master, and the indentures are drawn and sealed, then he cannot go back, but must serve out his time. We have covenanted in baptism, to take the Lord for our God, renouncing all others ; and renewed this covenant in the Lord's supper, and shall we

not keep our solemn vow and covenant? we cannot go away from God without the highest perjury, Heb. x. 38. 'If any man draw back,' as a soldier that steals away from his colours, 'my soul shall have no pleasure in him; I will pour vials of wrath on him, and make mine arrows drunk with blood.'

3. None ever had cause to repent of cleaving to God and his service: some have repented that they have made a god of the world. Cardinal Wolfsey said, "Had I served my God as faithfully as I have served my king, he would never have left me thus." None ever complained of serving God, it was both their comfort and crown on their death-bed.

OF THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. xx. 4. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c.*

IN the first commandment is forbidden the worshipping a false god; in this, the worshipping the true God in a false manner.

1. 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.' This forbids not the making an image for civil use, Mat. xxii. 20. 'Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, It is Cæsar's.' But the commandment forbids setting up an image for religious use or worship.

2. 'Nor the likeness of any thing,' &c. All ideas, portraitures, shapes, images of God, whether by effigies or pictures, are here forbidden, Deut. iv. 15. 'Take heed lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make the similitude of any figure.' God is to be adored in the heart, not painted to the eye.

3. 'Thou shalt not bow down to them.' The intent of making images and pictures, is to worship them. No sooner was Nebuchadnezzar's golden image set up, but all the people fell down and worshipped it, Dan. iii. 7. Therefore God forbids the prostrating of ourselves before an idol; so then, the thing prohibited in this commandment is image-worship. To set up an image to represent God, is a debasing of the Deity, it is below God. If one should make images of snakes or spiders, saying he did it to represent his prince, would not the prince take this in high disdain? what greater disparagement to God, than to represent the infinite God by that which is finite: the living God, by that which is without life, and the Maker of all, by a thing which is made?

1. To make a true image of God is impossible. God is a spiritual essence, Johu iv. 24. and, being a Spirit, he is invisi-