

## SERMON XXIX.

*But to him that died, and rose again.*—2 Cor. v. 15.

FROM these words we have the second fruit of Christ's death and purchase, he died that we might die in conformity unto his death, and he died that we might live with a respect to his resurrection; and therefore, as I have spoken of our dying by the death of Christ, so must I speak now of our living in the life and in the resurrection of Christ. His death is the merit of it, but his resurrection is the pattern and fountain of it. His death is the merit of it, for it is repeated here again. He did not only die that we might die, but he died that we might live—'He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves,' &c. But then his resurrection is the pattern and the fountain of it; for therefore is the clause inserted, 'That they might live to him that died for them, and rose again.'

Now in this verse there are two things.

1. The fruit itself—the new life, with respect to the resurrection of Christ: *And he died for all, that they might live.*

2. The aim, tendency, and ordination of that life, which is to refer all our actions to God's glory, and to guide them by God's will: *That they should from henceforth live not to themselves, &c.*

Now this end, aim, and tendency of the new life, it is propounded negatively: 'Not unto themselves.' This is mentioned because a man cannot live to God till he hath denied himself. Spiritual life is but a recovery out of self-love. Before the fall there was no such thing as self, contrary to, or distinct from God, set up either in an opposite or divided sense from God; but when man fell from God, self interposed as the next heir, as an idol, not God; therefore the great work and care of religion is to draw us from self to God. 'Not to themselves,' that is, not to their own wills, ends, and interests. But it is positively expressed too, that they should live according to the will, and for the glory of God.

For the first of these, the fruit itself. I shall speak of the life itself, that we have by virtue of Christ's resurrection; 'That they which live,' that is, spiritually. Some, indeed, expound it judicially; they that live in a law sense, they are freed from death, to which they were obliged by Adam, and which they deserved by the merit of their own sins. But though that be included, it is not the full and formal meaning of the clause; for as the death mentioned in the former verse is to be interpreted of the mystical death, so by consequence this living is to be interpreted of the spiritual life, by bestowing of the Holy Ghost upon us. Of this I shall speak under this point, namely,—

*Doct.* That by virtue of Christ's death and resurrection christians obtain the grace of a new life.

In opening of this, I shall—

1. Show that there is a spiritual life, and what it is.

2. The respect that it hath to the resurrection of Christ, as the spiritual death hath to his death.

*First,* That there is a spiritual life. There is a natural and human

life, and there is a spiritual and heavenly life. The natural and human life is nothing but the civil and orderly use of sense and reason: and there is a spiritual and heavenly life, which is nothing but supernatural grace, framing and disposing the whole man to live unto God. It is supernatural grace, because we have it by virtue of our union with Christ: John vi. 57. 'As I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me.' Mark, when we have eaten Christ, when we are united to Christ (that is, take it out of the metaphor), as our food becomes one with our substance: so when we are united to Christ so as to become one spirit, then we live by the influence and virtue of his Spirit. In the life of nature we live by the influence of his general providence, but in the life of grace by the power of the Holy Ghost: therefore it is called, 'The life of God,' Eph. iv. 18: 'Being alienated from the life of God;' that is to say, that life which God worketh in us by the communication of his Spirit. Now by this supernatural grace, this gift of the Spirit, we are framed to live unto God. For this life, as it hath another principle distinct from that of the natural life, so it hath another end; the operations of the creature are sublimated and raised to a higher end. Here, in the text, the apostle shows the ordination and tendency of this life, that it is 'not to ourselves,' but it is 'to him that died for us, and rose again;' and Gal. ii. 19. 'I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.' It is a life whereby a man is enabled to act and move towards God, and for God, as his utmost end and his chief good. The natural life is to itself, as water riseth not beyond its fountain; and that which is born of the flesh can go no higher than as fleshly inclinations carry it. But the spiritual life is a power enabling us to live unto God: Rom. xiv. 8. 'Whether we live we live unto God,' &c. When we only mind self-interest, and act for the conveniences, and interests, and supports of the outward life, then we do but 'walk as men,' 1 Cor. iii. 3; this is, but according to the motions and to the bent of a natural principle. But if we would live as christians, or as new men, then we must live at a higher rate; God must be at the end of every action. Thus you see what it is.

Now because of the term *life*, I shall show—

1. The correspondence,
2. The difference, between it and the common life.

1. The correspondence and likeness that is between the common life that other men live and this life of grace, that Christ died for us that we might live, and is wrought in us in conformity to his resurrection, for therefore they go under the same name. They are alike in many things.

[1.] The natural life supposes generation, so does the spiritual, which is therefore expressed by regeneration, or by being 'born again.' John iii. 3, and 1 John ii. 27. Now look, as in natural generation we are first begotten and then born, so here there is an act *qua regeneramur*, by which we are begotten again, and *qua renascimur*, by which we are born again. There is an act of God, by which we are begotten again—viz., by the powerful influence of grace upon our hearts; accompanying the word, James i. 18; and there is an act of God, by which we are born again—viz., when the new creature is formed in us, and begins to discover itself—'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.' Effectual calling and sanctification are

these two acts ; by the one we are begotten, by the other born ; the one may be called our passive, the other our active regeneration. And as in generation, that which begets produces the same life that is in himself—a beast communicates the life of a beast, and a man of a man ; so it is the life of God that we receive when we are formed for his use by the power of his grace. It is called the life of God and the divine nature, spiritual qualities being infused, whereby we resemble God. And herein, again, it agrees with common life. Life consists in the union of the matter with the principle of life ; as when there is union between the body and soul, then there is life, without which the body is but a dead and an inactive lump. As Adam's body, when it was organised and framed, until God infused the breath of life in it, lay as a dead lump ; so this life is begun by a union between us and Christ : he lives in us by his Spirit, and we live in him by faith, Gal. ii. 20. The Spirit is the principle of life, and faith is the means to receive it ; and therefore we are said, Rom. vi. 5, 'to be planted into the likeness of Christ's resurrection.' Planting notes a union ; as a bud that is put into a stock becomes one with the stock, and bears fruit by virtue of the life of the stock ; we no sooner are planted into Christ but we feel the power of his life and virtue of his resurrection ; he begins to live in us, and we in him, as the graft in the stock, and as the stock in the graft.

[2.] Where there is life, there is sense and feeling, especially if wrong and violence be offered to it. A living member is sensible of the smallest prick and pain ; and so is the spiritual life bewrayed by the tenderness of the heart, and the sense that we have of the interest of God. Stupid and insensible spirits show they have no life ; and therefore those that are 'alienated from the life of God,' are said to be 'past feeling,' Eph. iv. 18, 19. As long as there is life there is feeling. We may lose other senses, yet there may be life. The eye may be closed up, and sight lost ; and the ear may be deaf, and lose its use, but yet life may remain still. But feeling is dispersed throughout the whole body, and we do not lose our feeling till we are quite dead ; therefore this is the character of them that are alienated from the life of God, that they have no feeling. Now the children of God, the regenerate, are sensible of the injuries done to the spiritual life by sin, and of the decays of that life they have, and of the comforts of it. What consciences have they that can live in carnal pleasures, and sin freely in thought, and foully in act, and yet never groan under it, never be sensible of it ? Paul was sensible of the first stirrings and risings of sin : Rom. vii. 24, 'O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from this body of death ?' Now where there is no sense of this, it shows such have no life, who are neither sensible of the injuries done to the life they have, nor of the decays of it by God's absence. When the bridegroom is gone, sensible hearts will mourn, Mat. ix. 15 ; when they have lost Christ, when they feel any abatements of the influences of his grace. Carnal men that sleep in their filthiness, have no sense of God's favours or frowns, of his absence or presence, because they are quite dead ; they do not take notice of God's dealings with them either in mercy or judgment, therefore are touched with no remorse for the one or thankfulness for the other, but are careless and stupid,

and past feeling. And can a man be alive and not feel it? And can you have the life of grace, and not feel the decays and interruptions of it, and neither be sensible of comforts or injuries?

[3.] Where there is life there is an appetite joined with it, an earnest desire after that which may feed, maintain, and support this life. What makes the brute-creatures to run to the teats of the dam as soon as they are born, but instinct of nature? Appetite is the immediate effect of life. Where there is life it must have some supports; it hath its tastes and relishes; as 1 Peter ii. 2, 'As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.' I say, where there is a new birth there will be an appetite after spiritual unmixed milk. The new nature hath its proper supports; and there will be something relished and savoured besides meats, drinks, and bodily pleasures, and such things as gratify the animal life. As Jesus Christ said, John iv. 32, 'I have meat to eat that ye know not of;' so spiritual life hath inward consolations, it hath hidden manna, whereby it is supported and maintained—'Meat that perisheth not,' John vi. 27. Painted fire needs no fuel; those that do not live they have no appetite, there is no need of nourishment. But where there is life there will be a desire, an appetite that carrieth us to that which is food to the soul, to Christ Jesus especially, and to the ordinances in which he is exhibited to us. And therefore, where there is no desire to meet with God in these ordinances, where Christ may be food to our souls, it is to be feared there is no life. Wicked men may desire ordinances sometimes, but not to strengthen the spiritual life, but out of carnal ends and reasons. They are loth to be left out of the worship that is in esteem in the place where they live; as the Pharisees submitted to John's baptism, though they hated the Lord Christ; it was then in esteem; therefore he calls them 'a generation of vipers,' Mat. iii. 7. And partly because they trust in the work wrought. There is somewhat to pacify natural conscience by the bare external performance of a duty; and carnal men rest in the sacraments or visible ordinances. It is natural to us to be led by sensible things; and the external action being easy, they choke their consciences with these things. How usual is it in this sense to see many that tear the bond, yet prize the seal: that is to say, they contemn the bond of the covenant, and the duty of the covenant, yet dote upon the Lord's supper, which is a seal of it. But a true appetite desires these ordinances, that we may meet with God in them. This is a sign of life.

[4.] Where there is life there will be growth: especially in vegetables, there life is always growing and increasing till they come to their full stature; so do the children of God grow in grace. Our Lord himself, though he had the Spirit without measure, yet 'he grew in wisdom and favour with God,' Luke ii. 40; not in show, but in reality; he grew in wisdom as he grew in stature. Though his human nature in his infancy was taken into the unity of his divine person, yet the capacity of his human nature was enlarged by degrees, for his human nature was still to carry a proportion with ours; and therefore he grew in wisdom and in favour with God. And so all that are Christ's, they grow. 'The trees planted in the courts of God flourish there,' Ps. xcii. 13. There is more room made for the new nature by degrees to exert and put forth itself. Corruption is still a-dying, and they grow more

humble, more holy, more solid, more rational, more wise in the spiritual life, more resolved for God, more heavenly-minded, that they may be at more liberty for God. They may lose somewhat in liveliness of gifts and vigour of affections (for these things come and go), but they are more spiritual, and more steadfast, and more solid, and seriously set to seek after God; as an old tree, that puts forth fewer leaves and blossoms, but is more deeply rooted. But now hypocrites do not grow beyond their first blaze; yea, they wither every day, lose their zeal and their forwardness, out of carnal ease or affection to pleasures, honours, or greatness of the world; they lose the seeming grace that they had before.

[5.] Where there is life there are vital operations, for life is active and stirring. So spiritual life hath its operations; it cannot well be hid, it will bewray itself in a zealous and in a constant and uniform practice of godliness. They are idols that have feet, and walk not: Rev. iii. 1, Some only 'have a name to live, and are dead.' They that make a naked profession, but are not excited to live, and bring forth fruit to God, 'they have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof;' 2 Tim. iii. 5, that is, the power that should change their hearts, and direct and order all their actions. They that are governed by the Spirit, they feel this power; they are enabled to bring forth the fruits of righteousness to the praise and glory of God. Look, as a worldly man, by virtue of the worldly spirit that is in him, is dexterous in all his affairs—his worldly principle puts a life into him, Luke xvi. 9; their employment is suitable to their life; so a spiritual man, that hath not the spirit of the world, or a disposition that makes him eager upon worldly things, but the Spirit of God dwelling and working in him, here is not the sphere of his activity; his cares, thoughts, and endeavours are turned into another channel; he is quickened and raised to newness of life, Rom. vi. 4. The man is more earnest, more thoroughly set for heaven, and the worldly life is more overruled and mastered in him, and the heavenly and divine life prevails in him, and sets him a-work more and more. Thus I have, by comparing these two lives, a little showed you what is that life that we have by Christ; it is a life that flows from regeneration; that is begun by union with Christ; that begets a sense, so that a christian feels the annoyances of those things that are inconvenient and contrary to this life; and begets an appetite after the supports that should maintain it, and discovers itself by growth; this life is increased in them more and more; and also it discovers itself by its activity, by making them fruitful towards God. Thus you see wherein they agree.

2. Let us a little see wherein they differ.

[1.] They differ in the state of them both; for this spiritual life is a life that is consistent with some degree of death. Even then when we live, we are troubled with a body of death. Paul complains of it, though grace hath the upper hand in the soul, yet corruption cleaves to us still. Outwardly a man cannot be said to be dead and alive together; but a christian yet hath sin dwelling in him, and is dying to sin every day, that he may live unto God. And as sin decays, so the spiritual life takes place: for mortification makes way for vivification; and according to the degrees of the one, so are the degrees of the other. The more we die to sin, the more we are alive to righteousness, 1 Peter ii. 24.

[2.] There is a difference in the dignity of this life. Natural life, what is it? A benefit vouchsafed to us by God, that we may have time for repentance; but yet it is but a 'wind' that is soon blown over, and passeth away, Job vii. 7; and a suitable expression you have, James iv. 14, for this life is but as a 'vapour.' This life is a little warm breath turned in and out by the nostrils, soon gone. It is indeed a continued sickness; and our food is as it were constant medicine to repair and remedy the decays of the natural life. Oh, but this is a life that flows from God himself, and is a more worthy thing, it is the life of God; and as Christ liveth in the Father, so we in him by the Spirit. This was a life bought at a dearer rate than the life of nature: John vi. 51, 'My flesh which I give for the life of the world.' Nothing less than the death of the Son of God would serve the turn; and therefore it is more noble than the other life, which is called 'the life of our hands,' Isa. lviii. 10, because it costs us hard labour to maintain it.

[3.] As it differs in the dignity and value, so in the original. The natural life is traduced and brought down unto us by many successions of generations from the 'first Adam;' he was 'a living soul,' but the 'last Adam was a quickening spirit,' 1 Cor. xv. 45. We have a living soul by virtue of our descending from the first Adam; all that our parents could do was to make way for the union of soul and body together. But by this life we and Christ are united together, and he becomes a life-making spirit unto us.

[4.] There is a difference in the duration. Grace is an immortal flame, a spark that cannot be quenched. All our labour and toil here in the world is to maintain a dying life, a lamp that soon goes out, or to prop up a tabernacle that is always falling; when we have made the best provision for it, it is taken away—'Thou fool, this night,' &c. This life is in the power of every ruffian and assassin that values not his own. Oh, but the spiritual life is a life that begins in grace and ends in glory; the foundation of it was laid in justification, that took off the sentence of death; sanctification is the beginning of it, the which by degrees is carried on till it end in glory, where we shall be never weary of living it. The outward life, though short, yet we soon grow weary of it; the shortest life is long enough to be numbered with a thousand miseries. If we live to old age, age is a burthen to itself, Eccles. xii. 1. Life itself may become a burthen, for some have wished and requested for themselves that they might die. But no man ever wished for the end of this spiritual life. Who ever cursed the day of his new birth? This is life indeed; then we begin to live in good earnest, we may reckon from that day forward that we live. The seed of eternal life was laid as soon as grace was infused into the soul, and you may 'take hold of eternal life,' 1 Tim. iv. 20, before you enter into it. Maintain this life, and it will end in eternal glory. Thus I have despatched my first question, namely, What is this life that Christ hath purchased for us? A spiritual death, that we might die to sin, and also a spiritual life, that we might live unto God.

*Secondly.* We come to speak of the respect that is between this life and Christ's resurrection.

I Answer, Christ's resurrection is—(1.) An example and pattern of it; (2.) a pledge of it; (3.) a cause of it.

1. An example of it. There is great likeness and correspondence between Christ's rising from the grave, and a christian's resurrection from the death of sin.

[1.] Christ died before he rose, and usually God killeth us before he maketh us alive. First we find the word a killing letter before we find it a word of life. This is God's method. Paul saith, Rom. vii. 9, 'The commandment came, and sin revived, and I died.' A man is broken in heart with an apprehension of sin and God's eternal wrath, before he is made alive by Christ: Gal. ii. 19, 'I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.' He must be himself a dead man. The law must do the law work before the gospel doth the the gospel work; so Rom. viii. 2, 'But the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.' He is under the law of death and sin, as it convinceth of sin and bindeth over to death.

[2.] The same Spirit of holiness, or power of God, that quickened Christ, quickeneth us. It is said, Rom. vi. 4, 'That as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so should we be raised to newness of life;' that is, by his glorious power: 2 Cor. xiii. 4, 'For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God.' What is there said to be done by the power of God is said elsewhere to be done by the Spirit of sanctification: Rom. i. 4, 'And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' So are believers quickened by the same Spirit: Rom. viii. 11, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.' Christ will quicken us by his grace, as he did his own dead body. The same quickening Spirit that is in Jesus Christ doth also quicken us.

[3.] Again; Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; as the apostle telleth you: Rom. vi. 9, 'Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.' His resurrection instated him in an eternal life, never more to come under the power of death again. He might have been said to be alive after death if he had performed but one single act of life, or lived only for a while; but he rose to an immortal, endless life, a life co-eternal with the Father. So is a christian put into an unchangeable state: sin hath no more dominion over him,—should not, shall not, as the apostle proveth there, applying it to the christian. When Christ telleth he is the resurrection and the life, he asserts two things: John xi. 25, 26, 'That he that believeth on him, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and shall never die!' Though formerly dead in sin, he shall live the life of grace, and when he liveth it once, shall never die spiritually and eternally; otherwise how shall we make good Christ's speech?

Christ, in that he liveth, he liveth with God, and liveth unto God, Rom. vi. 10, that is, with God, at his right hand; and to God, that is, referring all things to his glory; for, Phil. ii. 10, 11, all that Jesus Christ doth as mediator is to the glory of God the Father. So a christian liveth with God and unto God; with God, not at his right hand now, but yet in a state of communion with him: 1 John i. 3,

'And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ.' And he liveth to God, as in the text—'Not to ourselves, but to him that died for us, and rose again;' that is, no longer to our own lusts and desires, nor for our own ease, profit and honour, but according to the will and for the service and honour of God; as more fully hereafter. Well then, that new state, into which Christ was inaugurated at his resurrection, is a pattern and example of our new spiritual life.

2. How it is a pledge of it. Christ was our common person, and we make one mystical body with him; and therefore his resurrection and life was not for his own person and single self alone, but for all those that have interest in him. As he died, so he rose again in our name and in our stead, as one that had satisfied the justice of God, and procured all manner of grace for us, and as a conqueror over all our spiritual enemies. And therefore he is called the first-fruits from the dead, 1 Cor. xv. 20: as a little handful of the first-fruits blessed the whole harvest, and sanctified it unto God; it blessed not the darnel and the cockle, but blessed and sanctified the corn. Christ's quickening after death was a sure pledge that every one who in time belongeth to him shall in his time be quickened also; first Christ, and then they that are Christ's, every one in their own order. We must not think that when Christ was raised it was no more than if Lazarus or any other single person was raised. No; his resurrection was in our name; therefore we are said to be raised with Christ, Col. iii. 1: and not only so, but quickened together with Christ, Col. ii. 13, and Eph. ii. 4, 5. Though we were quickened a long time after Christ's resurrection, yet then was the pledge of it. It was agreed between God and Christ that his resurrection should be in effect ours, and in the moment of our regeneration the virtue of it should be communicated to us. The right was before faith to all the elect; but when faith is wrought, the right is applied by virtue of the covenant of redemption. He rose in the name of all the redeemed, and they are counted to rise in him, and we are actually instated in this benefit, when converted to God.

3. It is a cause of it. That Spirit of power by which Christ was raised out of the grave, is the very efficient cause of our being raised and quickened, or of our new birth; for the virtue purchased by Christ's death is then applied to us by him who is now alive, and liveth for evermore for that end and purpose. Therefore it is said, 1 Peter i. 3, 'That God hath begotten us to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ'—by virtue of that power which he now hath, as risen from the dead; and Eph i. 19, 20, 'And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places.' The same power worketh in believers, which wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. The same power which wrought in and towards Christ's exaltation, is engaged for believers to work grace, and carry on the work of grace in them. Christ risen and living in heaven is the fountain of life in all new creatures. He is the great receptacle of grace, and sendeth it out by his Spirit,—a vital influence to all such as belong to him. And there-



fore our life is made dependent upon his : John xiv. 19, 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' The life of believers is derived from Christ's life, who is our quickening head, communicating virtue to all his members. There is a virtue in his life to quicken us; so that we do not live so much as Christ liveth in us : Gal. ii. 20, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;' as the root in the branches, and the head in the members.

*Use* 1. Information. It teacheth us three things in point of use.

1. The suitableness between Christ and believers. Consider him as God, or mediator. As God, Christ hath life communicated to him by eternal generation; so by regeneration we are made partakers of the divine nature. As mediator, he subsists in his life as man, by virtue of the personal union with the Godhead. So do we live by virtue of the mystical inhabitation or union with Christ by his Spirit; for our spiritual life floweth from the gracious presence of God in us by his Spirit. Christ as man had first a frail life, subject to hunger, cold, and sufferings; so have believers a spiritual life, consistent with many weaknesses and infirmities. But now Christ liveth gloriously at the Father's right hand; so we shall one day bear the image of the heavenly, and be one day freed from all weaknesses. Thus are we conformed unto Christ, and partake of the same life he doth.

2. It informeth us in what way this life is conveyed and continued to us. By virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by the Spirit through faith; his death is at the bottom of it, for he died that we should live together with him; 1 Thes. vi. 10, 'Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.' His resurrection is the pattern, pledge, and cause of it; for, Rom. vi. 10, 'If we were reconciled by his death, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.' After he had rescued us from the power and danger of our sins by his rising from the dead, he is in a greater capacity to send out that Spirit by which he was raised to raise us up to a new life. Then the Spirit is the immediate worker of it, for Christ maketh his first entry, and dwelleth in the hearts of believers, by his Spirit; for we are renewed and born again by the Spirit: John iii. 5, 'That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,' without which we are not capable of it. The Spirit worketh faith, and then there is a habitation fit for Christ in the soul: Eph. iii. 17, 'That he may dwell in your hearts by faith.' Then he liveth in us, as the head in the members, Col. ii. 19; and the root in the branches, John xv. 1. It is by faith that the union is completed: John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' And then a virtue and power floweth from this union, to enable us to do those things which are spiritually good and acceptable to God, which is nothing but that which we call life. Without him we can do nothing, John xv. 5; with him, and by him, all things: Phil. iv. 13, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,'—namely by the influence of his Spirit received by faith.

3. It informeth us, it is not enough to believe that Christ died for you, unless also you permit Christ to live in you. It is not enough

for your faith, it is not enough for your love; the apostle mentions both, and we must look after both. As to have our old offences expiated, so to live a new life in Christ: Rom. vi. 5, 'For if we have been planted together into the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' We are branches of that tree whereof Christ is the root. We must have communion with Christ living, as well as with Christ dying, and not only freed from the damning power of sin, but quickened to a new life.

*Use 2.* Is exhortation; to press you to several duties.

1. To believe that there is such a life. It is matter of faith; for when Christ had said, John xi. 26, 'Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die,' he presently addeth, 'Believest thou this?' Few mind and regard it. The general faith concerning life by Christ must go before the special application. Besides, it is a hidden thing: 'your life is hidden with Christ in God,' Col. iii. 3. It is not visible to sense; and invisible things are only seen by faith. It is hidden from sense, and therefore it must be believed. It is hidden from the carnal world, as colours are from a blind man, because they have no eyes to see it. The natural man cannot see things that must be spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Besides, the spiritual life is hidden under the natural: Gal. ii. 20, 'The life that I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.' They live in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. It is a life within a life. The spiritual life is nothing else but the natural life sublimated and overruled to higher and nobler ends. Spiritual men eat, and drink, and sleep, and trade, and marry, and give in marriage, as others do, for they have not divested themselves of the interests and concernments of flesh and blood; but all these things are governed by grace, and are carried on to holy and eternal ends. Besides, it is hidden, because there is upon it the veil and covering of afflictions and outward meanness and abasement; as it was said of some, 'of whom the world was not worthy, that they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins,' Heb. xi. 37, 38. Who would think so much worth should lie under such a base outside? Their glory is darkened and obscured by their condition. Besides, too, this life is often hidden by reproaches, and censures, and calumnies. The people of God are represented as strange sort of people unto the world: 2 Cor. vi. 8, 'As deceivers, and yet true.' They are reputed as a company of hypocrites and dissemblers; all their experiences questioned and scoffed at. Profane and wanton wits will be spitting out their venom in every age, and God's people will be judged according to men in the flesh, though they live to God in the spirit, 1 Peter iv. 6. God permitteth it; reproach is the soil and dung whereby he maketh his heritage fruitful. But yet this is a hiding and disguising the spiritual life. Lastly, it is hidden under manifold weaknesses and infirmities. The best have their blemishes, and the most of christians show forth too much of Adam and too little of Jesus; and so the spiritual life is carried on darkly, and in a riddle. Though the old man of corruption doth not bear sway in their hearts, to command, direct, and order all their actions, as formerly it did, yet sin is not wholly gone; they feel a law warring in their members, Rom. vii. 33. And it is not only warring, but sometimes prevailing,

that they themselves can feel little of the holy life. There are some who question the life of grace, others scorn and scoff at it. Yet believe it, for it is the great truth revealed in the scriptures, and it is in some measure felt by sense; yea, the rays of this hidden and rejected life are often discovered to the world. For there are some who by their practices condemn the world, live in counter-motion to the corrupt sort of men, walk as those that have another spirit than the spirit of the world, 1 Cor. ii. 12, and as those that look for a happiness elsewhere. Therefore believe that there is such a life.

2. Value and esteem it according to its worth and excellency; I mean, with a practical esteem, as Paul doth, counting all things but dung and dross in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. What would he know in him? Phil. iii. 10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection;' or the virtue of raising him out of sin to the life of grace. Oh! that is an excellent thing indeed. It is more to be advanced to this life than to the highest honour in the world. This is to live in God, to God; to have miracles of grace wrought in us every day. It is the divine power that giveth us 'all things that pertain to life and godliness,' 2 Peter i. 3; not begun nor carried on without a daily miracle, or a work exceeding the power of nature or the force of the creature. Life ennobleth all things: a living dog is better than a dead lion; to be alive to God, when others are dead in sin, what a great privilege is that?

3. Deal with Christ about it. Come to him, he purchased it by his death: John vi. 51, 'This is my flesh, which I have given for the life of the world'—to God in sacrifice, to us for food. Look upon him as one that is possessed of the fulness of the Spirit, to work it in all those that come to God by him: Heb. vii. 25, 'He is able to save to the uttermost all those that come to God by him, for he liveth for ever to make intercession for them;' that is, penitent believers, for by faith and repentance we come to God by Christ. He is angry that we will not come to him for this benefit: John v. 40, 'Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.' If you have a pressing need, why should you keep away from him? That is his quarrel against us, that we will not make use of him for this benefit. He is best pleased when we have most of it: John x. 10, 'I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly.' He would have us not only living christians, but lively. He hath appointed ordinances to convey it to us. The word: Isa. lv. 3, 'Hear, and your souls shall live.' The sacraments: Ps. xxii. 26, 'The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever.' Prayer: that we cry earnestly, and express our desires of this benefit: Ps. xxxvi. 9, 'For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.' David often called upon God as the God of his life. Well, when we go to God, he remitteth us to Christ, Christ to the Spirit, and the Spirit to the ordinances; there we should observe his drawings, and obey his sanctifying motions, when he saith, 'Arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,' Eph. v. 14. When more awakened than at another time.

4. When we have this life, let us improve it, and act grace in all holy obedience unto God: Eph. v. 25, 'If we live in the Spirit, let us

walk in the Spirit.' If partakers of the new life of grace, we must show it in our conversations, for newness of heart is seen in newness of life.

*Use 3* is to put us upon self-reflection and self-examination. Have we a new life communicated to us?

1. If it be so, then there is a great change wrought in us. It is said of Christ, 'he was dead, and is alive,' Rev. i. 18. To him we are conformed: Luke xv. 24, 'This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found;' so Eph. ii. 1, 'You that were sometimes dead in trespasses and sins, yet now hath he quickened.' Surely when a man is translated from death to life, that should be a sensible change, as if another soul dwelt in the same body; he is another man to God, hath holy breathings after him, delights frequently to converse with him in prayer: Acts ix. 11, 'Arise, and go into the street called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth;' and Zech. xii. 10, 'I will pour upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication.' He hath a childlike love to God as a father: Gal. iv. 6, 'And because ye are sons, he hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your heart, crying, Abba, Father.' Have a childlike reverence to him: Eph. v. 1, 'Be ye followers of God, as dear children.' Illustrate it by that, Jer. xxxv. 6, when they set pots of wine before them to drink, 'We dare not; Jonadab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine.' And a childlike dependence upon him: Mat. vi. 32, 'Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.' A childlike hope from him: 1 Peter i. 3, 'Who hath begotten us to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' Zeal for him: 2 Cor. v. 10, 'Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.' He is another man to his neighbour; he carrieth it justly and righteously to all, both as to person, name, and estate; and this not by compulsion of conscience, but inclination of heart, which the scripture expresseth by loving our neighbour as ourselves, seeking their good as our own, rejoicing in their good as our own, mourning for their evil as our own. Such a justice as groweth out of love: Rom. xiii. 8, 'Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.' But to our fellow-saints and everlasting companions a Christ-like love: 2 Pet. i. 7, 'Add to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness charity.' Another man in his special relations: Philem. 11, 'Which in times past was unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and me.' That is the sphere of our activity. In the government of himself he doth exercise a greater command over his passions and affections: Gal. v. 24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof;' alloweth no bosom sin: Ps. xviii. 23, 'I was upright before thee, and kept myself from mine iniquity;' and still a constant carefulness to please God: Heb. xiii. 18, 'For we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.'

2. If so, there will be a solemn dedication of ourselves to God: Rom. vi. 13, 'But yield yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead.' The reason is, because the great effect of grace is a tendency towards God, and that tendency produceth a setting apart of

ourselves for God's use and service; and the reality of this is seen in using ourselves for God.

3. Where there is life there will be vital operations. For life is active and stirring; it cannot be hidden, but will bewray itself in all that we do, though not at all times in a like measure. Our prayers will be the prayers of a living man; our conferences and discourses such as come from those that have life in them; our whole service of God such as hath warmth and zeal in it: James v. 16, 'The fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man;' and Rom. xii. 11, 'Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;' our addresses to God, such as become feeling of wants, an appetite after and savour of spiritual things. And if christians do not feel this life (for sometimes it is weak and obstructed), they cannot be satisfied, nor rest in this frame. When dull of hearing, or cold in prayer, they rouse up and stir up themselves: Isa. lxiv. 7, 'There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.' What is wanting in fervour is made up in sense and feeling and bemoaning their condition; so that the heart is alive, because it is sensible of its deadness, living though not lively. But the chief note is a sincere desire to please, honour, and glorify God; and that by virtue of Christ's resurrection christians obtain the grace of a new life.

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### SERMON XXX.

*That they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again.*—2 Cor. v. 15.

WE are still upon the second fruit of Christ's purchase—he died that we might die in a conformity to his death, and he died that we might live with a respect to his resurrection. His death is the merit of it, but his resurrection is the pattern, pledge, and fountain of this new life. I propounded to speak—

1. Of the fruit itself; the grace of the new life wrought in us, in conformity to Christ's resurrection.

2. The aim and tendency of that life; which is to refer all our actions to God, 'that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again.' The aim is propounded—

[1.] Negatively—*Not to themselves.*

[2.] Affirmatively—*But to him that died for them, and rose again.*

[1.] Negatively—'Not to themselves:' to their own ease, honour, and profit, their own wills, own interests, and own ends.

[2.] Positively—'To him:' according to his will, for his honour and glory.

*Doct.* The duty and property of the spiritual life is to refer all our actions, not to self, but to God.

1. For proof of the point, take one place for both: Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 'For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto God; or whether we die, we die unto the

Lord; for whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.' A christian is not his own man, and therefore liveth not to himself, but he is the Lord's in his person, all his relations, enjoyments, conditions, interests; he is the Lord's by every kind of right and title, and hath not power over the least action that he doth, or comfort he enjoyeth: if health, wealth, uses it for God; if children, loves them in order to God; and therefore referreth all to God. In the text the apostle saith, None of us—none of those that are in Christ. The apostle speaketh of weak and strong christians, they all agree in this; and he shrewdly implieth that he that liveth to himself is none of Christ's. Now—

[1.] Not to self, for self-denial is required as our first lesson: Mat. xvi. 24, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.' Christ telleth us the worst at first. So see how peremptory Christ is: Luke xiv. 26, 'If any man come to me, and hate not father and mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' It is too late for the vote of man and foolish reason to interpose, out of hope to get this law repealed. No, it is unalterably stated that no interest of ours, no, not life itself, which maketh us capable of enjoying all other worldly interests, can be pleaded in bar to our duty, or by way of exception or reservation in our subjection to Christ. Now, if self must be denied, and all the interests of it renounced, certainly we must not live to ourselves. God taxeth his people for their self-seeking and self-aiming: Hos. x. 1, 'Israel is an empty vine, that bringeth forth fruit to himself;' as a vine that only maketh a shift to live, and to draw sap to itself, but bringeth forth no fruit to the owner. Certainly, as in the spiritual we receive all from Christ, we use all for him; as rivers run into the sea, from whence their channels are filled. They do not live *in* Christ that do not live *to* Christ. Visible, nominal christians are as the ivy that closeth about the bark, but bringeth forth no berries by virtue of its own root; but these really engrafted into Christ do bring forth fruit to Christ.

[2.] To God: Gal. ii. 19, 'I through the law am dead to the law, that I may live to God.' There the apostle showeth the ordination of the spiritual life. As soon as we are alive by grace, we are alive unto God, and the stream of our affections, respects, and endeavours, is turned into a new channel; so Rom. vii. 4, 'Married to Christ, that we may bring forth fruit unto God.' This 'unto God,' is explained, Col. i. 10, 'That we may walk worthy of God unto all pleasing;' that is, agreeable to his will or word, wherein he hath declared his pleasure, and stated the rule of our actions. So 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.' That is the end and aim of all our actions, sacred or civil, spiritual or natural. God is the beginning, and must be the end of all things; he is the absolute Lord, and the infinite and inestimable good, in the enjoyment of whom our happiness lieth.

I shall observe something from the text, and as the point is delivered in this place.

1. I observe, that this end of the new life is propounded disjunctively, for a man cannot do both: he cannot live to himself and God too. A man cannot live to God till he has denied himself. Before

the fall there was no such thing as self, opposite to God and separate from him. But when man forsook God as his chief good and last end, then self was set up as an idol in the place of God; for, lay aside God, and self interposeth as the next heir. And what kind of self do we set up but carnal self—the pleasing of the flesh, or the advancement of a kind of carnal felicity to ourselves, in opposition to God, and in disjunction from him? Thence we are bidden to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, before we can give up ourselves to the service of God, Titus ii. 12. Mark the two things to be denied—‘ungodliness and worldly lust.’ For when we fall from God, we fall to the world, or some inferior good thing, wherewith we please the flesh, and so make the earthly life, and the pleasure we expect therein, to be our chief good and ultimate end, and bestow all our time and care upon it. Thence that dissuasive, Rom. xiii. 14, ‘Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.’ The unrenewed part of mankind do altogether spend their time in providing for the flesh, and seeking the happiness of the animal and earthly life, apart from God, or in opposition to him. Now this disposition must be mortified and cured before we can live unto God. We must not live to ourselves; self is only to be regarded in a pure subordination to God, not as opposite to him, not as separated and divided from him only, as self-respects would tempt us not only to disobey God, but also to forget and neglect God. Most will grant that we are not to mind self in opposition to God, but few consider that we are not to mind self apart from him, but God must be at the end of all our desires, motions, actions, enjoyments; though this latter be as evident a truth as the former. Natural self is to be denied as well as corrupt self, as appeareth by the example of Christ, who had no corrupt self to deny, and yet it is said, Rom. xv. 3, ‘He pleased not himself.’ Christ had an innocent natural will, by which he loved his natural life and peace—‘Father, let this cup pass;’ but he submitted it to God—‘Not my will, but thine be done,’ Mat. xxvi. 39. Therefore we also must not only deny self as corrupted by sin, but self as separate from God. How else shall we submit to God in these things wherein he may lay a restraint upon us, or put us to trial about them, whether we love them in order to him, they being things which otherwise we may affect? And besides, to love anything apart from God, and to seek it apart from God, and rejoice in it apart from God, without any reverence and respect to God, is to make the creature the last end in which the action terminateth, which is an invading of God’s prerogative. But if these things be so, who then can be saved? For do not all love themselves, and please themselves, and seek their own things? If they do not love the creature so as to fall into gluttony, drunkenness, adultery, oppression, and the like, yet in the temperate and lawful use of the creature, who looks to God? I answer, All the godly should, or else they are not godly; for there is no living to God and ourselves in an equal or violent degree, as a man cannot go two ways at once. But yet there is self in the faithful in a remiss degree, even self inordinately affected, that is either in opposition to God or apart from him in some particular acts, but the main drift and course of their lives is to God and for God. Living to God or self must be determined by what the man is principally set to maintain, promote, and gratify; the end which

he doth principally design and endeavour after ; what his heart is most set upon, what he seeketh in the first place, Mat vi. 33 ; the pleasing or glorifying of God, or the pleasing and glorifying of the flesh, in some inferior good thing. What is it they live for ? So nothing in the world is so dear to you but you can leave it for God ; nothing you love so well but you love God better, and can part with it for his sake, and lay it at his feet ; nothing you would use and do but in order to God. But on the other side you give God a little respect, such as the flesh can spare, with the fragments and scraps of the table, when the flesh is full and is satisfied ; some crumbs of your estate, time, strength, but your life and love is employed about other things ; not careful to live to God, to serve him in all your affairs, to eat, and drink, and trade to his glory, and to redeem your time to attend upon him : this they understand not, mind not, and therefore still live to themselves.

2. I observe that which is spoken of is living to self and living to God. Living doth not note one single action, but the trade, course, and strain of our conversations, whether it be referred to self or God. Every single act of inordinate self-love is a sin, but living to ourselves is a state of sin. A man lives to self when self is his principle, his rule, and his end, the governing principle that sets him on work, or the spring that sets all the wheels a-going—the great end they aim at, and the rule by which they are guided and measure all things. If it be for themselves, they have a life in the work ; so the apostle : Phil. ii. 21, ‘ All seek their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ.’ ‘ Their own things’ are their worldly ease, and profit, and credit ; when the things wherein Christ’s honour and kingdom are concerned are neglected. Any interest of their own maketh them ready, industrious, zealous, it may be, for Christ, when there are outward encouragements to a duty : but when no encouragements, rather the contrary ; then cold and slack. So, on the other side, we live to God when his grace, or the new nature in us, is our principle, his service our work, or the business of our lives, and his glory our great end and scope ; when we have nothing, and can do nothing, but as from God, and by him, and for him : Phil. i. 11, ‘ Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God.’

3. That love to God is the great principle that draweth us off from self to God ; for it is said, ‘ The love of Christ constraineth us.’ That is the beginning of all this discourse : such as a man’s love, inclination, and nature is, such will be the drift of his life. And therefore self-denial is never powerful and thorough unless it be caused by the love of God. But when a man once heartily loveth God, he can lay all things at God’s feet, and suffer all things and endure all things for God’s sake. Men will not be frightened from self-love ; it must be another more powerful love which must draw them from it ; as one nail driveth out another. Now what can be more powerful than the love of God, which is as strong as death ? Many waters cannot quench it, nor will it be bribed, Cant. viii. 7. This overcometh our natural self-love ; so that not only time, and strength, and estate, but life and all shall go for his glory : Rev. xii. 11, ‘ They loved not their lives to the death.’ Self-love is so deeply



rooted in us, especially love of life, that it must be something strong and powerful that must overcome it. What is nearer to us than ourselves? This is Christ's love. None deserveth their love so much as Christ. I know no happiness but to enjoy his love and glory; this prevaileth beyond their natural inclination.

4. The great thing which breedeth and feedeth this love is Christ's dying, that we might be dead to sin and the world, and might also be alive to God. The object of love is goodness. Now such goodness as this should beget love to Christ. This may be considered,—

[1.] As to the intention of the Redeemer. Surely if he aimed at this—the love and service of his redeemed ones—it is fit that he should obtain this end. Now this was Christ's end: Rom. xiv. 9, 'For this end Christ died, and rose again, and revived, that he might be lord of dead and living.' Christ had this in his eye, a power and dominion over us all, that he might rule us and govern us, and bring us into a perfect obedience of his will; that none of us might do what liketh him best, but what is most acceptable to Christ.

[2.] The grace and help merited. He obtained a new life for us, that we might be made capable to live, not to ourselves, but unto him. If he had obliged us only in point of duty to live unto God, and not obtained necessary grace to enable us to perform it, the love had not been so great. No, he hath obtained for us the gift of the Spirit, and the great work of the Holy Ghost is, by sanctifying grace, to bring off the soul from self to God: John xvi. 14, 'He shall take of mine, and glorify me.' This grace is not given us to exalt or extol any other thing but Christ alone, as Christ his Father, John xv. 8. That grace we have from Christ, and the Spirit inclineth us to make God our end and scope.

[3.] The obligation left on the creature by this great and wonderful act of mercy and kindness doth persuade us to surrender and give up ourselves to the Lord's use: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Take the argument either from the greatness of his sufferings, or the greatness of the benefits purchased; still the argument and motive is exceeding strong and prevailing. Shall the Son of God come and die such a painful, shameful death for us, and shall not we give up ourselves to him, and love him and serve him all our days?

2. I shall prove it by reasons.

[1.] The title that God hath to us. We are not our own, and therefore we must not live to ourselves; but we are God's, and therefore we must live unto God. This reason is urged: 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20, 'What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.' How are we God's? By creation, redemption, regeneration, and consecration; in all which respects God is more truly owner of you than you are of anything you have in the world.

(1.) We are his by creation—'It is he that made us, not we ourselves,' Ps. c. 3. What one member was made at our direction or

request, much less by our help and assistance? No, God framed us in the secret parts of the belly. Now if the husbandman may call the vine his own which he hath planted, God may much more call the creature his own which he hath made. God made us out of nothing. The husbandman cannot make a vine, he doth only set it and dress it: but God made us, and not we ourselves. The creature is wholly and solely of him and from him, and nothing else; therefore it should be wholly and solely to him and for him. Self-love is God's prerogative: he alone can love himself and seek himself, because he alone is from himself, and without dependence on any other: but we that are creatures, and depend upon God every moment for his providential assistance and supportation, are under the dominion and rule of him upon whom we do depend. And every motion and inclination of ours is under a rule. If we could any moment be exempt from the influence of his providence, we might be supposed to be exempted in that moment from his jurisdiction and government; but man wholly depending upon God for being and preservation, cannot lay claim or title to himself, or anything that is his, no, not for a moment. They were rebels against God's government who said, Ps. xii. 4. 'Our tongues are our own; who is lord over us?' By what right can we call our tongue our own? We neither made it nor can keep it longer than God will; he is the maker of all things, and therefore should be the governor and end of all things. It is robbery and usurpation of God's right when you divert your respects from him, and set up self in his place.

(2.) By redemption. That right is pleaded: 1 Cor. vi. 20, 'Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God with your bodies and souls, which are God's.' By creation we owe ourselves to God; but by redemption we owe ourselves to him by a double and a more comfortable right and title. A man bought with another's money, if he died by his stripes, if he continued a day or two, his friends had no plea against his master. The law giveth this reason, for he is his money, Exod. xxi. 21; that is, his own purchase by money. But God hath bought us at a higher rate—with the blood of his Son: 1 Peter i. 18, 'The precious blood of Christ.' Therefore the redeemed are bound to serve him that ransomed them. If a man had bought another out of captivity, or he had sold himself, all his strength, and time, and service, belonged to the buyer. Christ hath bought us from the worst slavery, and with the greatest price. No thralldom so bad as the bondage of sin and Satan; no prison so black as hell; and no ransom so precious as the blood of the Son of God. And he bought us to this end, that we might live to God, not to ourselves. And therefore, unless we mean to defraud Christ of his purchase, we should mind this more than we do.

(3.) By regeneration. Whereby we are brought actually into Christ's possession, and fitted for his use; taken into his possession, for there is a spiritual union and conjunction between us and Christ; see 1 Cor. vi. 15-17, 'Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid! Know ye not that he that is joined to a harlot is one body? For two, saith he, shall be

one flesh. What! but he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.' Mark there the grounds of the apostle's reasoning: he that is joined to a harlot is one flesh, and he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. What shall we conclude thence? That all that is ours is Christ's: ver. 15, 'Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid!' Christ hath a right in all and everything that is a christian's. Members belong more to their head than slaves to their master, because of their near conjunction; and from thence they receive life, strength, and motion. Being engrafted into Christ, we must submit to be guided and quickened by his spirit; as fitted for his use, the new creature is fitted for the operations which belong to it; the withered branch is again quickened, that it may bring forth fruit unto God. God's best gifts would lie idle if this were not: Rom. vii. 4, 'Married to Christ, that we may bring forth fruit to God.'

(4.) By voluntary contract and resignation. When we first enter into covenant with God, God giveth Christ, and all things with him, and we give up ourselves, and every interest of ours, unto God: Cant. ii. 16, 'I am my beloved's, and he is mine.' So that to alienate ourselves, and use ourselves for ourselves, it is not only robbery, but treachery and breach of covenant, because by our own solemn consent we owned and acknowledged God's right in us, and yielded up ourselves to the Lord, to be employed, ordered, and disposed by him at his own will and pleasure: Rom. vi. 13, 'But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.'

[2.] The danger which will come by it, if we should live to ourselves, and not to God.

(1.) The creature doth not only withdraw itself from God, but sets up another god; and so the crown is taken from God's head, and set upon the object of our own lust. The world is god, Mat. vi. 24; or the belly is god, Phil. iii. 19. We leave the true God but a name, and set up ourselves as our own end, and the pleasing of ourselves as our chief good, and use all creatures to this end, and love the present life and prosperity more than God, and set up our own will in contradiction to God's; all our labour and travail is to please ourselves and satisfy ourselves, and to break the bonds and cast off the yoke, and would be lords of ourselves and our own actions, and enjoy honours, and riches, and pleasures to ourselves.

(2.) There cannot a worse mischief befall us than to be given over to our own selves; or, this is the sorest plague: Ps. lxxxi. 12, 'So I gave them over to their hearts' lusts, and they walked in their own counsels.' There is nothing maketh us more miserable than to be given over to our own choices. And he said well that made this prayer to God—*Libera me a malo homine, a me ipso*. For pride, sensuality, and worldliness will necessarily bear rule where a man is given over to himself; we have not a worse enemy than ourselves. It is self that depriveth us of heaven, that maketh us neglect and slight the grace of our Redeemer. Man's own will is the cause of his own misery, and thou offendest thyself more than all the world can do besides. Therefore a man hath more cause to hate himself than other things.

*Use* of all is to press us to this weighty duty of living to God, and not to ourselves. Not to our own will and interest, but according to the will and for the glory of God.

*Motives—*

1. Christ's self-denial, who came from heaven, not only to expiate our offences, but to give us an example. And wherein was the example? He telleth us he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. John vi. 38; and to promote his Father's glory: John viii. 50, 'I seek not my own glory.' He was still guided by his Father's will, and had his orders from heaven, for all that he did. Now how did he do the will of God, and seek the glory of God? He did it with delight: John iv. 34, 'It was meat and drink to him to do his Father's will.' A will wedded to itself, and his own honour, and ease, and credit, is most unlike Christ. And he did it with much patience and self-denial: Rom. xv. 3, 'He pleased not himself;' that is, sought not the interests of that life he had assumed, but contradicted them by his fastings, temptations, sufferings, through the reproaches and ingratitude of men, and outward meanness and poverty of his condition. And especially by his death and passion, there he humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation, Phil. ii. 4-8; that the same mind might be in us; that we might learn that life, and all the comforts of life, should not be so dear to us as the love of God and everlasting life; for Christ loved not his life in comparison of love to his Father and his church. He preferred the pleasing of his Father in the work of redemption before his own life. Christ emptied himself that God might be glorified. How unwilling are ye to go back two or three degrees in your pomp, or pleasure, or profit, for God's sake, when the sun of righteousness went back ten degrees!

2. We cannot be miserable while we are wholly his, and devote ourselves to his service: Ps. cxix. 94, 'I am thine, save me.' Paul's speech: Acts xxvii. 23, 'The God whose I am, and whom I serve.' Paul was confident of his help, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. There is no truer self-seeking than to deny all for God; if the happiness of man were in himself or any other creature, he needed not to have to do with God.

3. What a poor account can men make to God at the last day, that spend their lives in carnal pursuits! There is a time coming when God will take an account: Luke xix. 23, 'That at my coming I might have required mine own with usury.' A factor that hath embezzled his estate, what account can he give of it? A workman that hath loitered all day, how can he demand his wages at night? An ambassador that hath neglected his public business, and spent his time in play or courtships, what account can he give to his prince that sent him? How comfortable will it be when you can say, as Christ: John xvii. 4, 'I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.'

4. We have lived to ourselves too long already. In the text it is 'henceforth;' and 1 Peter iv. 3, 'That he should no longer live the rest of his time to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.' Too much of our time already is employed in the service of our lusts; we may with grief look back upon the time we have spent as very long—too long—in pleasing the flesh. We have been long enough dishon-

ouring God and destroying our own souls, having so little time left, and so small strength and vigour left, to bestow upon God.

*Directions—*

1. Entirely and unreservedly devote yourselves to God. You must not reserve so much as your very lives, but resolve to resign up all to God. We have no interest of our own but what is derived from him, and subservient to him; own his right by your own consent and free resignation. If hitherto you have walked contrary to God, and opposite to him, come, lay down the bucklers; say as Paul, Acts ix. 6, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' Deliver up the keys of your heart, that he may come and take possession. If formerly you have given up yourselves to God, confirm the grant, Rom. xii. 1. Enter anew into the bond of the holy oath.

2. Being devoted to God in the whole course of your conversations, you must prefer his interest before your own. And when any interest of your own riseth up against the interest and will of God, care not for yourselves; set light by it, as if it were nothing worth; and let no self-respects tempt you to disobey God, though never so powerful. Let no hire tempt you to the smallest sin, no danger fright you from your duty: Dan. iii. 17, 18, 'We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. Our God is able to deliver us; if not, we will not worship the golden image which thou hast set up;' so Acts xx. 24, 'I count not my life dear to me.' If we can but forget ourselves and remember God, he will remember us better than if we had remembered ourselves. Take care of your duty, and God will take care of your safety; we secure our stock by putting it all into God's hands, and vending it in his service.

3. We are to use all the creatures, and all our enjoyments for God. Naturally a man useth and loveth the creature only for himself, but then he liveth to himself; but when he loves it and useth it for God, he liveth to God, 1 Cor. x. 31, and 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. Though men are speculatively convinced all is God's, yet they love it and use it as their own.

4. Being given up to God, we must study God's will: Rom. xii. 2, 'That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God;' Ps. i. 2, 'But his delight is in the law of God.' We must practise what we know, and still search that we may know more. Gross negligence and willing ignorance showeth we have a mind to excuse and exempt ourselves in some kind of subjection from God; and his will should be reason enough to persuade us to what he hath required: 1 Thes. iv. 3, 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification;' 1 Thes. v. 18, 'For this is the will of God concerning you;' 1 Peter. ii. 15, 'For this is the will of God, that with well-doing ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.'

5. We must take heed of carnal motives. Many such services we perform to God. There may be such as they that followed Christ for the loaves, John vi. 26. Some preached the gospel out of envy, as others out of good-will, Phil. i. 15. A man may seek himself carnally in a religious way; for a selfish man loves God, and all things else, for his carnal pleasure, and is serving himself in serving of God—an argument of a base and unworthy spirit. This was the devil's allega-

tion against Job, chaps. i. 9–11, and ii. 4, 5; it is not thee they seek, but themselves; their own commodity rather than thy glory. There is no man to seek this accusation, but to be faithful with God when he crosseth his self-interest, and to be as zealous for him when secular motives are gone as he was before.

6. In every duty we must come farther home to God; for all christianity is a coming to God by Christ. Now we get farther home to God as the divine nature doth prevail in us, and the carnal, self-seeking nature is subdued: 2 Cor. v. 16, ‘Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.’

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### SERMON XXXI.

*Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth we know him no more.—2 Cor. v. 16.*

THERE were false apostles at Corinth, who gloried much in outward things; not only birth, wealth, abilities of speech, but such outward things as had a nearer connection with and respect to religion; as their acquaintance with Christ, that they had known him in the flesh, and owned him when yet alive, and therefore are supposed to be intended in that expression, ‘I am of Christ,’ 1 Cor. i. 12. As others received the doctrine of life from Peter, Paul, Apollos, they immediately from Christ himself. Now this boasting these Corinthian doctors used, as to keep up their own fame among the people, so to lessen and weaken the credit of Paul’s apostleship; for this objection lay against him, that he had not, as other disciples, conversed with our Lord Jesus Christ on earth. Now Paul, that he might give the Corinthians occasion to glory in his behalf, and furnish them with an answer that gloried, *ἐν προσώπῳ καυχόμενους*, ver. 12, in external privileges, though they knew in their consciences they had little reason so to do, he had more valuable things to boast of—namely, that he was much in spirit, much in labours, much in afflictions for the honour of the gospel, and to all which he was carried out by the hopes of eternal life, the terror of the Lord at the day of judgment, ‘and the love of Christ constraining him.’ This was the threefold cord: hope of reward, fear of punishment, and the love of Christ; and these were more valuable considerations whereupon to esteem of any one than external privileges could be. In their outward privileges he could vie with them; for though he was none of Christ’s followers here upon earth, yet he was equal to them, by seeing and having been spoken to by Christ out of heaven: 1 Cor. ix. 1. ‘Am not I an apostle? have not I seen Jesus Christ the Lord?’ But Paul did not seek his esteem merely for his vision of Christ, and that ecstasy which befell him at his first conversion, but for the faithful discharge of his work, upon the ground afore-mentioned, that he would