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, Ifa. 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 affluage, 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 perfecution.

2dly, 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 lafting, 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,' Ifa. ix. 9. (3.) Peace is laid 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 purcaher of peace. He had made peace by his blood, Col. i. 20. ' Having made peace by the blood of his crofs.' 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 ariseth peace. There was a well of water, near Hagar, but the 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 confidence to wit- nes 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. lvi. 21. 'There is no peace, faith 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 fearles and stupid; but there is a great difference between a stupified confidence, and a pacified confidence, 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 happinels 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 deceitful. The sinner doth not doubt of God's mercy; from which presumptuous confidence ariseth some kind of quiet in the mind. The same word in the Hebrew, ca'al, 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 baniseth holiness, Deut. xxix. 19. 'I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkennes 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 bear of this: the least trouble will shake this peace; it will end in despair. In a false peace, confidence is asleep; but, when this lion of confidence 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?

Any'. 1. True peace flows from union with Christ; Communio fundatur in unione. The graft or fiction 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 bruisings, mayst subdue thy peace; God pours the golden oil of peace into broken hearts.

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

Any'. They have a title to it; they have the ground of it; grace is the feed 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 blest 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 melttings 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?

Any'. 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 subtile 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 faints 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 flacken the firings of a viol, the music is spoiled; if a Christian flack 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. Ux. Labour for this blest peace, peace with God and conscience. Peace with neighbour-nations is sweet, Pax unda triumphis innumeris melior. The Hebrew word schalom, 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 fet 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 the 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 blest 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 blusth, 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, Phil. 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 thecale 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 refult 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, faith the soul, how sweet is this rofe of Sharon! Hath Christ waded through a sea of blood and wrath to purchase my peace; Hath he not only made peace, but fpoke peace to me? How fhould my heart ascend in a fiery chariot of love! How willing fhould I be to do and suffer for Christ?' This peace quiets the heart in trouble, Mic. v. 5. 'This man fhall be the peace, when the Assyrian fhall come into our land, and tread in our palaces.' The enemy may invade our palaces, but not our peace; this man Christ, fhall be the peace. When the head aches, the heart may be well; when worldly troubles affault 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 Abi- lion: it was no small affliction to think that his own fon fhould seek to take away his Father's life and crown: David wept and covered his face, 2 Sam. xv. 30. Yet at this time, faith he, 'I will lay me down in peace, and sleep.' He had trouble from his fon but peace from his confcienee; David could sleep upon the soft pillow of a good confcienee: this is a peace worth getting.

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

Anf. 1. Let us ask it of God; he is the God of peace, he beats back the roaring lion, he stills the raging of confcienee; if we could call all the angels out of heaven, they could not fpoke peace without God. The flars cannot make day without the sun; none can make day in a dark deserted soul, but the Sun of righteousness. As the wildernefs cannot water itself, but remains dry and parched, till the clouds drop their moisture; so our hearts cannot have peace, till he infufe 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 horfe, 1 Kings ix. 22. 'When Joram law Jehu, he faid, is it peace, Jehu? And he anfwered, What peace, fo long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts are fo 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. Pæx nofira belhum contre daemonem, 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. 21. That blood of Christ which pacified God, must pacify conscience; Christ's blood being licked 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 holy; 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 twitly toward heaven: Oh call yourselves often to account; keep your reckonings even, and that is the way to keep your peace.

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