

## SERMON VIII.

Setting forth the Believer's Fellowship with CHRIST, the next End of his Application to them.

PSALM xlv. 7.

*Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

**T**HE method of grace in uniting souls with Jesus Christ, hath been opened in the former discourses; thus doth the Spirit, (whose office it is) make application of Christ to God's elect: The result and next fruit whereof is *communion* with Christ in his graces and benefits. Our *mystical union* is the very ground-work and foundation of our sweet, soul-enriching *communion* and participation of spiritual privileges; we are first ingrafted into Christ, and then suck the sap and fatness of the root: first married to the person of Christ, then endowed and instated in the privileges and benefits of Christ. This is my proper work to open at this time, and from this scripture.

“The words read, are a part of that excellent *song of love*\*, that “heavenly *Epithalamium*, wherein the spiritual espousals of Christ “and the church are figuratively and very elegantly celebrated “and shadowed. The subject matter of this psalm is the very “same with the whole book of the Canticles;” and in this psalm, under the figure of king Solomon, and the daughter of Egypt, whom he espoused, the spiritual espousals of Christ and the church are set forth and represented to us. Among many rapturous and elegant expressions in praise of this glorious bridegroom, Christ, this is one, which you have before you: “God, thy God, hath anointed “ed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows:” i. e. enriched and filled thee, in a singular and peculiar manner, with the fullness of the Spirit, whereby thou art consecrated to thy office: and by reason whereof thou out-shinest and excellest all the saints, who are thy *fellows* or copartners in these graces. So that in these words you have two parts; viz. *First*, The saints' *dignity*, and *Secondly*, Christ's *pre-eminency*:

*First*, The saints' *dignity*, which consists in this, that they are Christ's *fellows*. The Hebrew word † is very full and copious,

\* *Hic Psalmus propheticus est, continetque Epithalamium quo Christi cum ecclesia nuptiæ celebrantur, idemque habet argumentum quod canticum canticorum ejusque videtur esse epitome. Cocceius in loc.*

† מִדְּכֵרֵךְ *Consortes, participes, sodales, socii. Vox Hebræa quodcumque societatis sive communionis genus significat. Muis.*

and is translated “comsorts, companions, copartners, partakers: or, as ours read it, *fellows*.” i. e. such as are partakers with him in the anointing of the Spirit, who do, in their measure, receive the same Spirit, every Christian being anointed, *modo sibi proportionato*, with the same grace, and dignified with the same titles, 1 John ii. 27. Rev. i. 6. Christ and the saints are in common one with another: Doth the spirit of holiness dwell in him? so it doth in them too. Is Christ *King* and *Priest*? Why, so are they too by the grace of union with him. He hath made us kings and priests to God, and his Father. This is the saints’ dignity to be Christ’s fellows, consorts, or copartners; so that look, whatever spiritual grace or excellency is in Christ, it is not appropriated to himself, but they do share with him: for indeed he was filled with the fulness of the Spirit, for their sakes and use: as the sun is filled with light, not to shine to itself, but to others; so is Christ with grace. And therefore, some translate the text, not *præ consortibus*, above thy fellows; but *propter consortes*, for thy fellows\*. Making Christ the first receptacle of grace, who first and immediately is filled from the fountain, the Godhead: but it is for his people, who receive and derive from him, according to their proportion.

This is a great truth, and the dignity of the saints lies chiefly in their partnership with Christ, though our translation, *above thy fellows*, suits best, both with the importance of the word, and scope of the place.

*Secondly*, But then, whatever *dignity* is ascribed herein to the saints, there is, and still must be, a *pre-eminency* acknowledged, and ascribed to Christ: if they are anointed with the Spirit of grace, much more abundantly is Christ: “God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

By the *oil of gladness* understand the Spirit of holiness, compared here with oil, of which there was a double use under the law, viz. a *civil* and a *sacred* use. It had a sacred and a solemn use, in the inauguration and consecration of the Jewish kings and high-priests; it had also a civil, and common use, for the anointing their bodies †, to make their limbs more agile, expedite, and nimble; to make the face shine, for it gave a lustre, freshness, and liveliness to the countenance. It was also used in lamps, to feed and maintain the fire, and give them light. These were the principal uses of oil. Now, upon all these accounts, it excellently

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\* Rivet.

† Oil itself is pure and clear, which supplies and feeds the flame with fuel; hence the metaphor of anointing with oil used in scripture, frequently signifies the internal illumination of the mind by the Holy Spirit, and the communication of the true knowledge of God, and suitable affections of soul to it. *Moller. on the place.*

expresseth, and figuratively, represents to us the Spirit of grace poured forth upon Christ and his people. For,

*First*, By the Spirit poured out upon him, he was prepared for, and consecrated to his offices, he was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, Acts x. 38.

*Secondly*, As this precious oil runs down from Christ, the head, to the borders of his garments, I mean, as it is shed upon believers, so it exceedingly beautifies their faces, and makes them shine with glory.

*Thirdly*, It renders them apt, expedite, and ready to every good work: *Non tardat uncta rota.*

*Fourthly*, It kindles and maintains the flame of divine love in their souls, and, like a lamp, enlightens their minds in the knowledge of spiritual things; the anointing teaches them.

“And this oil is here called *the oil of gladness* \*, because it is the “cause of all joy and gladness to them that are anointed with it.” Oil was used (as you heard before) at the instalment of sovereign princes, which was the day of the gladness of their hearts; and, among the common people, it was liberally used at all their *festivals*, but never upon their days of mourning. Whence it becomes excellently expressive of the nature and use of the Spirit of grace, who is the cause and author of all joy in believers, John xvii. 13.

And with this oil of gladness is Christ said to be anointed *above his fellows*, i. e. to have a far greater share of the Spirit of grace than they: “For to every one of the saints is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ,” Eph. iv. 7. But to him the Spirit is not given by measure, John iii. 34. “It hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell,” Col. i. 19. and “of his fulness we all receive grace for grace,” John i. 16. The saints partake with him, and through him in the same Spirit of grace, for which reason they are his fellows; but all the grace poured out upon believers comes exceeding short of that which God hath poured out upon Jesus Christ. The words being thus opened, give us this note,

Doct. *That all true believers have a real communion or fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.*

From the saints’ union with Christ, there doth naturally and immediately result a most sweet and blessed communion and fellowship with him in graces and spiritual privileges, Eph. i. 3. “Blessed

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\* *Ελαιον αγαλλιασεως dicitur id quod causam dat summi gaudii.* Grot. in Heb. i. 9. Αυτος υμιν αιτιος της δωρεας τς πνευματος, και επισπασαμενος καθο εστιν ανθρωπος, το πνευμα και υμιν μεταδως. i. e. He is the cause of the gift of the Spirit to you, and being anointed with the Spirit as he is man, he communicates the Spirit to us also. *O Ecum.*

“be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ: in giving us his Son, he freely gives us all things,” Rom. viii. 32. So in 1 Cor. i. 30. “Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.” And once more, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. “All are yours, and ye are Christ’s.” What Christ is and hath is theirs by communication to them, or improvement for them; and this is very evidently implied in all those excellent scripture metaphors, by which our union with Christ is figured and shadowed out to us; as the *marriage-union* betwixt a man and his wife, Eph. v: 31, 32. You know that this conjugal union gives the wife interest in the estate and honours of the husband, be she never so meanly descended in herself\*. The *natural union* betwixt the head and members of the body, by which also the mystical union of Christ and believers is set forth, 1 Cor. xii. 12. excellently illustrates this fellowship or communion betwixt them, for from Christ “the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body,” as the apostle speaks, Eph. iv. 16. The union betwixt the graff and the stock, which is another emblem of our union with Christ, John xv. 1. imports, in like manner, this communion or partnership betwixt Christ and the saints; for no sooner doth the graff take hold of the stock, but the vital sap of the stock is communicated to the graff, and both live by one and the same juice.

Now, that the scope of this discourse be not mistaken, let the reader know that I am not here treating of the saint’s communion or fellowship with God in his duties, as in prayer, hearing, sacraments, &c. but of that interest which believers have in the good things of Christ, by virtue of the mystical union betwixt them through faith: there is a twofold communion of the saints with Christ.

The first is an *act*.

The second is a *state*.

There is an actual fellowship or communion the saints have with Christ in holy duties, wherein Christians let forth their hearts to God by desires, and God lets forth his comforts and refreshments again into their hearts; they open their mouths wide, and he fills them: this communion with God is the joy and comfort of a believer’s life, but I am not to speak of that here. It is not any act of communion, but the state of communion, from which all acts of

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\* *Ubi ego Cajus tu Caja. Uxor clarescit in radiis mariti.*

communion flow, and upon which they all depend, that I am now to treat of; which is nothing else but the joint interest that Christ and the saints have in the same things; as when a ship, an house, or estate, is among many partners, or joint heirs, every one of them hath a right to it, and interest in it, though some of them have a greater, and others a lesser part. So it is betwixt Christ and his people; there is a *κοινωνία*, i. e. a fellowship or joint interest betwixt them, upon which ground they are called *co-heirs with Christ*, Rom. viii. 17. This communion or participation in Christ's benefits, depends upon the hypostatical union of our nature, and the mystical union of our persons with the Son of God; in the first he partakes with us, in the second we partake with him; the former is the remote, the latter the next cause thereof.

In the explication of this point, I shall speak to these four things:

1. What are those things in which Christ and believers have fellowship.
2. By what means they come to have such a fellowship with Christ.
3. How great a dignity this is to have fellowship with Jesus Christ.
4. And then apply the whole in divers practical inferences.

*First*, What are those things in which Christ and believers have fellowship, to which I must speak both *negatively* and *positively*.

1. *Negatively*, The saints have no fellowship with Jesus Christ in those things that belong to him as God; such as his consubstantiality, co-equality, and co-eternity with the Father. It is the blasphemy of the wicked *Famulists* to talk of being godded into God, and christed into Christ. Neither men nor angels partake in these things; they are the proper and incommunicable glory of the Lord Jesus.

2. The saints have no communion or fellowship in the honour and glory of his mediatory works, viz. his satisfaction to God, or redemption of the elect. It is true, we have the benefit and fruit of his mediation and satisfaction: his righteousness also is imputed to us for our personal justification, but we share not in the least with Christ in the glory of this work; nor have we an inherent righteousness in us as Christ hath; nor can we justify and save others as Christ doth: we have nothing to do with his peculiar honour and praise in these things. Though we have the benefit of being saved, we may not pretend to the honour of being Saviours, as Christ is to ourselves or others. “\* Christ's righteousness is

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\* *Justitia Christi fit nostra, non quoad universalem valorem sed particularem necessitatem, et imputatur nobis non ut causis salvationis, sed ut subjectis salvandis.* Bradshaw de Justificatione.

“not made ours as to its universal value, but as to our particular necessity; nor is it imputed to us as to so many causes of salvation to others, but as to so many subjects to be saved by it ourselves.”

*Secondly*, But then there are many glorious and excellent things which are in common betwixt Christ and believers, though in them all he hath the pre-eminence; he shines in the fulness of them, as the sun, and we with a borrowed and lesser light, but of the same kind and nature as the stars. Some of these I shall particularly, and briefly unfold in the following particulars.

*First*, Believers have communion with Christ in his *names* and *titles*; they are called Christians from Christ, Eph. iii. 15. from him the whole family in heaven and earth is named: this is that worthy name the apostle speaks of, James ii. 7. He is the Son of God, and they also, by their union with him, have power or authority to become the sons of God, John i. 12. He is the heir of all things, and they are joint-heirs with him, Rom. viii. 17. He is both King and Priest, and he hath made them kings and priests, Rev. i. 6. But they do not only partake in the names and titles, but this communion consists in things as well as titles. And therefore,

*Secondly*, They have communion with him in his *righteousness*, i. e. the righteousness of Christ is made theirs, 2 Cor. v. 21. and he is “the Lord our righteousness,” Jer. xxiii. 6. It is true, the righteousness of Christ is not inherent in us, as it is in him; but it is ours by imputation, Rev. iv. 5, 11. and our union with him is the ground of the imputation of his righteousness to us, 2 Cor. v. 21. “We are made the righteousness of God in him,” Phil. iii. 9. for Christ and believers are considered as one person, in construction of law; as a man and his wife, a *debtor* and *surety*, are one: and so his payment or satisfaction is in our name, or upon our account.

Now, this is a most inestimable privilege, the very ground of all our other blessings and mercies. O, what a benefit is this to a poor sinner, that owes to God infinitely more than he is ever able to pay, by doing or suffering; to have such a rich treasure of merit as lies in the obedience of Christ, to discharge, in one entire payment, all his debts to the last farthing? “Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness,” Isa. xlv. 24. even as a poor woman that owes more than she is worth, in one moment is discharged of all her obligations, by her marriage to a wealthy man.

*Thirdly*, Believers have communion with Christ in his holiness or sanctification, for of God he is made unto them, not only righteousness, but sanctification also; and as in the former privilege, they have a stock of merit in the blood of Christ to justify them;

so here, they have the Spirit of Christ to sanctify them, 1 Cor. i. 30. and therefore we are said of his fulness to receive "grace for grace," John i. 16. i. e. say some, grace upon grace, manifold graces, or abundance of grace; or grace for grace, that is, grace answerable to grace: as in the seal and wax, there is line for line, and cut for cut, exactly answerable to each other; or grace for grace, that is, say others, the free grace of God in Christ, for the sanctification or filling of our souls with grace: be it in which sense it will, it shews the communion believers have with Jesus Christ in grace and holiness. Now, holiness is the most precious thing in the world, it is the image of God, and chief excellency of man: it is our evidence for glory, yea, and the first fruits of glory. In Christ dwells the fulness of grace, and from him, our head, it is derived and communicated to us; thus he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, Heb. ii. 11. You would think it no small privilege to have bags of gold to go to, and enrich yourselves with, and yet that were but a very trifle in comparison to have Christ's righteousness and holiness to go to for your justification and sanctification. More particularly,

*Fourthly*, Believers have communion with Christ *in his death*; they die with him, Gal. ii. 20. "I am crucified with Christ," i. e. the death of Christ hath a real killing and mortifying influence upon the lusts and corruptions of my heart and nature: true it is, he died for sin one way, and we die to sin another way: he died to *expiate* it, we die to it, when we *mortify* it: the death of Christ is the death of sin in believers; and this is a very glorious privilege; for the death of sin is the life of your souls; if sin do not die in you by mortification, you must die for sin by eternal damnation. If Christ had not died, the Spirit of God, by which you now mortify the deeds of the body, could not have been given unto you: then you must have lived vassals to your sins, and died at last in your sins; but the fruit, efficacy, and benefit of Christ's death is yours for the killing those sins in you, which else had been your ruin.

*Fifthly*, Believers have communion with Christ *in his life and resurrection* from the dead; as he rose from the dead, so do they; and that by the power and influence of his *vivification* and resurrection. It is the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the law of sin and death, Rom. viii. 2. Our spiritual life is from Christ, Eph. ii. 1. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins:" and hence Christ is said to live in the believer, Gal. ii. 20. "Now I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:" and it is no small privilege to partake of the very life of Christ, which is the most excellent life that ever any creature

can live; yet such is the happiness of all the saints, the life of Christ is manifest in them, and such a life as shall never see death.

*Sixthly*, To conclude, believers have fellowship with Jesus Christ in his glory, which they shall enjoy in heaven with him: they "shall be ever with the Lord," 1 Thes. iv. 17. and that is not all, (though, as one saith, it were a kind of heaven but to look through the key-hole, and have but a glimpse of Christ's blessed face) but they shall partake of the glory which the Father hath given him; for so he speaks, John xvii. 22, 24. and more particularly, they shall sit with him in his throne, Rev. iii. 21. and when he comes to judge the world, he will come to be glorified in the saints, 2 Thes. i. 10. So that you may see what glorious and inestimable things are, and will be in common betwixt Christ and the saints. His titles, his righteousness, his holiness, his death, his life, his glory. I do not say that Christ will make any saint equal with him in glory; that is impossible, he will be known from all the saints in heaven, as the sun is distinguished from the stars; but they shall partake of his glory, and be filled with his joy there; and thus you see what those things are that the saints have fellowship with Christ in.

*Secondly*, Next I would open the way and means by which we come to have fellowship with Jesus Christ in these excellent privileges; and this I shall do briefly in the following positions.

*Position 1.*

First, *No man hath fellowship with Christ in any special saving privilege by nature, howsoever it be cultivated or improved; but only by faith uniting him to the Lord Jesus Christ; It is not the privilege of our first, but second birth.\** This is plain from John i. 12, 13. "But to as many as received him, to them gave he power "to become the sons of God, even as many as believe on his name, "who are born not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, "but of God." We are by nature children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3. we have fellowship with Satan in sin and misery: the wild branch hath no communication of the sweetness and fatness of a more noble and excellent root until it be ingrafted upon it, and have immediate union and coalition with it, John xv. 1, 2.

*Position 2.*

*Believers themselves have not an equal share one with another, in all the benefits and privileges of their union with Christ, but in some there is an equality, and in others an inequality; according to the measure and gift of Christ, to every one.*

In justification they are all equal: the weak and the strong be-

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\* The truly faithful only are members of Christ, not as they are men, but as they are Christians; not by their first, but second birth. *Polan. Syntag. Book 6. chap. 55.*



liever are alike justified, because it is one and the same perfect righteousness of Christ, which is applied to the one and to the other, so that there are no different degrees of justification, but all that believe are justified from all things, Acts xiii. 39. and "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1. be they never so weak in faith, or defective in degrees of grace. But there is apparent difference in the measures of their sanctification, some are strong men, and others are babes in Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 1. The faith of some flourishes and grows exceedingly, 2 Thes. i. 3. the things that are in others are ready to die, Rev. iii. 2. It is a plain case, that there is great variety found in the degrees of grace, and comfort among them that are jointly interested in Christ, and equally justified by him.

*Position 3.*

*The saints have not fellowship and communion with Christ, in the fore-mentioned benefits and privileges by one and the same medium, but by various mediums and ways, according to the nature of the benefits, in which they participate.*

For instance, they have partnership and communion with Christ, as hath been said, in his righteousness, holiness, and glory, but they receive these distinct blessings by divers mediums of communion: we have communion with Christ in his righteousness, by the way of imputation; we partake of his holiness, by the way of infusion; and of his glory in heaven, by the beatifical vision. Our justification is a relative change, our sanctification a real change, our glorification a perfect change, by redemption from all the remains both of sin and misery.

Thus hath the Lord appointed several blessings for believers in Christ, and several channels of conveying them from him to us; by imputed righteousness, we are freed from the guilt of sin: by imparted holiness, we are freed from the dominion of sin, and by our glorification with Christ, we are freed from all the relics and remains both of sin and misery let in by sin upon our natures.

*Position 4.*

*That Jesus Christ imparts to all believers, all the spiritual blessings that he is filled with, and withholds none from any that have union with him, be these blessings never so great, or they that receive them never so weak, mean, and contemptible in outward respects, Gal. iii. 27. "Ye are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." The salvation that comes by Jesus Christ is stiled the common salvation, Jude 3. and heaven the inheritance of the saints in light, Col. i. 12. "There is neither Greek nor Jew, (saith the apostle, circumcision, nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all," Col. iii. 11. He means, there is no privilege in the one to commend them to God, and no want of*

any thing in the other to debar them from God ; let men have or want outward excellencies, as beauty, honour, riches, nobility, gifts of the mind, sweetness of nature, and all such like ornaments, What is that to God? He looks not at these things, but respects them, and communicates his favour to them as they are in Christ : *He is all, and in all.* The gifts and blessings of the Spirit are given to men as they are in Christ, and without respect to any external differences made in this world among men : hence we find excellent treasures of grace in mean and contemptible persons in the world ; poor in the world and rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom ; and as all believers, without difference, receive from Christ, so they are not debarred from any blessing that is in Christ : “ All is yours, for ye are Christ’s, 1 Cor. iii. ult. With Christ God “ freely gives us all things,” Rom. viii. 32.

*Position 5.*

*The communion believers have with Christ, in spiritual benefits, is a very great mystery, far above the understandings of natural men.* There are no footsteps of this thing in all the works of creation ; therefore the apostle calls it “ The unsearchable riches of Christ,” Eph. iii. 8. ἀνεζηγχιωξον πλξτον τξ Χξιξξ : The word signifies, that which hath no footsteps to trace it by : yea, it is so deep a mystery, that the angels themselves stoop down to look into it, 1 Pét. i. 12. “ Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered “ into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for “ them that love him : but God hath revealed them unto us by his “ Spirit,” 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

*Thirdly,* and lastly, I shall, in a few particulars, open the dignity and excellency of this fruit of our union with Christ, and shew you, that a greater glory and honour cannot be put upon man, than to be thus in fellowship with Jesus Christ, John xvii. 22. “ The “ glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may “ be one, as we are one :” And therefore, more particularly, let it be considered,

*First,* With whom we are associated, even the Son of God ; with him that is *over all, God blessed for ever.* Our association with angels is an high advancement, for angels and saints are fellow-servants in the same family, Rev. xix. 10. and through Christ we are come to an innumerable company of angels, Heb. xii. 22. But what is all this to our fellowship with Jesus Christ himself, and that in another manner than angels have? For though Christ be to them an head of dominion, yet not an head of vital influences, as he is to his mystical body the church ; this therefore is to them a great mystery, which they greatly affect to study and pry into.

*Secondly,* What we are that are dignified with this title, the *fel-*

*lovs* or *co-partners* with Jesus Christ: not only dust by nature, (*Dust thou art*), but sinful dust; such wretched sinners, as, by nature, and the sentence of the law, ought to be associated with devils, and partakers with them of the wrath of the Almighty God to all eternity.

*Thirdly*, The benefits we are partakers of, in and with the Lord Jesus Christ; and, indeed, they are wonderful and astonishing things, so far as they do already appear, but yet we see but little of them comparatively, to what we shall see, 1 John iii. 1, 2. “Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” O, what will that be! to see him as he is, and to be transformed into his likeness!

*Fourthly*, The way and manner in which we are brought into this fellowship with Christ; which is yet more admirable. The apostle gives us a strange account of it in 2 Cor. viii. 9. “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich:” he empties himself of his glory, that we might be filled; he is made a curse, that we might enjoy the blessing; he submits to be crowned with thorns, that we might be crowned with glory and honour; he puts himself into the number of worms, Psal. xxii. 6. that we might be made equal to the angels. O, the inconceivable grace of Christ!

*Fifthly*, The reciprocal nature of that communion which is betwixt Christ and believers; we do not only partake of what is his, but he partakes of what is ours: he hath fellowship with us in all our wants, sorrows, miseries and afflictions; and we have communion with him in his righteousness, grace, sonship and glory: he takes part of our misery, and we take part of his blessedness; our sufferings are his sufferings, Col. i. 24. O, what an honour is it to thee, poor wretch, to whom a great many would not turn aside to ask how thou dost; to have a King, yea, the Prince of all the kings of the earth, to pity, relieve, sympathize, groan and bleed with thee, to sit by thee in all thy troubles, and give thee his cordials; to say thy troubles are my troubles, and thy afflictions are my afflictions: whatever toucheth thee, toucheth me also. O what name shall we give unto such grace as this is!

*Sixthly*, and lastly, Consider the perpetuity of this privilege: Your fellowship with Christ is interminable, and abides for ever. Christ and the saints shall be glorified together, Rom. viii. 17. while he hath any glory they shall partake with him. It is said indeed, 1 Cor. xv. 24. that there shall be a time when Christ will deliver up the kingdom to his Father; but the meaning is not that

ever he will cease to be the Head of his saints, or they from being his members: No, the relation never ceases; justification, sanctification and adoption, are everlasting things, and we can never be divested of them.

*Inference 1.* Are the saints Christ's fellows? *What honourable persons then are they! and how should they be esteemed and valued in the world!* If a king, who is the fountain of honour, do but raise a man by his favour, and dignify him by bestowing some honourable title upon him, what respect and observance is presently paid him by all persons? But what are all the vain and empty titles of honour, to the glorious and substantial privileges with which believers are dignified, and raised above all other men by Jesus Christ? He is the Son of God, and they are the sons of God also: he is the Heir of all things, and they are joint-heirs with Christ: he reigns in glory, and they shall reign with him: he sits upon the throne, and they shall sit with him in his throne. O that this vile world did but know the dignity of believers, they would never slight, hate, abuse, and persecute them as they do! And O that believers did but understand their own happiness and privileges by Christ, they would never droop and sink under every small trouble at that rate they do!

*Inf. 2.* *How abundantly hath God provided for all the necessities and wants of believers!* Christ is a storehouse filled with blessings and mercies, and it is all for them: from him they "receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness," Rom. v. 17. "Of his fulness they all receive grace for grace," John i. 16. All the fulness of Christ is made over to them for the supply of their wants: "My God shall supply all your needs, (saith the apostle) according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ," Phil. iv. 19. If all the riches of God can supply your needs, then they shall be supplied. Say not, Christ is in the possession of consummate glory, and I am a poor creature, struggling with many difficulties, and toiling in the midst of many cares and fears in the world; for care is taken for all thy wants, and orders given from heaven for their supply: *My God shall supply all your need.* O say with a melting heart, I have a full Christ, and he is filled for me: I have his pure and perfect righteousness to justify me, his holiness to sanctify me, his wisdom to guide me, his comforts to refresh me, his power to protect me, and his all-sufficiency to supply me. O be cheerful, be thankful, you have all your hearts can wish; and yet be humble; it is all from free-grace to empty and unworthy creatures.

*Inf. 3.* *How absurd, disingenuous, and unworthy of a Christian, is it to deny, or withhold from Christ any thing he hath, or by which he may be served or honoured?* Doth Christ communicate all he hath to you, and can you withhold any thing from Christ? On Christ's

part it is not *mine*, and *thine*, but *ours*, or *mine* and *yours*; John xx. 17. "I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God." But O this cursed idol *self!* which appropriates all to its own designs and uses. How liberal is Christ! and how penurious are we to him! Some will not part with their credit for Christ, when yet Christ abased himself unspeakably for them. Some will not part with a drop of blood for Christ, when Christ spent the whole treasure of his blood freely for us; yea, how loth are we to part with a shilling for Christ, to relieve him in his distressed members, when as yet "we know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich!" O ungrateful return! O base and disingenuous spirits!" The things Christ gives us are great, and the things we deny to him are small: he parts with the greatest, and yet is denied the least. The things he communicates to us are none of ours, we have no right nor title by nature, or any desert of ours to them; the things we deny or grudge to Christ are by all titles his own, and he hath the fullest and most unquestionable title to them all; what he gives to us, he gives to them that never deserved it; what we withhold from him, we withhold from one that hath deserved that, and infinitely more from us than we have or are.

He interested you freely in all his riches when you were enemies; you stand upon trifles with him, and yet call him your best and dearest friend: he gave himself and all he hath to you, when you could claim nothing from him; you deny to part with these things to Christ, who may not only claim them upon the highest title, his own sovereignty, and absolute property, but by your own act, who profess to have given all in covenant to him: what he gives you return no profit to him; but what you give or part with for him is your greatest advantage. O that the consideration of these things might shame and humble your souls!

*Inf. 4. Then certainly no man is, or can be supposed to be a loser by conversion, seeing from that day, whatever Christ is or hath becomes his.*

O what an inheritance are men possessed of by their new birth! Some men cry out, Religion will undo you; but with what eyes do these men see? Surely, you could never so reckon, except your souls were so incarnated, as to reckon pardon, peace, adoption, holiness, and heaven, for nothing; that invisibles are non-entities, and temporals the only realities. It is true, the converted soul may lose his estate, his liberty, yea, his life for Christ; but what then? Are they losers that exchange brass for gold? or part with their present comforts for an hundred-fold advantage? Mark x. 29. So that none need be frightened at religion, for the

losses that attend it, whilst Christ and heaven are gained by it: they that count religion their loss have their portion in this life.

*Inf. 5. How securely is the saints inheritance settled upon them, seeing they are in common with Jesus Christ?* Christ and his saints are joint-heirs, and the inheritance cannot be alienated but by his consent; he must lose his interest, if you lose yours. Indeed Adam's inheritance was by a single title, and moreover, it was in his own hand, and so he might, (as indeed he soon did) divest himself and his posterity of it; but it is not so betwixt Christ and believers; we are secured in our inheritance by Christ our co-heir, who will never alienate it: and therefore it was truly observed by the father, *Falcior Job in sterquilinio, quam Adamus in paradiso*: Job was happier upon the dunghill, than Adam was in paradise. The covenant of grace is certainly the best tenure; as it hath the best mercies, so it gives the fullest security to enjoy them.

*Inf. 6. How rich and full is Jesus Christ, who communicates abundantly to all the saints, and yet hath infinitely still more in himself, than hath ever been received by them all.*

Take all the faith of Abraham, all the meekness of Moses, all the patience of Job, all the wisdom of Solomon, all the zeal of David, all the industry of Paul, and all the tender-heartedness of Josiah; add to this, all the grace that is poured, (though in lesser measure,) into all the elect vessels in the world, yet still it is far short of that which remains in Christ; "He is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows." And in all things he hath, "and must ever have the pre-eminence. There are many thousand stars glittering above your heads, and one star differs from another star in glory, yet there is more light and glory in one sun, than in many thousand stars. Grace beautifies the children of men exceedingly, but still that is true of Christ, Psal. xlv. 2. "Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips." For all grace is secondarily, and derivatively in the saints, but it is primitively and originally in Christ, John v. 16. Grace is imperfect and defective in them, but in him it is in its most absolute perfection and fulness, Col. i. 19. In the saints it is mixed with abundance of corruption, but in Christ it is altogether unmixed, and exclusive of its opposite, Heb. vii. 26. So that as the Heathen said of moral virtue, I may much more say of Christ, That were he to be seen with mortal eyes, he would compel love and admiration from all men, for "he is altogether lovely," Cant. v. 16.

*Inf. 7. What delight and singular advantage must needs be in the communion of the saints, who have communion with Jesus Christ in all his graces and benefits.*

"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,” 1 John i. 3. O it is sweet to have fellowship with those that have fellowship with God in Jesus Christ. Christ hath communicated to the saints varieties of graces, in different measures and degrees; and as they all receive from Christ the fountain, so it is sweet and most delightful to be improving themselves by spiritual communion one with another: Yea, for that end one is furnished with one grace more eminently than another, that the weak may be assisted by the strong, as a *modern divine* \* well observes. Athanasius was prudent and active, Basil of an heavenly, sweet temper, Chrysostom laborious, without affectation, Ambrose resolved and grave, Luther courageous, and Calvin acute and judicious. Thus every one hath his proper gift from Christ, the fountain of gifts and graces, 1 Cor. vii. 7. One hath quickness of parts, another solidity of judgment, but not ready and presential; one is zealous, but ungrounded; another well principled, but timorous; one is wary and prudent; another open and plain; one is trembling and melting; another cheerful and joyous; one must impart his light, another his heat: The *eye*, the knowing man, cannot say to the *hand*, the active man, I have no need of thee. And O how sweet would it be, if gifts, graces, and experiences were frequently and humbly imparted: But idle notions, earthly mindedness, self-interests, and want of more communion with Christ, have almost destroyed the comfort of Christian fellowship every where in the world.

*Inf. 8. In a word, those only have ground to claim interest in Christ, who do really participate of his graces, and in whom are found the effects and fruits of their union and communion with him.*

If you have interest in Christ, you have communion in his graces and benefits; and if you have such communion, it will appear in your maintaining daily *actual communion with God* in duties; whereby will be produced,

*First*, The increase of your sanctification, by fresh participations from the fountain; as *cloth* which is often dipt into the *vat* receives the deeper dye, and livelier tincture; so will your souls by assiduous communion with God. It will also be discerned,

*Secondly*, In your deeper humiliation, and spiritual sense of your own vileness: The more any man partakes of God, and is acquainted with him, and assimilated to him, the more base and vile in his own sight he still grows, Job xlii. 5, 6. Isa. vi. 5.

*Thirdly*, It will appear in your more vehement longings after the full enjoyment of God in heaven, 1 Pet. i. 8. and Rom. viii. 23.

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\* Mr. Torshel.

You that have the first fruits will groan within yourselves after the full harvest, and satisfying fruition; you will not be so taken with things below, as to be content with the best lot on earth for your everlasting portion. O! if these communicated drops be so sweet, what is there in Christ the fountain?

And thus I have opened the method of grace in bringing home Christ and his benefits to God's elect by union, in order to communion with him.

*Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.*



## SERMON IX.

Containing the first general Use of Exhortation, inviting all Men to apply JESUS CHRIST.

MATTH. xi. 28.

*Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

**T**HE *impetration* of our redemption by Jesus Christ, being finished in the first part, and the way and means by which Christ is *applied* to sinners in the foregoing part of this *treatise*; I am now orderly come to the general *use* of the whole; which in the first place shall be by way of *exhortation*, to invite and persuade all men to come to Christ; who, in all the former sermons, had been represented in his *garments of salvation*, red in his apparel, prepared and offered to sinners as their all-sufficient and only remedy: And in the following sermons, will be represented in his *perfumed garments* coming out of his *ivory palaces*, Psalm xlv. 8. to allure and draw all men unto him.

For a general head to this use, which will be large, I have chosen this scripture, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

These words are the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, in which there is a vital, ravishing sound: It is your mercy to have such a joyful sound in your ears this day. And in them I will consider their *dependence*, *parts*, and *scope*.

As to their *dependence*, it is manifest they have an immediate relation to the foregoing verse, wherein Christ opens his commission, and declares the fulness of this authority and saving power, and the impossibility of coming to God any other way. "All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: Neither knoweth any man the Father