

to complain of disappointments; but though they are unpleasant meat, they are excellent sauce to an after meal, to make it go down more sweetly than otherwise it would. Amen.

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Galashiels, Saturday, July 28, 1722.

## SUITABLE IMPROVEMENT OF CHRIST THE APPLE TREE.

## SERMON XIII.

SONG OF SOLOMON ii. 3.

*I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

THAT this song is literally, although in a continued allegory, meant of Christ and his church, and that it is not all meant of Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter; does the more convincingly appear from the description of the bridegroom as a potent king, chap. i. 12, and yet a shepherd, v. 7. and from the description of the bride as a queen, and yet a keeper of the vineyards, v. 9. and of kids, v. 8.

The words of the text are the words of the spouse, and the scope of them is to recommend Christ, and that from her own experience. And indeed Christians who have experience of religion in their own souls are fittest to recommend Christ to others. In the words we have an account,

1. Of an application which she made to him, in her own distressed case. *I sat down*, says she, *under his shadow with great delight*. In these three things are to be considered, 1. A suitable help in Christ, for her case discovered to her, *his shadow*. She was like a weary traveller out of breath, with the many difficulties, with which she had to grapple like scorplings by the heat of the sun, that was much in need of rest and refreshment. And she beholds him like an apple tree casting a broad shadow under which she might get ease. 2. The actual use which she made of Christ for that end. *I sat under*, or *in his shadow*. By this expression is meant the exercise of faith in Christ, as is clear from Psalm xxxvi. 7. "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." Faith is that grace, which by means of the promise discovers Christ's shadow suitable for a weary soul, and by which the soul comes under his shadow and special protection, and interposeth Christ himself between it and the

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heat that is like to burn it up. 3. The manner in which she was carried to this exercise, *with great delight, or great desire*. Delight and desire are near a-kin, but the word here used, signifies rather eager desire, than delight. The original text runs precisely thus, both for the order and literal signification of the words. *In his shadow I eagerly desired and sat down*. The sense is, she was carried with full sail of desire to that shadow, and sat down in it, like one running from the scorching heat of the sun under a shade, or as the hart panting for water brooks goes to them to drink.

2. We have the result of this her application to Christ by faith. *His fruit was sweet to my taste*. She had comfortable experience of his goodness. She needed not take the recommendation of Christ and religion as a matter of hearsay. She herself felt, tasted, and fed. If any should say, there was nothing desirable or pleasant in religion, she could give them the lie, from what her own soul felt. If any should say the way of believing is a dry sapless way, commend me to a way more solid and rational; she could contradict them from the experience of her own soul, and it is vain to dispute against sense and feeling. She found in that way a fulness to her soul, a suitable fulness, a shadow that was good lodging, and fruit that was both meat and drink.

*Doctrine I.*—The way of relief for poor sinners, under all scorchings to which they are exposed, is to sit down in, and by faith to repose themselves under Christ's shadow.

In prosecuting this doctrine, I shall,

I. Show what need sinners have of a shadow to cover them.

II, Show how Christ became a shadow for poor sinners in this case.

III. Show what it is to sit under Christ's shadow. We are then,

I. To show what need sinners have of a shadow to cover them. A shadow is a defence against the scorching heat of the sun, of which they well know the need who travel in hot countries. This is that notion of a shadow that is aimed at in the text. Compare chap. i. 6. And thus it is applied to our Lord Jesus Christ by Isaiah. "And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain." In another place he says, "Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."

Here then lies the need of the shadow to poor sinners. The world is turned a hot country all over to the sons of fallen Adam, witness the spiritual blackness upon all faces, Amos ix. 7. Adam's fall has

changed the temperature of the air which we breathe. God himself the sun of the world, whose influences were enlightening, cheering, comforting and warming to innocent men, is become a consuming fire to the workers of iniquity. He now darts his rays directly down upon the head of the sinner, so that the whole head is sick and heart faint. It is become so hot, that if a shadow had not been provided, this world had all been burnt up ere now. But there was a shadow timely interposed. "And a man, says Isaiah, shall be as a hiding from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

II. We are now to show how Christ became a shadow for poor sinners in this case. And here three things deserve our consideration,

1. He was fitted to afford a shadow from that heat, by his assuming our nature, in that he being God was incarnate and became man. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth." His human nature united to his divine in his person, was a vail to the rays of his majesty, through which sinners might behold it and not die. "We have now boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh." Hereby, as Job saith in another case. "He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it." And hence our Lord Jesus Christ was typified by the cloud spread over Israel in the day time in the wilderness, by which they were preserved from the scorching heat of the sun. The man Christ is fitted to mediate betwixt us and an offended God, for he is Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature. Good news to poor sinners in this weary land. There is a root sprung out of the dry ground, and it is become a tree of life; the name of it is the tree of life; and it casts a shadow, a defence, for guilty creatures under it, from the heat of wrath from heaven.

2. He actually affords a shadow for needy sinners by virtue of his complete satisfaction to law and justice. "For being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. Neither is their salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Hence Christ crucified is the sum of the desires of the soul savingly enlightened. "For I determined, says Paul, not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

Reckoning that in him is all that is necessary to begin, to carry on, and to complete their salvation; and that being under his shadow, they have all within the compass of it which they need to make them completely happy. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power." How a crucified Jesus actually affords such a shadow to those that come under his shadow, will be cleared by three things.

1. He received all the scorching beams of wrath on himself, that so he might keep them from his people. "For he hath made him sin who knew no sin, to be sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Why is the man under the shadow safe, but because the thick branches of the tree which make the shadow, do receive scorching beams of the hot shining sun which otherwise would reach him? The beams of wrath which should have scorched all the elect world, were contracted in the covenant betwixt the Father and the second Adam as in a burning glass, and so pointed directly against his head and concentrated in him. "The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. Yea, it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief." There was nothing to interpose between him and them. "He trode the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with him." But they fell immediately in all their force upon him. "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." So that he did not only like Jonah faint, but died outright under them.

2. He exhausted them. He drank the cup of wrath from the brim to the bottom. So that there was no more revenging wrath to fall on him. "For Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." Nor can any under his shadow, for an assurance of which we have the oath of God. "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." And upon this our Lord Christ bids his people come away with him, for that now the storm is blown over on him, the sky is clear, and it is safe travelling for guilty creatures to the throne of God, Song ii. 10, 11.

3. And now through him, the comfortable influences of heaven are bestowed and conveyed to those under his shadow, through him as the channel of conveyance, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." The debt is paid, he has got up the bond. The sun beats no more upon the tree with its great heat,

but shines upon it fair and sweet and will do so for ever; and thereby they under its shadow receive quieting, reviving, enlightening, and fructifying influences. "They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon."

3. He is by divine appointment made a public shadow for all the inhabitants of the weary land; so that it is lawful for them and every one of them to come in by faith and take shelter under it, whatever they are or have been. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is heaven's deed constituting a crucified Christ the ordinance of God for salvation to sinners; to whom they may look and be saved, and that is their warrant. And the proclamation is issued out concerning it and registered in the book of God. *Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is unto the sons of men.* Alas! it would be small comfort to poor scorched sinners, if Christ were only a private shadow, like that which men have in their gardens, to which poor travellers have no access, it being within high walls and locked doors. No, as Christ is not the rose of the garden, but the rose of the field, which any person may pluck who will have it; so he is the apple tree among the trees of the wood, under the shadow of which whosoever will may sit down. "And the Spirit and the bride, say come; and let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Though in the meantime it is a sad truth, that such is the natural aversion of sinners to Christ, that till they be so scorched, as that not another tree in all the wood can shelter them, they will not come in under his shadow. We now proceed,

III. To shew what it is to sit down under Christ's shadow.

It is the soul fleeing to Jesus Christ for a refuge, coming unto him on the call of the gospel, and receiving him and uniting with him by believing on his name. And this notion of faith bears,

1. The soul being sensibly scorched and uneasy in itself. Though all may, yet none will come under Christ's shadow, but sensible sinners. "The full soul loatheth an honey comb: but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." They to whom the world is not a weary land, will not value the shadow of this great rock. The method of sovereign grace for bringing sinners under Christ's shadow is to make the fiery law shine full upon them and scorch them. It shines on them in its holy commands, set home on their

souls in its spirituality and vast extent, discovering the sinfulness of their natures, hearts, lips, and lives, till it makes them say in earnest, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we do all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have carried us away." The law scorches them with its threatenings and curses, and so beats on their heads, hearts, and consciences, till they are ready to faint, and say with the prodigal, *I perish*. Most part of men are like those upon whom the sun is beating and wasting them with its heat, but they are fast asleep, they feel it not. But awake when they will, in the fiery region of the law, they will find themselves sun-burnt and sick. "For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The holy commands will be no more as a sealed book to them, and the awful threatenings no more as the sounding against the mountains. They will find they need a shadow.

2. That the soul finds no shadow any where else. "Thus the prodigal would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him." All the places of refuge to the soul, where it was wont to get ease, are in that day burnt up, and can afford no shelter. Flee whither they will, the house is unroofed above their heads, and their gourds are all withered, and afford no more shadow for them. Their creature comforts are dry and useless; they can give no ease to the pained conscience. The slender, moth-eaten garment of their own works, their prayers, tears, reformations, &c. cannot keep off the scorching beams of the fiery law from their consciences. "But what things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ." Thus they can find no shadow under which to rest.

3. A discovery of Christ's shadow to the poor outcast that can get lodging no where else. As God did with Hagar, when she had laid down the child for dead, "he opened her eyes and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink." So the Lord does with the soul in this extremity. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water." And this is that which is called in scripture *the finding of the Pearl of great price*. And never was the discovery of the shadow of a great rock to a poor traveller, ready to faint by excessive heat in a weary land, more welcome, than this discovery of Christ's shadow

to the weary soul. Consider that it is discovered to the soul as a sufficient shadow against all the heats that annoy it. *How many hired servants*, (said the prodigal when he came to himself,) “of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger.” Bread enough, what an encouraging view! Jesus is able also to *save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him*. This makes the soul answer *yea*, to the question. Believest thou that I am able? And this will in such a case where the soul is pressed with a deep sense of sin, require a powerful operation of the Spirit of God to cause the soul to believe; however easy some may think it is to believe.—Christ does not heal them who were never touched at the heart with their sickness.

Again it is discovered to the man as an open shadow, and open for him to go into it. And by this discovery the soul believes God, believeth the Son saying, in the gospel promise, “I am the Lord thy God, open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” And until the soul believes Christ’s shadow to be open to it, it can never go into it, more than one can believe on Christ without seeing a warrant, or embrace the gift of righteousness without believing that it is tendered to them in particular.

4. It imports that the soul goes under Christ’s shadow for shelter and rest. This is the renouncing of all other refuges, and betaking one’s self to the covert of blood alone; “Even to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling.” This is what Paul calls *the receiving of the atonement*, Rom. v. 11. *and the faith in his blood*, iii. 25. The word is the name of the mercy seat, the cover of the ark, under which the soul comes by faith in his blood, trusting and confiding upon it for shelter, life, and salvation to itself, upon the ground of the faithfulness of God in the promise of the gospel.

This is the coming under Christ’s shadow according to the scripture phraseology. So says the bramble in the parable, Judges ix. 15. *trust in my shadow*, when believing it shall be a defence to you. So the Jews are said, Isa. xxx. 2. *to trust in the shadow of Egypt*. And their trust in that shadow their confusion, ver. 3. because the defence for which they looked under it, would fail them, and “they were taken in their pits, of whom they said, under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.” And thus it is applied to the soul’s coming under Christ’s shadow by faith. “How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.” This is the receiving of Christ, even believing on his name, John i. 12.

5. It imports the soul abiding under Christ's shadow. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." She sat down under it as one resolved to stay. Faith takes hold of Christ to cleave to him, never to part with him, come what will, saying, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* And thus the man ever interposeth the obedience and death of Christ, betwixt heaven and his sinful soul. Keeps always Christ's shadow above his head. This is his only plea before the Lord, by which he can answer the demands of law and justice, and ward off the blow of the wrath of God. If he expects any good from heaven, he looks for it to come through the tree of life under whose shadow he sits. If he have any thing to offer to heaven, it must pass the same way. No communication with heaven but through Christ.

*Use.*—I would then exhort and invite you to come in, and sit down under Christ's shadow this day. Our Lord is spreading out his shadow to you in this place, and we are sent to call you and every one of you to come under it. Come then scorched souls and repose yourselves under Christ's shadow. I think you may all answer to that name even the most insensible amongst you, whose spiritual barrenness declares your souls to be a scorched and parched soil where no good can grow. More particularly,

1. Come under Christ's shadow, you who are under apprehensions of the Lord's wrath gone out against you for your sins, who feel a fire in your breasts, a sting of guilt in your consciences. Here is a shadow for ease to you, a covert of blood of infinite value, that will turn away wrath, give peace with an offended God, and pull the sting out of your consciences. "For the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin, and purgeth the conscience from dead works." No arrows of wrath can pierce you here.

2. Come, tempted souls, whom Satan is plying with fiery darts, ready to take hold of and set on fire the corrupt heart. If you sit down under Christ's shadow by faith, it will be a defence to you. "Above all then take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." You are annoyed on every side with fiery flying serpents, look to the brazen serpent on the pole of the gospel. "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee."

3. Come, you whose souls are pining and withering away within you, for want of the kindly influences of heaven on them. Here is a reviving and refreshing shadow for you. "They that dwell under his shadow shall return: they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." This



shadow will put sap in the bones, that are burnt as an hearth, a freshness in the heart that is withered as the grass, and render those who are faint, indisposed and inactive in their souls, lively and vigorous, like a giant refreshed with wine.

4. Come, you whose corruptions are rampant, and like summer vermin are destroying every green thing in or about you. Christ's shadow will cool the distempered heat of your souls, and reduce them to a holy temperature. "The grace of God teacheth us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world." The sanctifying virtue of his blood, and the efficacy of his Spirit, is able to master the strongest lusts. "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Ah! why do you go to swim in the waters of sin, for cooling of that hellish heat of lusts, where you are every moment in hazard of being swallowed up, while there is such a shadow for you to repose yourselves under.

5. Come, you to whom this world is made a weary land with the scorching heat of troubles, with which you are still meeting in it. "And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of waters in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." You are full of complaints of the hardships which you are made to undergo in the world. Trouble on your bodies, vexations in your minds, crosses and losses in your means, reproaches on your names. No ease can you find, however you shift about for it. The Lord lets the sun beat thus on your heads, to drive you under his shadow. Comply then with the design of providence, by coming under this shadow.

Lastly, Come all of you, whatever your case be.

*Motive 1.* There is no safe living without this shadow. The curse of the fiery law, and the wrath of God will burn up those that are without. And how can you be able to deal with an absolute God. "For who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

2. There is access for you to come under it, whatever your case be. There is a virtue in Christ's shadow, for helping the worst of cases. Wherefore despise not your own mercy. *Him that cometh unto me, saith Jesus, I will in no wise cast out.*

Lastly, There will not always be access. You are now highly privileged, God has set before you an open door. There is no shadow for fallen angels, no shadow now for the damned, and many even in this world, know not that there is a shadow for them. But it is offered to you now, and you know not how soon the door may be shut. *Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation. Amen.*

*Galashiels, Sabbath afternoon, July 29, 1722.*

SUITABLE IMPROVEMENT OF CHRIST THE APPLE TREE.

SERMON XIV.

SONG OF SOLOMON ii. 3.

*I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

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DOCTRINE.

CHRIST's fruit relisheth well with those who, by faith, sit down under his shadow.

In treating this doctrine, I shall,

I. Shew some things imported in it.

II. Shew what are Christ's fruits, which are so sweet to the taste of those that sit under his shadow.

III. Why Christ's fruit relisheth so well with those who by faith do partake of it. We are then,

I. To shew some things imported in this doctrine.

1. It imports that there is in Christ Jesus a suitable fulness for the soul. "For it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." There is nothing wanting in him to make the soul happy. This tree of life affords not only a defence from evil by its shadow, but full provision by its fruits not only a shelter from the scorching heat, but food for the hungry soul. Christ's shadow is a defence to all under it, from the revenging wrath of God, that it shall never fall on them. Of them God says, *I have sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.* It is a defence from the curse of the fiery law, that it can no more reach them. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.* It is a defence also from the evil of afflictions, that these shall not hurt them in the end, but turn to their profit. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

But then he is not a shadow or defence, out of which one may be starved by hunger; but in him there is fruit to satisfy the cravings of an immortal soul, so that in him, one may find at once a defence from evil and store of good. "I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said.

thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living. Hearken diligently, saith the Lord, unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Hence they who withdraw from him are without excuse. "O generation, see ye the word of the Lord: Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?"

2. They must put themselves under the covert of his blood and righteousness, who would partake of his fruits. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." There is no access to the wedding feast without the wedding garment, the white raiment of Christ's righteousness put on by faith. "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless." All the guests are sprinkled with his precious blood. This removes the curse, which made the heavens as brass above them, and gives them access to the fruits. Guilty creatures cannot have access to, or communion with God but through the Mediator, and in him they have access to *be filled with all the fulness of God*.

3. Those to whom Christ is a shadow and defence from the wrath of God and curse of the law he also feeds. There is no separating of the justifying blood and sanctifying Spirit. Many would be content to be called by Christ's name, and yet eat their own bread. They would have the benefit of Christ's shadow for their defence, but in the mean time the vain world, and their own fulsome lusts for their provisions. But deceive not yourselves, if Christ be indeed a rest to thy conscience, he will also be a rest to thy heart. If you be indeed come under Christ's shadow, your heart will be saying within you, "whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." As if he had said, bring nothing along with you for your provision, but come to the Lord for all.

4. When we sit down under Christ's shadow by faith, it corrects the vitiated taste, cools the distempered heat of the soul, and brings it to a holy temperature; so as spiritual things which before were tasteless as the white of an egg, become sweet to their taste. This takes place when Christ sends his servants, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus." And so it is a good sign where the soul's esteem of Christ and of his

benefits is raised above all things else. *Unto them that believe he is precious.*

Lastly, Faith, trust, and confidence, in the Lord Jesus Christ, produce sweet experience at length of the Lord's goodness to the soul. This is the way the soul sucks the sweet and nourishment out of the precious promises, while unbelief as it expects nothing from him, gets as little. We have David's experience clear on this head. "The Lord, says he, is my strength and my shield, my heart trusted in him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him." Trust reposed in a generous man is a strong tie on him to answer the expectation of the party trusting him. Thus Lot would rather expose his own daughters to the very greatest indignity, than expose the men to any harm, who had come under the shadow of his roof for protection. And we have God's promise concerning those who put their trust under Christ's shadow. "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone, and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame." They shall not be ashamed as men are when their expectations are disappointed. We are,

II. To shew what are Christ's fruits which are so sweet to the taste of those that sit under his shadow. These are all the benefits, privileges, graces, comforts, and fulness of the covenant, making his people happy here and hereafter. Christ himself is the tree that bears them from the least to the greatest; the promises are the branches upon which they grow, and faith is the hand that pulls them. They were all purchased by Christ, and it is in him and through him that they are enjoyed. A particular enumeration of them I will not attempt, but shall only mention a few things in general.

1. There is an inexhaustable fulness of them that will serve to feed all the saints, in time and through all the ages of eternity. Therefore they are called the unsearchable riches of Christ, Eph. iii. 8. Behold the top branch and the fruit with which it is laden. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Here is grace and glory, relative grace, pardon of sin, peace with God, adoption into his family; inherent grace, the restoration of the image of God, the continuation of it, the perfecting of it. Here is all the soul is capable to desire, an infinite fulness, even all the fulness of God, in respect of which all created fulness bears not the proportion of one drop of water to the ocean.

2. There is a variety of them, suited to all the possible cases of those that are under Christ's shadow. "The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. Behold a cluster of them. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Are they weak and unable to guide themselves? *He is wisdom.* Are they unable to pay the debt of righteousness to the law, by doing and suffering? *He is righteousness,* full and complete righteousness to them. Are they unholy? *He is sanctification* to them, in him all their well springs of holiness are, and from him they shall have a life of holiness, and live more abundantly, till at length they be made like him in the perfection of which they are capable. Are they yet under many wants and weaknesses? *He is redemption,* to set them free from all vestiges of imperfection. We now proceed,

III. To shew why Christ's fruit relisheth so well with those who by faith do partake of it.

1. Because it is suitable to their case, which drove them under Christ's shadow. What brought them there but felt need of supply for their perishing souls. Bread is sweet to the hungry man, and drink to him that is scorched with thirst. And Christ, and every thing in Christ, is sweet to the hungry soul, that could get nothing suitable to its case till it came thither. *The full soul loatheth an honeycomb: but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.* And what is the reason, that so few relish that sweetness which is in Christ, but because they have not been brought to a sense of their need of him.

2. Because this fruit is proper food for their new nature. *If any man be in Christ he is a new creature.* And if a man be a new creature, he must have new nourishment, he cannot feed as he was wont. He has new desires, a new appetite, and a new relish. For he desires that which is agreeable to the new nature, and tends to the support and maintenance of it. And that is Christ only and his benefits. Thus he says to us, *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.*

3. Because the real experience of Christ's fruits communicated to the soul, always leaves a sweet relish of them behind it. Therefore says the apostle Peter, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Come and see, is the most powerful persuasive to the love of religion, therefore says the Psalmist, *O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* Men's

judgment of religion, who have never tasted the sweetness of it, is little to be regarded, for they judge of that, of which they have had no experience. But spiritual sensation and feeling will always give a noble testimony to Christ. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

*Use I.* Of trial. Hereby you may try whether ye had a communion with Christ or not? Whether you have got under his shadow. Those who sit down there use to be so entertained as that his fruits are sweet to their taste. What report does your heart give concerning Christ and his spiritual benefits? I make no question but the entertainment of the guests has been very different. Some have been filled with joy in believing. Some have come away with sorrowful hearts from the table, reckoning they were not allowed to taste. And others have had no raised appetite after Christ or his benefits, it is not the like of these things that have any taste with them, and all other things are tasteless to them. This is a most dangerous case. It speaks a man not to be under Christ's shadow. But whatever your apprehensions may be as to your entertainment there, if you have come away with a sweet savour and relish of Christ and religion on your hearts, there is ground of hope. Yet it must be owned, that it is not every relish of Christ and his benefits will prove one a true Christian. For the stony ground hearers received the word with joy. Take these differences then betwixt the heart's relish of the true Christian, and the superficial relish of the hypocrite.

1. The sincere Christian relisheth Christ with his benefits, not only as good, but as best for him, all things compared, "Whom, says he, have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee." Again, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." But whatever relish the hypocrite may have of Christ, there is something else he relishes as best for him; and hence it is he deals with Christ as Orpah with her mother-in-law, who wept, and kissed her, and parted with her, and went back to her people and her gods, Ruth i. 14, 15. But the true Christian saith with Ruth, ver. 16. "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." None but Christ, none in competition with him.

2. The Christian gets his relish by feeling the extreme bitterness of sin. Like those on the day of Pentecost, *they have been pricked in their hearts and made to cry, what shall we do?* But the hypocrite comes easier by his, *he anon with joy receives the word*. No man can relish health at the rate one does who is brought back from the gates of death. Many have some relish of Christ and his salvation, to whom sin was never very bitter, or if it was, it was never of all the most bitter to them, and their relish of Christ is but superficial. But God puts in more bitterness into sin, to his own, till it becomes of all bitter things the most bitter, even more bitter than all the bitterness which the heart finds in repentance, watching, strict walking, being hedged up by the holy law. And then Christ and his salvation are cordially relished.

So the Christian's relish of Christ is the most powerful one which he hath, and therefore they choose him peremptorily. They see such a suitableness in him to their case, that they must have him upon any terms. The hypocrite gets a half look of Christ in the gospel, hence a half affection to him. Christ is sweet to them, but still some one lust or other is sweeter.

3. The Christian relisheth a whole Christ, and his whole salvation. Every thing that is in him or comes with him. The hypocrite never comes this length. The Christian says, All Christ's fruits are sweet, his sanctifying Spirit, as well as his justifying blood; his holy commandments as well as his gracious promises; the commandments that are difficult, as well as those with which he can more easily comply. Yea his cross as well as his crown is welcome.

*Use 2.* Of exhortation. O Christian communicants, behave yourselves as those who have sat down under Christ's shadow, and to whose taste his fruit has been sweet. And if you would do this, you must,

1. Beware of sitting down again under your shadows of created comforts, which have so often been made like Jonah's gourd to you. They have withered and you have been left to the scorching sun beating on your head. God has often shaken you out of your nests, be not then like the silly dove, that nestles again where it has been often plundered.

2. Beware of being deceived with the false sweet of sin. If the fruits of it have been so bitter, as to cause you look out for a shadow to a scorched conscience in Christ, and he hath made his fruits sweet to you, it may well be expected that you have got, both what may affright you from going back, and what may be cords of a man to hold you fast. Amen.