

fection among them. There is but one God, and they that serve him should be one. There is nothing would render the true religion more lovely, or make more profelytes to it, than to see the professors of it tied together with the heart-strings of love, Pf. cxxxiii. 1. 'Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is, to see brethren live together in unity!' It is as the sweet dew on Hermon, and the fragrant ointment poured on Aaron's head. If God be one, let all that profess him be of one mind, and one heart; this fulfils Christ's prayer 'that they all may be of one.'

2. If there be but one God, let us labour to clear the title, that this God is ours, Pl. xlvi. 14. 'This God is our God.' What comfort can it be to hear that there is a God, and that he is the only God, unless he be our God? What is Deity without property? O let us labour to clear the title. Beg the Holy Spirit: the Spirit works by faith; by faith we are one with Christ, and through Christ we come to have God for our God, and so all his glorious fulness is made over to us by a deed of gift.

Uſe 5. What cause have we to be thankful, that we have the knowledge of the only true God? How many are brought up in blindness? Some worship Mahomet; divers of the Indians worship the devil; they light a candle to him, that he should not hurt them. Such as know not the true God, must needs tumble into hell in the dark. O be thankful that we are born in such a climate where the light of the gospel hath shined! to have the knowledge of the true God, is more than if we had mines of gold, rocks of diamonds, islands of spices; especially if God hath savingly revealed himself to us; if he hath given us eyes to see the light; if we so know God, as to be known of him, as to love him, and believe in him, Matth. xi. 25. we can never be enough thankful to God, that he hath hid the knowledge of himself from the wise and prudent of the world, and hath revealed it unto us.



OF THE TRINITY.

Q. IV. *HOW many persons are there in the Godhead?*

Ans. Three persons, yet but one God.

1 John v. 7. 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are but one.'

God is but one, yet there are three distinct persons subsisting in one Godhead. This is a sacred mystery, which the light within could never have discovered. As the two natures in

Christ, yet but one person, is a wonder, so three persons, yet but one Godhead. I am in a great deep, the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Ghost God; yet not three Gods, but one God. The three persons in the blessed Trinity are distinguished, but not divided; three substances, but one essence. This is a divine riddle, where one makes three, and three make but one. Our narrow thoughts can no more comprehend the Trinity in Unity, than a little nut-shell will hold all the water in the sea. Let me shadow it out by this similitude: in the body of the sun, there is the substance of the sun, the beams, and the heat; the beams are begotten of the sun, the heat proceeds both from the sun and the beams; but these three, though different are not divided; they all three make but one sun: so in the blessed Trinity, the Son is begotten of the Father, the Holy Ghost proceeds from both; yet though they are three distinct persons, yet but one God. First, let me speak of the Unity in Trinity; then of the Trinity in Unity.

1st, Of the Unity in Trinity. The Unity of the persons in the Godhead consists in two things:

1. The identity of essence. In the Trinity there is an oneness in essence: the three persons are of the same divine nature and substance; so that *in Deo non est magis et minus*, there are no degrees in the Godhead; one person is not God more than another.

2. The Unity of the persons in the Godhead, consists in the mutual in-being of them, or their being in one together. The three persons are so united, that one person is in another, and with another, John xvii. 21. 'Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.'

2dly, Let me speak of the Trinity in Unity. 1. The first person in the Trinity is God the Father: he is called the first person, in respect of *order*, not *dignity*; for God the Father hath no essential perfection which the other persons have not; he is not more wise, more holy, more powerful, than the other persons are, a priority, not a superiority.

2. The second person in the Trinity is Jesus Christ, who is begotten of the Father before all time, Prov. viii. 23, 24, 25. 'I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled; before the hills, was I brought forth.' Which scripture declares the eternal generation of the Son of God. This second person in the Trinity, who is Jehovah, is become our Jesus. The scripture calls him the branch of David, Jer. xxiii. 5. and I may call him the flower of the virgin, having assumed our nature. 'By him all that believe are justified,' Acts xiii. 39.

3. The third person in the Trinity, is the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from the Father and the Son : his work is to illuminate the mind ; and inkindle sacred motions. The essence of the Spirit is in heaven, and every where ; but the influence of it is in the hearts of believers : This is that blessed Spirit, who gives us the holy unction, 1 John ii. 20. Though Christ merits grace for us, it is the Holy Ghost works it in us : Though Christ makes the purchase, it is the Holy Ghost makes the assurance, and seals us up to the day of redemption. Thus I have spoken of all the three persons : the Trinity of persons may be proved out of Mat. iii. 16. ‘ Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straight-way out of the water, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him ; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son.’ Here are three names given to the three persons. He who spake with a voice from heaven, was God the Father ; he who was baptized in Jordan, was God the Son ; he who descended in the likeness of a dove, was God the Holy Ghost. Thus I have shewn you the unity of essence, and the Trinity of persons.

Use 1. It confutes the Jews and the Turks, who believe only the first person in the Godhead : this cuts afunder the sinews of our comfort. Take away the distinction of the persons in the Trinity, and you overthrow man’s redemption, for God the Father being offended with man for sin, how shall he be pacified without a mediator ? This Mediator is Christ, he makes our peace ! And Christ having died, and shed his blood, how shall this blood be applied, but by the Holy Ghost ? Therefore, if there be not three persons in the Godhead, man’s salvation cannot be wrought out : if there be no second person in the Trinity, then there is no redeemer : if no third person, then there is no comforter. And so the plank is taken away by which we should get to heaven.

2. It confutes the execrable opinion of the Socinians, who deny the divinity of the Lord Jesus ; they make him only to be a creature of an higher rank. As the Papists blot out the second commandment, so the Socinians would the second part of the Trinity. If to oppose Christ’s members be such a sin, what is it to oppose Christ himself ? (1.) Jesus Christ is co-equal with God the Father, Phil. ii. 6. ‘ He thought it no robbery to be equal with God.’ (2.) He is co-eternal with God the Father, Prov. viii. 23. ‘ I was from the beginning ;’ for else there was a time when God was without a Son, and so he should be no Father ; nay, else there was a time when God was without his glory,’ for Christ is ‘ the brightness of his Father’s glory,’ Heb. i. 3. (3.) He is co-essential with God the Father. The Godhead subsists in Christ, Col. ii. 9. ‘ In whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.’ It is said, not only Christ was

with God before the beginning, but he was God, John i. 1. and 1 Tim. iii. 19. 'God manifest in the flesh.' The title of Lord, so often given to Christ, in the New Testament, doth answer to the title of Jehovah in the Old Testament, Deut. vi. 5. Mat. xxii. 37. so that Christ hath a co-eternity, and con-substantiality with his Father, John x. 30. 'I and my Father are one.' It were blasphemy for any angel to speak thus! Yet further, to prove Christ's Godhead, consider 1st, The glorious incommunicable attributes belonging to God the Father, are ascribed to Christ, 1. Is God the Father omnipotent? So is Jesus Christ. He is the Almighty, Rev. i. 8. he creates, Col. i. 16. 2. Is God the Father infinitely immense, filling all places? Jer. xxiii. 24. so is Jesus Christ. While Christ was on the earth by his bodily presence, he was at the same time in the bosom of the Father, John iii. 13. in regard of his divine presence. 2dly, The same *jura regalia*, or prerogatives royal, which belongs to God the Father, belong also to Christ: (1.) Doth God the Father seal pardons, this is a flower of Christ's crown, Mat. ix. 2. 'Thy sins be forgiven thee:' Nor doth Christ only remit sin *organice*, as ministers do, by virtue of a power delegated to them from God: but Christ doth it by his own power and authority. (2.) Is God the Father the adequate object of faith? Is he to be believed in? So is his Son, John xiv. 1. (3.) Doth adoration belong to God the Father? So it doth to the Son, Heb. i. 6. 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' How sacrilegious therefore is the Socinian, who would rob Christ of the best flower of his crown, his Godhead? They that deny Christ to be God, must greatly wrest, or else deny the scripture to be the word of God.

2. It confutes the Arians, who deny the Holy Ghost to be God. The eternal Godhead subsists in the Holy Ghost, John xvi. 13. 'He shall guide you into all truth.' Christ speaks not there of an attribute, but of a person: and that the Godhead subsists in the person of the Holy Ghost, appears thus: the Spirit, who gives diversity of gifts, is said to be the same Lord, and the same God, 1 Cor. xii. 5, 6. The black and unpardonable sin is said, in a special manner, to be committed against the Godhead subsisting in the Holy Ghost, Matth. xii. 32. The mighty power of God is made manifest by the Holy Ghost; he changeth the hearts of men. The devil would have Christ prove himself to be God, by turning stones into bread: but thus the Holy Ghost shews his Godhead, by turning stones into flesh, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 'I will take away the stony heart: and give you a heart of flesh.' Yet further, the power and Godhead of the Holy Ghost appeared in the effecting the glorious conception of our Lord Jesus Christ; the very shadow of the Holy Ghost made a virgin conceive, Luke i. 35. The Holy

Ghost works miracles, which transcend the sphere of nature; as raising the dead, Rom. viii. 11. To him belongs divine worship, our souls and bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. vi. 19. in which temples he is to be worshipped, ver. 20. We are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost; therefore either we must believe his Godhead, or renounce our baptism in his name. Methinks, it were enough for such men, as have not so much as heard whether there be an Holy Ghost, Acts xix. 2. to deny his Deity; but that any who go for Christians, should deny this article of their creed, seems to me very strange. They who would wittingly and willingly blot out the third person, shall have their names blotted out of the book of life.

Use 2. Of exhortation. 1st, Believe this doctrine, the Trinity of persons in the unity of essence. The Trinity is purely an object of faith: the plumb-line of reason is too short to fathom this mystery: but where reason cannot wade, their faith must swim. There are some truths in religion may be demonstrated by reason; as that there is a God: But the Trinity of persons in the unity of essence is wholly supernatural, and must be believed by faith. This sacred doctrine, though it be not against reason, yet it is above reason. Those illuminated philosophers, that could find out the causes of things, and discourse of the magnitude and influence of the stars, the nature of minerals, could never, by their deepest search, find out the mystery of the Trinity: This is of divine revelation, and must be adored with humble believing. We can be no good Christians, without the firm belief of the Trinity. How can we pray to God the Father, but in the name of Christ, and through the help of the Spirit? Believe the glorious Trinity. How are the Quakers to be abhorred, who go under the name of Christians, yet undervalue and renounce Jesus Christ. I have read of some of the Quakers, who speak thus; “We deny the person of him whom you call Christ, and affirm, That they who expect to be saved by that Christ without works, will be damned in that faith?” Could the devil himself speak worse blasphemy? They would pull up all religion by the roots, and take away that corner-stone, on which the hope of our salvation is built.

2dly, If there be one God subsisting in three persons, then let us give, (1.) Equal reverence to all the persons in the Trinity. There is not more or less in the Trinity; the Father is not more God than the Son and Holy Ghost. There is an order in the Godhead, but no degrees; one person hath not a majority or supereminency above another, therefore we must give equal worship to all the Persons, John v. 23. ‘That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.’ Adore unity in Trinity.

(4.) Obey all the Persons in the blessed Trinity; for all of

them are God. 1. Obey God the Father; his words, either perceptive or minatory, must be observed. Christ himself, as man, obeyed God the Father, John iv. 34. much more than must we, Deut. xxvii. 10.

2. Obey God the Son, Pſal. ii. 12. 'Kifs the Son, left he be angry?' Kifs him with a kifs of obedience: Chriſt's commands are not grievous, 1 John v. 3. Nothing he commands, but is for our intereſt and benefit: O then kiſs the Son! Why do the elders throw down their crowns at the feet of Chriſt, and fall down before the Lamb? Rev. iv. 10, 11. but to teſtify their ſubjection, and to profeſs their readineſs to ſerve and obey him.

3. Obey God the Holy Ghoſt. Our ſouls are breathed into us by the glorious Spirit, Job xxxiii. 4. 'The Spirit of God hath made me.' Our ſouls are adorned by the bleſſed Spirit; every grace is a divine ſparkle lighted in the ſoul by the Holy Ghoſt. Nay more, the Spirit of God ſanctified Chriſt's human nature: he united it with the divine, and fitted the man Chriſt to be our Mediator. Well then doth this third perſon in the Trinity, the Holy Ghoſt, deſerve to be obeyed; he is God, and this tribute of homage and obedience is to be paid him by us.

OF THE CREATION.

Q. VII. *WHAT are the decrees of God?*

Anſ. The decrees of God are his eternal purpoſe, according to the counſel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath fore-ordained whatſoever ſhall come to paſs.

I ſhould now come to ſpeak concerning the decrees of God, but I have already ſpoken ſomething to this under the attribute of God's immutability. God is unchangeable in his eſſence, and he is unchangeable in his decrees; his counſel ſhall ſtand: he hath decreed the iſſue of all things, and carries them on to their period by his providence; and therefore I ſhall proceed to the execution of his decrees.

Q. VIII. The next queſtion is, *What is the work of creation?*

Anſ. It is God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, &c.

Gen. i. 1. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

The creation is glorious to behold, it is a pleaſant and fruitful ſtudy. Some think that Iſaac, when he went abroad into the fields to meditate, it was in the book of the creatures. The