

of Hagar, Gen. xvi. 11. Then your tears have a voice: Lam. ii. 18, 'Their heart cried unto the Lord, Let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease.' Then the prayers of saints have a voice: Luke xviii. 7, 'Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him?' The martyrs under the altar cry: Rev. vi. 9, 'The souls under the altar cried with a loud voice, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' Persecutors' consciences, they cry, O thou bloody Julian! thou hast murdered the children of God, and hast been guilty of oppression! As is storied of the king of France, that was author of that bloody massacre, he could never sleep afterward, but was haunted with terrors in his conscience, and at his death blood issued out at all the pores of his body.

Use. What terror and astonishment should this be to the enemies of the church, be they secret or open! Oppressed innocency will cry aloud; they may forgive, but the Lord forgets not. The Lord will not only take notice of their blood, but bottle their tears: Ps. lvi. 8, 'Thou tellest my wanderings; put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?' God kept a register of David's sufferings; every weary step was recorded in God's book; it is but folly and madness to think to hide your practices, or to escape punishment.

SERMON XXI.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.—HEB. xi. 5.

THE apostle makes it his chief scope in this chapter to convince the Hebrews of the nature, and worth, and efficacy of saving faith. To that purpose he layeth down the acts of sanctifying faith, ver. 1, and throughout the chapter he treats of the effects, fruits, and consequences of faith. Here we meet with a consequent or fruit of faith in the instance and example of Enoch, who, among the rest of those glorious lights where-with this chapter is adorned, shineth forth like a star of the first magnitude. Let me inquire why the apostle mentioned Enoch next to Abel, Seth and other holy patriarchs of the blessed line and race being passed by? I answer, Though the Spirit of God is not bound to give an account of his method, and therefore is not to be vexed with the bold and daring inquiries of human reason, yet because all things in the scripture are ordered with good advice, a few humble inquiries are lawful and profitable.

1. Enoch was the next solemn type of Christ; Abel was a type of Christ's death, and Enoch next proposed as a type of his ascension. **הַנּוֹךְ** from **הִנָּךְ** *dedicavit*, the dedicated, or the dedicator. (Christ), 'hath consecrated for us a new and living way through the veil, that is to say,

his flesh,' Heb. x. 20; therefore he is called ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, 'the prince of life,' Acts iii. 15, and he said, John xiv. 3, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' Tertullian calleth Enoch, *Candidatum ceternitatis*; and others have called him *Obsidem et testem vite ceterne*, the pledge and witness of eternal life; so was Christ dedicated to this purpose, that he might be the captain of life and salvation to the church, and he is gone to heaven as a pledge of our eternal glory.

2. Because between these two instances there is a fit proportion: Abel was an instance of the efficacy of faith, and Enoch of the consequent and reward of faith; Abel, he suffered for righteousness, and the instance of Enoch shows what is the fruits of suffering faith—that faith which doth engage us in suffering doth interest us in the reward. In Abel's death the holy patriarchs saw what they might expect in the world: and in Enoch's translation they saw what they should receive from God. The Lord would give them this perfect document both of the present operation of faith and the future reward of faith.

3. Because he was an eminent saint, the next that is taken notice of in the history of Moses. The apostle mentions not all the saints in the blessed line, but only the choicest. Now Enoch is many ways eminent and notable; for his birth we find, Jude 14, 'He was the seventh from Adam;' usually that is the number of perfection. Some that would turn all things into an allegory descant thus: That as there were six from the creation that died, and the seventh was translated alive from earth into heaven; so for six thousand years death shall reign, but in the seventh millenary it shall cease, and eternal life shall succeed. But this is but a fond conjecture; they are more pious that observe that the seventh man was dedicated to God, and God takes him for his special servant, as he takes the seventh day for his special day; but, chiefly, he is notable for his life and conversation: Gen. v. 24, 'Enoch walked with God;' that is, wholly dedicated himself to the service of the Lord—a phrase given to those that by express profession were set apart for the Lord, either as prophets, priests, or kings, for special service by office and ministration. But usually it is applied to persons employed in the exercises of piety and holiness: walking with God in the old testament, and well pleasing to God in the new, are synonymous terms. Another thing is notable in his life, that he lived as many years just as there are days in the year—three hundred and sixty-five years, Gen. v. 21, 22. Enoch was translated next after Adam's death, as will easily appear by chronology; as soon as Adam died Enoch was translated. God in Adam would give the world a pledge of the fruit of sin, which was death; in Enoch, a pledge of the fruit of holiness, which is immortality and eternal life.

In the words there is a proposition, and the confirmation of it.

1. The proposition or assertion of the apostle is, that *by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death*. The proposition implies two things—the blessing, and the means of obtaining it: the blessing—'He was translated;' the means—'By faith.'

2. The confirmation, which respecteth both the blessing and the means. He proves that Enoch was translated, out of that phrase of Moses; for saith he, *He was not found, because God had translated him*. And then he proves that it was by faith in the latter part of the text

—For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. In which reasoning there is a perfect syllogism: whosoever is translated on or after his pleasing God is translated by faith. Enoch was translated on or after his pleasing God, therefore he was translated by faith. The major is proved by the sixth verse—‘Without faith it is impossible to please God;’ the minor by the history of Moses—‘For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.’

Let me illustrate the words.

‘By faith;’ that is, by faith in the being of God, and in the promise of the Messiah and of the world to come. Now the reason why his translation is attributed to faith is given by the apostle—‘For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.’ His faith was the fountain of his godliness, and his godliness was the pledge of glory; his faith respected his pleasing God, and his pleasing God was an evidence of his interest in eternal life.

‘Enoch.’ We read of two Enochs—one of the race of Cain, another of the line of Seth; the hypocritical church imitating the true church, as in outward rites, so in having the same names: the Enoch here meant was of the family of Seth.

‘Was translated,’ transplanted—μετετέθη: the apostle useth this word to note his transportation to heaven.

There are many questions for the opening of this translation; as (1.) Whether he were translated in soul and body? (2.) Whether he died in the translation? (3.) To what place he was translated, whether to heaven or some earthly paradise?

1. Whether he were translated in soul and body? Some think he was translated in soul only, and not in body, as if there were nothing extraordinary in the history of Enoch, and his body was left on the earth. This is altogether improbable. The phrases imply something more than ordinary: Gen. v. 24, ‘And Enoch walked with God, and was not; for God took him.’ Why should there be such special phrases, ‘he was not,’ and ‘God took him,’ if an ordinary thing were intended? So the apostle here—‘That he should not see death.’ It might have been enough to have said he died, as of all the rest; therefore there was somewhat of miracle in it, for he was gathered by God into glory, both in soul and body.

2. Whether he died in the translation or no? I answer, No, but was only changed; for the apostle saith ‘that he should not see death.’ The Chaldee paraphrase renders it, and ‘he was not,’ *Quia non mori eum fecit Deus*—Onkelos, *Non occidit eum Deus*. Probably, as those that live at the last day, the apostle saith, ‘We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed,’ 1 Cor. xv. 51. He was transported to heaven in a moment, without the pains and horrors of a natural death; and being purified in soul, and purged from corruption in his body, was presently clothed with a glorified body. As Elijah was carried alive soul and body into heaven, 2 Kings ii. 11; so those that live at the Lord’s coming ‘shall be caught up alive into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air,’ 1 Thes. iv. 7. And when the apostle himself would express his own desires, that he might go to heaven in this manner (for the first believers thought the day of judgment was at hand), he saith, 2 Cor. v. 2, ‘In this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon

with our house which is from heaven ;' and ver. 4, 'Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life ;' that is, he desired that glory might come on him without dissolution, without the trouble and pain of sickness and diseases—'Not that I might be unclothed,' and put off the body, but 'clothed upon,' invested with the qualities of a glorified body.

3. Whither he was translated, to what place? Some say to the earthly paradise, others to the heavenly paradise.

[1.] Some say to the earthly paradise ; so Haimo and others, there to stand in a happy condition until the last act of the world shall be brought on the stage, and then to fight with their imaginary antichrist. But that was defaced by the universal deluge and flood in Noah's time—'The highest hills that were under the whole heaven were covered,' Gen. vii. 19, and the custody of the seraphims and flaming-sword was removed when the beauty and pleasure of it was gone ; and the most probable opinion is, that paradise was in Armenia. Now Armenia was covered, and Noah's ark rested on the mountains of Ararat, or Armenia, Gen. viii. 4.

[2.] Some say to a heavenly paradise, by which they understand not the heaven of heavens, but some third place, which is called in scripture paradise, and Abraham's bosom, in which the souls of some rest until the last day, not fully perfected and blessed. Tertullian, Austin, and many of the fathers, were of opinion that the souls of martyrs did straightways flit hence into the presence of God, but the souls of common christians went to paradise, by which they understood *secreta animarum receptacula, sedesque in quibus requiescunt*—some unknown place, where they did enjoy happiness, congruous and convenient to their condition : and in such a place they would place Enoch. But all these things being devised without warrant and leave from the scriptures, little heed is to be given to them. Briefly, an earthly paradise it cannot be, that is defaced ; a third place it cannot be, that being devised without warrant from the scriptures. Heaven only remaineth, whither God translated him both in body and soul, there to enjoy the comforts of his presence ; it would have been an infringement of his happiness to separate him from his God, with whom he had walked here in spiritual communion. So the Targums, or expositions of the Jews, Jonathan, *Translatus fuit, et ascendit in calum, &c* ; Josephus calls it *ἀναχώρησις πρὸς τὸν θεὸν* ; the Arabic version, *Translatus est in paradisum*.

That 'he should not see death ;' that is, that he might not die a natural death by a dissolution of the body, but undergo a sudden change of qualities.

But you will say, How can this stand with the general curse of God pronounced upon all mankind in Gen. ii. 17, 'In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,' thou and all thine? and Gen. iii. 19, 'Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return ;' or that eternal decree, Heb. ix. 27, 'It is appointed for all men once to die.'

I answer, This was an extraordinary instance, that doth not cross the rule ; it was a special dispensation that the Lord might give the patriarchs a document and instance of eternal life, and the sudden change of qualities was something analogical to death ; and were it

not for this special dispensation of God, he was under that obligation, but the Lord was pleased to privilege him for the great purposes of his glory.

'And he was not found.' The words relate to what is said, Gen. v. 24, 'And he was not.' The phrase is used, Jer. xxxi. 15, 'Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.' This phrase is often put for those that are dead: Gen. xlii. 36, 'Joseph is not, and Simeon is not;' he supposed them dead, or knew not what was become of them, but it is taken for any disappearance.

'For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.' Some make it to be an inward testimony in his conscience; others, some visible and public honour that was done to him before the world, the story of which is not now extant. Most probable, it is the testimony that is given him in scripture: Gen. v. 24, 'And Enoch walked with God,' which the Septuagint renders—*ἐνηρέστησε τῷ θεῷ*, in that and other places, which we shall hereafter explain.

But you will say, How can this be said to be before his translation, for the testimony of Moses was long after the translation of Enoch?

I answer, The apostle is to be understood thus: Enoch had this testimony in scripture, so that before his translation the scripture witnessed he pleased God; not before his translation he received this testimony; and that is the order of Moses: Gen. v. 24, 'Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.'

A few hints from what hath been spoken before I begin the two main and principal points.

Obs. 1. There is a life everlasting prepared for God's children. The instance God would give the fathers was in the translation of Enoch: the instance God would give believers in the times of the gospel was in the ascension of Christ. As soon as Adam died Enoch was translated. In Adam God would give the world a pledge of the fruit of sin, which is death; and in Enoch God would give a pledge of the fruit of holiness; and that is immortality and eternal life. Enoch was not merely translated for his own benefit and comfort, but for the comfort of other patriarchs against the fear of daily crosses in this life, and against the terrors of death; they saw there was now like to be violence in the world. There was one martyr—Abel was slain. Now that they might have comfort against this, God translated Enoch. The great instance God gives in the times of the gospel was the ascension of Jesus Christ; when the human nature was carried into heaven, that was a pledge of our glorification. He carried our flesh into heaven, and he left his Spirit with us; he took our flesh into heaven that he might prepare a place for us, to receive heaven in our right, and he left his Spirit with us, that we might be prepared for heaven. Heaven is not only prepared for believers by Christ's ascension—'I go to prepare a place for you,' John xiv. 2, but believers are prepared for heaven—'vessels of mercy prepared unto glory,' Rom. ix. 23. Look, as in all contracts pledges are mutually taken and given, so Christ would take a pledge from us, even our nature, and give a pledge to us—his Spirit; therefore we are as sure as ever Enoch was to be translated to bliss if we have an interest in Christ: John viii. 51, 'Verily, verily I say unto you, If any man keep my saying, he shall not see

death.' Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and Christ, under a deep asseveration, makes the same privilege to every believer. Death, since the death of Christ, will not be deadly to them; in death itself they see life. It is true, Enoch was translated in body and soul; yet, however, we are presently with the Lord in soul as soon as we are dissolved.

Use 1. Is to reprove believers for minding the present life as much as they do. We busy ourselves too much in the world, and toil in gathering sticks to our nests, when to-morrow we must be gone and flit away. Here we 'dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth,' Job iv. 19, and we are consumed by the blast of his nostrils. Man is but a little enlivened dust, and we are, like potsherds, soon broken. Hereafter we live, now we are dying every day, saith Austin, *Nescio an vita mortalis, an vitalis mors nominanda est*; I do not know whether I should call this life a living death or a dying life.

Use 2. Is comfort to believers in the hour of death: John xi. 25, 'He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet he shall live.' When you go down to the grave, you may go down with this assurance, that you shall live; though you look upon your flesh as morsels for the worms, yet you may look upon it also as parcels of the resurrection. God is in covenant with a believer's dust; the body, that seems most to suffer, shall be raised up again.

Obs. 2. That life everlasting cannot be obtained but by some change, by flitting and removing out of this present life. Enoch died not, yet, however, he was changed; God took him: 1 Cor. xv. 50, 51, 'We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;' that is, as now invested with these qualities.

Use. This may comfort believers against the terrors of death. The only use of death is to put off the old earthly qualities, that we may put on the new and heavenly; death doth only pluck off the rotten garment. Christ will call the grave to an account: Rev. xx. 13, 'The grave gave up her dead;' as Joseph left his coat in his mistress's hand and fled away, so we leave the upper garment of the flesh in death's hands, but we fly away; and Christ, at last, will say, Grave! where is my Abraham, my Isaac, and my Jacob's dust?

Obs. 3. That the body is a partaker with the soul in life eternal; Enoch was translated both body and soul. It is a comfort we can say with Job, 'With these eyes we shall see God,' Job xix. 26, though our body be eaten up with worms. This body, as if he did knock upon his breast, 'This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality,' 1 Cor. xv. 53; so Phil. iii. 21, 'Who shall change our vile body,' &c. Look, as the world, when consumed with fire, it is the same world for substance, it shall be only a purging fire; so this corruptible body is the same body for substance, though God doth away the corruptible properties of it.

Use. This is a great comfort against the difficulties and inconveniences of the holy life. The same eyes that have been lifted up to God in prayer, those eyes shall see Christ upon his white throne, and those spirits that are now spent and wasted in holy exercises shall be

recruited. A body wasted in sin is a sad prognostic of the devouring burning, but a body wasted in duty shall be restored and repaired again; so it is comfort against the inconveniences of the common life. Many indeed have a vile body, because subject to diseases, humbled with pains and aches, racked with the stone and the gout; this vile diseased body shall be a glorious body. Christ's body was first vile, then glorious; first scourged, mangled with whips, then crowned with honour and glory; and he sat down with God. Oh! let us bear all these; they will be full of nimbleness, vigour, beauty, and glory, like Christ's glorious body.

Obs. 4. Heaven is but a translation to a better place. When you die, you are but translated. Enoch walked with God here; but when he was translated, he lived with God in an uninterrupted glory. Many times Christ comes into his garden to gather lilies; and they are cropped here, that they may be transplanted from the winter to the summer gardens, from the church and lower dispensation of the ordinances to paradise, that we may read divinity in the face of the Lamb for evermore, as scholars that are sent from the grammar-school to the university.

Use. Let it not be irksome to us to be loosed from the body that we may be present with the Lord and joined to Jesus Christ; it is but a removal and preferment, therefore it teacheth christians to grow weary of the world. The world is the place of your pilgrimage, the place of sorrow and sin: certainly we have little reason to love the world. (1.) It is Satan's circuit: when God calls Satan to an account, Job i. 7, 'Whence comest thou?' Satan answered, 'From walking to and fro in the earth.' (2.) It is sin's house of office, a place of defilement: Isa. xxiv. 5, 'The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof.' (3.) It is a common inn for all sorts of men, for bastards as well as sons: Ps. cxv. 16, 'The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.' Wicked men have a creature-right, it is given to them, they have a right by providence; nay, here we are not only fellow-commoners with wicked men, but fellow-commoners with beasts; they have a creature-right too, as well as we. (4.) It is the shambles of the saints: Rev. xviii. 24, 'In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon earth;' there they are grieved, vexed, and slain. Now, who would grieve to be transplanted to a higher and happier region, where nothing that defiles grows, nothing troubleth in those holy, blessed, and quiet mansions? Death is a preferment.

Obs. 5. That some are carried to heaven by a special and privileged dispensation. The entrance into glory is very different. God is not bound to the ordinary course of nature. Enoch and Elijah were both transported in soul and body; Elijah was sent to heaven in a fiery chariot. And so shall those that live at the last day 'be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air,' 1 Thes. iv. 17. Look, as God took away Enoch without the pain of sickness and trouble, so he carries many more joyful and singing to heaven. And therefore, in giving grace and glory, God will use a liberty and the prerogative of free grace. Some seem to be rapt up into heaven by a fiery chariot, by strong elevation of comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost, but others are

carried in the lower and darker way of sorrow, trouble, and soul-sickness.

Use. It is the duty of believers to be doing what is required, and to refer mere dispensations to God's good pleasure. Free grace is dispensed in a different way.

Obs. 6. That the persons which are honoured in this extraordinary way were Enoch and Elijah; and what were they? They were two that shined like stars in a corrupt age, those that contested with the corruptions of their own times. The note is this—viz., God's heart is especially set to honour them that are zealous for his glory in corrupt times. In the days of Enoch men were very corrupt, therefore the flood was threatened. Now Enoch kept a constant counter-motion to the times; he did not only walk with God, but reprov'd the vices of others: Gen. v. 24, 'He walked with God,' and he reprov'd the ungodly men of his age, Jude 14, 15. It is a standing rule, God will honour those that honour him. Public and zealous instruments are carried on by a mighty hand of providence, and sent to heaven in a glorious way.

Use. Oh then, learn first 'to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,' and then 'to reprove them,' Eph. v. 11; contest zealously for God. God will put honour upon them in the eyes of the world; not only give them glory in heaven, but public and visible honour here, that all might take notice of them.

I come to the points, which are two—

1. The right and interest of believers in the happiness of the eternal state.

2. The necessity of pleasing God, or walking with God, before we come to the full enjoyment of him. Which two points afford two doctrines.

Doct. 1. That the end and the great privilege of faith is to be translated out of the world into the happiness of the eternal state.

1. I shall prove the point by scripture: 1 Peter i. 9, 'Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.' Heaven is there proposed as the chief end and reward of faith; all that we do, all that we suffer, all that we believe, it is with an aim at the hope of the salvation of our souls. The last article of our creed is everlasting life. We begin with belief in God, and we end with life everlasting; there is the sum and result of faith, eternal life and glory: John xx. 31, 'These things are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you might have life through his name.' The end of the word is faith, and the end of faith is eternal life; all the duty part of the word may be reduced to faith, and all the promissory part to life. It is also the great privilege of faith: Eph. ii. 8, 'By grace ye are saved, through faith.' The foundation of glory is laid in mercy on God's part, and it is received by faith on our part: it is given of grace, not sold for works; and received by faith, not purchased by desert.

2. I shall by a few reasons prove the interest of believers in eternal life, and why faith gives a title to glory.

[1.] Because by faith we are made sons; all our right and title is by adoption. Children may expect a child's portion, as in natural

things : the title follows the birth, natural or legal. We hold heaven as co-heirs with Christ: 1 John iii. 2, 'Now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be;' that gives us a right. Now faith in a juridical sense makes us sons: John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God;' he gave them *ἐξουσίαν*, as a right to the inheritance and sonship. So also in a real, though spiritual sense: 1 Peter i. 3, 'He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled,' &c. The new birth is by the infusion of faith; all relations to God are built on that change: our hope depends upon our new birth.

[2.] These are the terms of the eternal covenant between God and Christ, that believers should have a right to heaven by Christ's death; therefore, whenever the Father's love, and Christ's purchase are mentioned, faith is the solemn condition. The Father hath meant to dispose of heaven to a sort of men, but upon what condition: John iii. 16, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten son,'—what to do? and upon what terms?—'that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;' so again, John vi. 40, 'This is the will of my Father that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day;' upon that condition Christ bargained with God, and God with Christ. So for the purchase of Christ: Heb. ix. 15, 'He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.' When Christ died, as the mediator and testator, he made believers his heirs. There is no other name expressed in his will and testament, but they that believe, and they that are called, which are all one; therefore they are called, Heb. vi. 17, 'heirs of promise.' Our inheritance was dearly purchased, Christ was to be a mediator by means of death, but it is made over to believers by will and testament.

[3.] Because faith is the mother of obedience, which is the way to eternal life; faith gives a title, and works give an evidence. This is the drift of the apostle here—Enoch pleased God before he was translated, therefore by faith he was translated; for 'without faith it is impossible to please God.' God hath no respect to works without faith; the way to be made happy is first to be made holy, and all the influences of grace are received and improved by faith. Faith is the mother of grace, and grace the pledge of glory. All your works are not evidences of eternal life, but as they come from faith. It is faith that kindles love and inflames zeal, and quickens obedience.

[4.] By faith that life is begun which shall only be consummated and perfected in glory. The life of glory and the life of grace are the same in substance, but not in degree. Here faith takes Christ, and then life is begun, though in glory it is perfected: 1 John v. 12, 'He that hath the Son, hath life;' it is begun in him already. When the soul is changed by grace, there is a foundation laid for the changing of body and soul by glory: the Spirit will not leave his mansion and dwelling-place. When Christ hath once taken up his residence in the heart, and begun life there, he will not depart. Believers are said to be raised up at the last day by the spirit of holiness dwelling in

them, Rom. viii. 11 ; and Rom. v. 2, ' By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' Faith anticipates heaven, and begins the life of glory by hope and the joys of the Holy Ghost.

Use 1. To press you to get faith upon this ground and motive, it will give you an interest in heaven. Heaven is the portion of believers. Dogs, and they that are without, cannot have the children's portion. Unbelievers are strangers to the comforts of religion for the present, therefore much more hereafter, when the definitive sentence is passed upon them. Oh, who would not labour for faith upon this ground ? Faith must needs be an excellent grace, that bringeth such a salvation ; it giveth you an interest in Christ and heaven. Faith ennobles the blood ; no birth like it ; it entitles us to the highest inheritance that is in the world. No dignity like that to be a son of the king of heaven, to be of kindred with all the saints, to be of the royal and noble blood. See how the apostle compares one birth with another : John i. 12, 13, ' Who are born, not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God ;' that is, not in that unclean lustful way that the children of the highest nobles and potentates of the earth are begotten. Faith can make the poorest beggar to be richer than the greatest monarch : James ii. 5, ' Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom ?' the sons of the potentates of the world cannot show the like ; to be an heir-apparent of heaven is better than to be possessor of the whole world. Oh, do but consider the inheritance ! the birth is noble, but the estate exceeding large. If you would have me express it to you, I must tell you the best commendation of heaven is silence, when the great voice saith, Come up and see, then we shall know what heaven is ; but now our ear hath received a little thereof in the promises ; therefore I shall speak something of it.

[1.] Consider the evil we are delivered from. We are freed from hell—' They shall not perish,' John iii. 16, and ' shall not come into condemnation,' John v. 24. Consider wicked men, their change is terrible. Wicked men grow upon the bank of hell, and when they are cut down they slip in, and there is their portion. When the inhabitants of hell are described, those that hold hell by tenure, Rev. xxi. 8, ' The fearful and unbelievers,' are in the front. Hell is the portion of unbelievers that never would own the faith, and the portion of apostates that have renounced the faith, and the portion of hypocrites that do but counterfeit faith.

[2.] Consider the good that is prepared for us, the excellency of the reward that God hath prepared for believers ; it is life, and a crown of life ; there is more in the accomplishment than in the promise. The word doth but speak of it in part, prophecy is but in part ; the word is suited to our present estate ; we have not affections and apprehensions large enough for such an excellent glory : God is ever better to his people than his word. The incomparable privileges a believer hath in this life, those pledges and first-fruits they here enjoy, do show the heavenly life must needs be glorious and excellent. The joy of the Holy Ghost is ' unspeakable and glorious,' 2 Peter i. 8 ; heaven therefore must needs be more excellent and glorious. Let me instance in two things. (1.) The perfection of your nature. In heaven there is

no want and no weakness ; the body remains in an eternal spring of youth, the blossoms of paradise are always green and the soul is filled up with God ; every faculty finds a satisfaction. We see what we now believe, and possess what we now love. Alas ! here, though we know indeed that God is, yet we do not know what he is completely. The knowledge of God and the love of God shall be our sole employment, and we shall have constant communion with God, without weakness, weariness, and diversion, and God will be always fresh to us ; as the angels that have beheld his face for these thousand years, yet still delight in God ; we shall never be cloyed, because satisfied. And the perfection of heaven shall be so great, that, besides the personal glory of Christ there shall be a great deal of happiness redound by the glory of his saints : Christ will so set forth the riches of his goodness that he will be 'admired in all them that believe,' 2 Thes. i. 10 ; that is, in the glory that he puts upon the saints. (2.) The communion and company you shall there have. As soon as the soul departs out of the body you shall be carried by angels in triumph to Christ. Believers have the same entertainment which Christ had. Christ was welcomed to heaven with acclamations : Dan. vii. 13, it is said, 'One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.' He was 'brought,' that is, by a train of angels, and there conducted and welcomed to heaven with a Well done, and well suffered for the souls of men ! So shall your souls be carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22. Why into Abraham's bosom ? Christ himself was not ascended, therefore it is said into Abraham's bosom ; but you shall be carried into Christ's bosom. Look, as God did as it were take Christ by the hand when he ascended, therefore it is said, Acts ii. 33, 'Being by the right hand of God exalted.' It principally notes the power of the divine majesty ; but it is an allusion to the entertainment we give to a friend or guest we would welcome, we take them by the hand ; so will Christ entertain you. How sweet will it be when Christ shall give us the right hand of fellowship ? The eye that cannot now endure to look upon the sun shall see the clarity and brightness of the divine essence beaming forth in Christ ; we shall see Christ himself upon his white throne, and see all the holy ones of God : Mat. viii. 11, 'We shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven,' and remain ever in his presence. It is sweet now to meet with the servants of God in an ordinance to praise God ; what will it then be when we shall praise God for ever in the great assemblies of the spirits of just men made perfect ? Consider, all this is made over by faith ; we have the right and title in this world, but the inheritance is in our Father's keeping, it is reserved in the heavens, therefore get and keep faith.

Use 2. It serves to direct you how to exercise and act faith in order to the everlasting state. Five duties believers must perform.

[1.] The first work and foundation of all is to accept of Christ in the offers of the gospel ; there is the foundation of a glorious estate. God excludes none from heaven that receive Christ into their heart. The first gospel commission that Christ signed and sent into the world contained this article—'He that believeth shall be saved,' Mark xvi. 16. And when the jailer said in his trouble, 'What shall I do to be

saved?' it is answered, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved,' Acts xvi. 31; receive Christ into your heart, and he will receive you into heaven. Let us bring our beloved into our beloved's house, into our hearts, and he will then bring you into those mansions that are in his father's house. The primary office of faith is to close with Christ. There the foundation is laid rightly to receive Christ; and when the union is begun there is a pledge of glory: Col. i. 21, 'Christ in you the hope of glory.' The great work of a christian should be to get Christ in him; there is the beginning of heaven.

[2.] It directs you to exercise your faith, to believe the promise of heaven which God hath made. Certainly faith is very weak in this particular, else we should have more ravishment and enlargement of affection. And the reason of this weakness of faith is, partly because it is wholly future, and the promise seems to be checked and defeated by death, and partly, because of our great unworthiness compared with the largeness of the recompense. Guilty sinners have low thoughts of the grace of God: therefore it is a mistake of christians to think they only doubt of their own interest, they doubt of the main promise: Heb. xi. 6, 'He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder,' &c; it is one of the fundamental truths never closely and surely enough laid up in your souls. A guilty creature is apt to straiten the divine mercy; and we cannot believe God will do all this. Consider the riches of God's mercy, and the sufficiency of Christ's merit. God's mercy is one relief; it is rich enough and full enough to give us heaven and glory. When God gives, he will give like himself. The two great perfections of the godhead are immensity and eternity; he will give, with reference to his immensity, 'an exceeding weight of glory;' and, with reference to his eternity, 'an eternal weight of glory;' the apostle mentions both in 2 Cor. iv. 17, &c. This is a benefit fit for God to give. Then ruminatè in your thoughts upon the abundant merit of Christ Jesus; it is a high dignity, but remember it is purchased with a great price. Consider the humiliation of Jesus Christ, that you may believe your own exaltation. Certainly if God can abase himself, we may expect that the creature may be advanced and glorified; and if Christ is clothed with our flesh, we may the better wait to be appareled with his glory. Consider, if Christ's glory could not hinder him from dying for us, certainly our misery cannot hinder us from reigning with Christ; the giving of Christ makes all more credible: Rom. viii. 32, 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' These things will facilitate the belief of heaven.

[3.] Get your own title confirmed; lay claim to your inheritance; seize upon heaven as your right and your portion, so as not only to believe heaven is possible and credible, but that it is your right, and made over to you in the testament of Jesus Christ: 1 Tim. vi. 19, 'That you may lay hold of eternal life.' A christian should possess and enter upon it as his own inheritance—This is mine. It was sweet when God said to Abraham, Gen. xv. 1, 'I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.' Consider the grace that is wrought in you; it is the earnest and the pledge of glory, it is the bud of glory; there-

fore let us 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God,' when we have 'access to his grace by faith,' Rom. v. 2. A christian should look upon his present standing as a pledge of glory. Heaven, the apostle calls it 'the prize of our high calling,' Phil. iii. 14; he that hath given me Christ, and called me, can glorify me. God hath called me to grace that I may wait upon him for glory; therefore rest upon the promise till you come to enjoy it, and until God measures the performance into your bosoms.

[4.] Let us often renew our hopes by serious and distinct thoughts. This is the way to anticipate heaven, by musing upon it: Heb. xi. 1. 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for,' &c. Wherever there is faith it will send out some spies to look within the veil, and see the glory that is there. We should always be thinking and ruminating upon it. If a man were adopted to the succession of a crown, he would always be pleasing himself with the supposition of the glory; so when poor creatures are called to such hopes, they should be creating suppositions and images. Worldly men feast their spirits with worldly hopes; they are thinking of the increase of their trade and promoting their gain: James iv. 13, 'To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain;' so a believer will be sending out spies, and feasting himself with his glorious hopes. A child of God doth translate himself by degrees, and weans himself from the world more and more, and is putting his heart into heaven before his person is there; he is 'seeking things that are above.' Col. iii. 1, and seriously musing upon them; his heart is in heaven before his body—'Our conversation is in heaven,' saith the apostle, Phil. iii. 20: all the business of their lives is laid so that they may look heavenward. As a man beyond the seas, when he hath gotten an estate there, will be forming his business so that he may draw it home; so a christian is compassing this in the whole course of his life, that he may get home, and return to his country. It is a hard matter to get the heart to the study of heavenly things; the children of God should do so. The sabbath-day is the image of heaven, and the communion we have with God in the ordinances is the pledge of that communion we shall have with God in heaven: God hath appointed that day on purpose for our help.

[5.] Another work of faith is earnestly to desire and long after the full accomplishment of glory. Faith bewrayeth itself by desires, as well as thoughts. All things hasten to their centre. Heaven is our home, and we should be hastening thither, not only in thoughts but desires. The world to a christian is but *libera custodia*, a larger prison, where his soul is kept under a restraint, and from the full enjoyment of Christ; therefore a christian's life is spent in desires and groans: Rom. viii. 23, 'We that have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.' Mark, 'we that have.' A man that once hath tasted of the clusters of Canaan, he is weary of the wilderness; so a christian is groaning for home, and for heaven, and for the full enjoyment of Christ, as the apostle saith, 2 Tim. iv. 8, 'They love his appearing.' Their hearts are always drawing towards Christ; if Christ doth but say, I come, he echoes again, 'Come, Lord Jesus Christ, come quickly,' Rev. xxii. 20.

Use 3. To exalt the mercy of God to believers; once sinners, and by grace made believers. Observe the wonderful love and grace of God in three steps—

[1.] That he hath provided such an estate for believers. What a miracle of mercy is this that God should think of taking poor despicable dust and ashes, and planting them in the upper paradise, that they should be carried into heaven and made companions of the angels. How would we wonder if God should take a clod of earth and place it among the stars, that it may shine there! And how much more may we wonder when the Lord is pleased to take us out of the grave, and out of the earth, and lift us up above all heavens! when a man that is made of the dust of the earth is *ἰσάγγελος*, equal to the angels.

[2.] That this state is provided freely, and upon such gracious terms. The terms are faith, and not merit; that is the tenor of the new covenant. Believe and live, not do and live; but works serve to evidence that interest. The Lord hath said, John iii. 36, 'He that believes in the Son of God hath everlasting life;' he hath it, as sure as if he were possessed of it. God will exclude none that will but accept of the offer; therefore if thou dost but rely upon Christ by a true and proper faith, thou art in a safe condition: John v. 24, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life.' Amen, amen. Will you believe Christ upon a double oath, when he plighteth his truth? Let us not straiten the promises; all that believe shall partake of that marvellous glory—all the difficult work was done by Christ—'He was taken from prison and judgment,' Isa. liii. 10, that we might not come into condemnation.

[3.] That God should send up and down the world to offer this salvation to men. The prophet saith, 'The salvation of the Lord is gone forth,' Isa. li. 5; and 'Wisdom hath sent forth her maidens,' Prov. ix. 3. And God hath sent forth his ministers, given us commission to open the grace of the gospel; and yet how is it scorned by men as if heaven were not worth the taking. If we did believe that there were such a glory, and that our eyes should behold it, how would it raise our hearts in thankfulness to God.

Use 4. Comfort to God's children against wants, and against troubles and persecutions, and against death itself.

[1.] Against wants. Let us be content with any condition in the world, since we are so well provided for in a better. Alas! after a short time we shall have no need of these things: Luke xii. 32, 'Fear not, little flock, it is your father's good pleasure to give you a kingdom.' Oh, you need not distract yourselves with worldly cares, there is a kingdom provided! It is grievous, I confess, to see wicked men abound with ease and plenty, and the children of God humbled with wants; but consider, if you have not so much money and means as others have, yet you have a better portion in Christ. God hath given you faith, and you are rich enough in Christ: James ii. 5, 'Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?' Alas! wicked men that have large possessions, yet they may perish, notwithstanding their outward enjoyments.

[2.] It is great comfort against troubles and persecutions. Let us

continue in the faith. There is comfort enough provided for us in the reward of faith: 1 Thes. iv. 18, 'Comfort one another with these words.' What words? why, that Jesus Christ will come in the clouds and meet believers, and they shall be for ever with the Lord. We pitch too much upon a carnal hope, and we think that this way and that way deliverance will come from something we fancy in the world, but we do not look after the glory of the everlasting state. There is an eye of flesh, when there is no arm of flesh—suppositions of worldly help. God will whip us for this vain confidence. We should comfort ourselves that there is an everlasting portion. When the Lord would comfort the patriarchs concerning the murder of Abel, there was the translation of Enoch; so when the apostle St Peter writes to the distressed Hebrews (he had much ado to wean those godly Hebrews from carnal thoughts of a temporal salvation and a temporal Messiah, from the pomp and splendour of an outward deliverer), he proposes this to keep up their joy: 1 Peter i. 9, 'Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.' The encouragements of the world run in another strain, looking for supplies in this and that corner of the world. St. Paul continued in steadfastness, not only under the difficulties but dangers of christianity: 2 Tim. iv. 8, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.' Why?—'For henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,' &c; that is, that he was thinking of what comfort it would be when he should sit in heaven among the glorified saints with his crown of righteousness upon his head. The christian's life is not only a race but a warfare. We must not only run, but fight; therefore the apostle saith, Heb. xii. 1, 'Run with patience the race that is set before you.' Now that which should keep us up is a garland of immortality and glory which Christ hath wreathed for us. The primitive christians, when they were under deep and dreadful persecutions, how did they comfort themselves with the kingdom that is above? The heathens suspected them as if they intended to change the government. When you hear us talking of a kingdom, you vainly and without reason suppose it is a human and earthly kingdom; no, we profess to hope not for an earthly but heavenly kingdom.

[3.] It is a comfort against death itself. There is a glorious state provided for believers. It is the end and privilege of faith to be translated out of the animal and corruptible life into that which is heavenly and immortal. Death to the godly is but a sleep, and the grave but a chamber of rest. Indeed the grave to wicked men is a prison, where their bodies are kept, that they may not infect and corrupt the church; but to the godly their life is not extinguished, but hidden, Col. iii. 3; and when Christ, who is their life, appears, then the veil is taken off, and they shall appear with him in glory. Death to them is a translation; life is not taken away, but changed—changed from a miserable and corruptible life to that which is blessed and eternal. It is true, death takes away the life of the body, which consists in the union of the body and the soul, and this it doth but for a while; but it doth not take away the life of the soul, for that is immortal: it feedeth on your dust, but the soul is in paradise—in Abraham's bosom, and it hath nothing to do with the spiritual life; still it is united to Christ. Look,

as when Jesus Christ died (and Christ and a believer run parallel), the personal union did not cease; so when we die, the union with Christ doth not cease; we die as creatures, as members of the first Adam, but we are sure to live as members of Christ; Jesus Christ is our head in the grave. The death of the wicked is an execution; it is indeed an act of vengeance. God orders death to be a trap-door to let them into hell; but death to a godly man is an act of your Redeemer to translate you, and bestow upon you the happiness of eternal glory.

SERMON XXII.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.—HEB. xi. 5.

THE second general point is the necessity of the holy life.

Doct. 2. Those that would live with God hereafter must learn to please God ere they depart hence.

In the prsuance of this point I shall examine—

1. What it is to please God.

2. The necessity of pleasing God ere we depart hence. Where (1.) The necessity of the thing itself; and there I shall show what respect and ordination the holy life hath to eternal glory. (2.) The necessity of the time, or the necessity of pleasing God, ere we flit out of the present life.

First, What it is to please God—‘He had this testimony, that he pleased God.’ It is a phrase by which the apostle interprets that place in Genesis, chap. v. 24, ‘And Enoch walked with God.’ In the Septuagint it is *ἐνῆρέστῃσε τῷ θεῷ*, Enoch ‘well pleased God;’ so that to please God is to walk with God. The only difference between them is that the one relates to God, the other to ourselves. Pleasing of God implies his gracious acceptation, and walking with God implies our duty. Elsewhere the phrases of pleasing God and walking with God are joined in scripture; as Col. i. 10, ‘That you may walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing.’ Walking notes the fixing and the holding of a settled course in our lives, that our intention and main scope must be to please God; so 1 Thes. iv. 1, ‘We beseech you,’ saith the apostle, ‘as ye have received of us how you ought to walk, and to please God, so you would abound more and more.’ Walking notes the course of life, and pleasing on our part notes the aim of the believer; all his care is to approve himself to God. On our part, it notes our endeavours; on God’s part, the success of our endeavours, his gracious acceptation. By this collation of places, we find that pleasing of God is all one with walking with God; but because I intend to handle the phrase in the full latitude of it, I must make it yet more comprehensive; for by the context you will find that it not only implies ‘walking with God,’ but, which is another distinct phrase of scripture, ‘coming to God,’

as you may see, ver. 6, for after he had said, ' Enoch had this testimony, that he pleased God,' he adds, ' For he that cometh to God,' &c., as if pleasing God and coming to God were all one. So that the whole duty of man in the present life is comprised in this phrase of ' pleasing God ;' and it is explained by these two parts—by ' coming to God ;' and when we are come, ' to walk with God.' I shall inquire—

1. What it is to ' come to God ?'
2. What it is to ' walk with God ?'

First, What it is to ' come to God ?' It is a usual phrase by which faith is set out in scripture. Coming and believing are all one : John vi. 35, ' He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst,'—where coming and believing are put as terms of the same import and signification. Now this coming to God implies several acts of the soul, which must be explained with analogy and respect to outward motion. In every motion there are two bounds and stages from which we come, and to which—*Terminus a quo, et ad quem.*

1. That which we come from is the curse and misery of our natural condition, or else we can never please God ; as the apostle proveth, Rom. viii. 8, ' They that are in the flesh cannot please God.' Mark the distinctness of the phrase, *ἐν σαρκὶ ὄντες*, they that ' are in the flesh ;' they that grow upon the old root, and are in their unregenerate state and condition. There is a great deal of difference between being in the flesh, and having the flesh in us. The children of God, as long as they live in the world, have a mixed principle, they have flesh in them ; but they are not so properly said to be in the flesh, for that notes an absolute immersion in the carnal state, as being in the faith notes a state of believing : 2 Cor. xiii. 5, ' Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith ;' so being in the flesh notes a corrupt and carnal state. Now they that are thus in the flesh can never please God, that is, can never be accepted with him ; so that out of this state we must come if we would perform this great duty. Now this coming out of the flesh is done by several acts, several progresses and tendencies, by which the soul comes from the curse and misery of the carnal state.

[1.] By a sensibleness of our distance from God in such a condition. There is no coming but presupposeth a sense of absence. Guilty creatures are at a vast distance from God. There is a great gulph between us and heaven, an unpassable gulph ; therefore the natural state is expressed by the prodigal's ' going into a far country,' Luke xv. 13. There is a distance and departure from God ; therefore it is said, Eph. ii. 13, ' You were sometimes afar off, but now are made nigh by the blood of Christ ;' afar off, not only out of the church, but out of the state of grace. Naturally we are all at a great distance in our minds and affections from God, and God is at a great distance from us ; heaven is closed up against the access of a guilty creature. Among other things this is one of the fruits of Adam's fall and disobedience ; Adam did not only lose the image of God, but the fellowship of God ; therefore ever since, the soul and God are at great distance and elongation. So the psalmist expresseth it : Ps. lviii. 3, ' The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born,

speaking lies.' There is a strangeness between us and God, and we cannot come mutually to converse together. Now actual sins make the breach wider and greater: Isa. lix. 2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God;' they make us careless of communion with God, and they make God resolved against any fellowship, or having any communion with us. Fallen man, at length, is not only come to be like the beasts, but like the devils; he puts on not only the brutish disposition of the irrational creatures, but the disposition of Satan himself; for the devils cannot endure the thoughts of God—'The devils believe and tremble,' James ii. 19. They hate their own thoughts of God; therefore they cannot endure the presence of Christ, but cry out, Mat. viii. 29, 'Jesus, thou Son of God, art thou come to torment us before the time?' This was the language of the devils; the presence of God was a bondage and a torment to them. So it is with guilty sinners; they cannot endure the presence of God, they speak just like the devil, Job xxi. 14, 'Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' Carnal men hate the thoughts of God. Now the first work of the Holy Ghost is to make the soul to be sensible of this distance and alienation from God.

[2.] There must be also a sense of the misery of such a condition. Men care not for God till they are sore pinched and urged with their own wants. When the prodigal was in a far country (by which the state of nature is represented), there with riot he spent his substance; but 'when he began to be in want,' then he thinks of returning to his father, Luke xv. 14. Men do not desire to recover their communion with God till they are thoroughly bitten with a serious remorse; God sends his hornet and stings their consciences, then they think of running to God. All the addresses to Christ in the days of his flesh began in the want of the creatures; the blind and lame and deaf, some possessed with devils, their maladies and miseries brought them to Christ, else there would not have been so great resort to him. So it is here; men never come to Christ till they are displeased with their natural state. Look, as Joab neglected to give Absalom a visit till he burned his cornfield, 2 Sam. xiv. 30, 31. Joab had never come if he had not set his barleyfield on fire; so the Lord lets in some sensible displeasure into the soul, and they begin to see the misery of a state of distance and alienation from God; and then they think of returning to God, and cry out, Oh, that they might be united to God! Look, as it is with believers in point of heaven, where there is the nearest communion with God;—we are apt to neglect breathing and panting after heaven when it is well with us in the world; but when the world is crucified to us, a dead and useless thing, oh, then, woe is me that my pilgrimage is prolonged! as David, when he was driven from his own palace, and was forced to wander up and down, then he says, 'Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!' Ps. cxx. 5;—so also it is with sinners in point of communion with God in grace: they do not think of returning to God and making up the breaches, and removing the distance between God and them, till God hath made them weary of their carnal state, by letting some sense of his displeasure light upon their consciences.

[3.] There must be a sense of our inability to return and come to

him. Man is a proud creature, and loth to be beholden; he would be happy and sufficient to himself; we would eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; and if we could heal our own wounds we would never return to God. Conviction usually endeth in hypocrisy, when the soul is not wrought off from its own strength. If men can heal conscience, and dress up a form of religion, there they rest; men stay in themselves till this be done. We are all by nature absent from God, and the scripture showeth us our inability to return. The state of fallen man is resembled by the wandering of sheep: Isa. liii. 6, 'All we like sheep have gone astray.' Of all creatures, sheep are most apt to stray, and most unable to return. Swine and dogs know the way home again, but sheep do not: so it is with the soul. Saith Austin, *Domine, errare per me potui, redire non potui*; Lord, I could go astray, and wander by myself, but I knew not how to return. It is Christ's office to bring us to God; God hath set up a mediator to make up our distance from God. It is Jesus Christ alone that must carry the strayed lamb home upon his own shoulder, as the Holy Ghost alludes to that similitude, Luke xv. 5. We can never go to God upon our own feet, but we must be carried home upon the shoulders of Christ; therefore conviction will never be successful till it brings the creature to come and lie down at God's feet as utterly undone, and to say, Jer. xxxi. 18, 'Turn us, Lord, and then we shall be turned.'

2. The next bound and stage in this motion is, to whom we do return, and that is to God; to God, through Jesus Christ, for otherwise he can never be well pleased with us. He hath proclaimed from heaven he will never be pleased with his creatures till they become one with Christ: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And Christ himself, when he professeth the quality of his offices, saith, John xiv. 6, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' Now the several tendencies of the soul towards God are a serious purpose to come to God, an earnest desire, and a constant waiting.

[1.] A serious purpose and practical decree issued forth in the soul. As the prodigal, when he was humbled with want, resolves, Luke xv. 18, 'I will arise, and go to my father;' so there is a resolution, I will arise, and go to God. All grace is founded in this practical decree. So David professeth his own shyness, that for a long time he kept off from God, and there was a distance between him and God; but at length he took up a serious purpose and determination that he would go and humble himself to God: Ps. xxxii. 5, 'I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,' &c. The soul, being inclined by grace, resolves to come to God through Christ. The scripture ascribeth much to this *πρόθεσις*, and settled resolution, that 'with full purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord,' Acts xi. 23. Our own wants and needs will make us full of anxious traverses, but the resolution and decree of the soul comes from grace; for herein lies the formal essence of faith, a resolved casting of the soul upon Christ, which is the issue and result of all those anxious and serious debates that were wont to be in the soul, by which, in the prophet's language, Jer. xxx. 21, 'The heart is engaged to approach to God;' when there is a charge laid upon the soul, by which the soul is engaged to come into his presence.

[2.] There is an earnest desire of enjoying communion with God in Christ: Ps. lxi. 8, 'My soul followeth hard'—or maketh hard pursuit—'after God;' and the pursuance of the soul is by desires; they are evidenced to be gracious, because they are not only after ease and comfort. Such desires may arise from self-love, but after a constant communion with God: Ps. xlii. 1, 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God;' not only after the sweetness and refreshment of grace, but after intimate converse with God: Ps. xxvii. 4, 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord,' &c. And they are after grace as well as after comfort: Ps. cxix. 5, 'Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!' All the endeavours of a natural man are to go away from God; but when a soul is touched with grace, it can never have enough holiness, and enough grace, and enough communion with God.

[3.] Constant and industrious waiting. Many times God makes the soul wait long; he hath waited long upon us, and therefore he makes us to wait long ere we receive the sensible effects of grace. Therefore this coming to God is described by an industrious and constant waiting; as Benhadad's servants watched the king of Israel for the word 'brother,' 1 Kings xx. 33, so the soul waits upon God for one glimpse of his love.' David expresseth this earnest waiting by the waiting of a sentinel or watchman for the dawning of the day: Ps. cxxx. 6, 'My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning.' Look, as the weary sentinel that is stiff and wet with the dews of the night waits for the dawning of the morning, when he may be taken off from his charge and duty; so doth the poor soul wait for the first dawning and breaking out of the rays of grace upon the soul. Now this is not only done by a christian at his first conversion, but after coming and renewing his accesses to God by Christ.

Secondly, What it is to 'walk with God?' That is the original expression, from whence this of pleasing God is taken, Gen. v. 22. Now, what is the meaning of that? Some read it, *Vacavit Deo*—he sequestered himself, to converse with God from the distraction of worldly affairs; others render it, *Ambulavit in timore Dei*,—he walked in the fear of God; the Targum of Jerusalem, He served, or laboured in the truth before the Lord. Others apply it to public office and service in the church, as if it were proper to those that were employed in the function of the priesthood: certainly in such a restrained sense it is taken, 2 Sam. xxx. 35. But this would be a sense too restrained, especially since it is here explained by the apostle by pleasing God. Therefore it notes any solemn profession of religion, or consecration and dedication to God's service; for I find this phrase applied to persons that were of eminent and great holiness, especially in an evil and corrupt age, as here to Enoch, when men degenerated, and a flood was threatened. So it is applied to Noah—'Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation; and Noah walked with God,' Gen. vi. 9, contrary to the corruptions and manners of his age. So it is applied to Levi; when the Lord speaks of the privileges of the house of Levi, he saith, Mal. ii. 6, 'He walked with me in peace and equity, and did

turn many from iniquity ;' that is, he held on God's side against the revolt and rebellion of the other tribes that had gone away after the calves in Dan and Bethel. It noteth a consecration of our lives to God's service, and special communion with him. The metaphor seems to be taken from two friends that agree and resolve to go a long journey, that they will keep the same way and course, as the Lord himself explains his similitude, Amos iii. 3, 'Can two walk together except they be agreed?' In the context God threatens the alienation and estrangement of his presence from them ; for, saith God, You and I have gone hand in hand together ; but now, if you take different courses, we must needs part : as two travellers, whose journey is not the same, cannot long travel together ; so saith God, If you will take that path, I must break off communion with you, and withdraw my presence. Thus you find that he that by solemn vow and agreement with God hath set up his resolution to sequester and consecrate himself to the service of the Lord, is said to walk with God.

Now there are many parallel expressions, that differ only in sound ; as, walking before God ; so saith God to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1, 'Walk before me, and be thou perfect.' It notes the very same thing. Thus Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 3, 'I have walked before thee with a perfect heart.' The parallel phrases in the new testament are 'walking in Christ,' Col. ii. 6 ; and 'walking in the truth,' 2 John 4. In the general it notes special strictness and communion with God in the course of our lives ; more particularly, I shall show you negatively what it doth not imply ; then positively, what it doth imply.

1. Negatively, what it doth not imply.

[1.] Not such a strictness as to abridge ourselves of the holy use of the necessary comforts of this life. I ground this upon that place, Gen. v. 22, 'Enoch walked with God, and begat sons and daughters.' The holy and pure use of the creatures may stand with the strictest rules of profession. There may be a walking with God without monkery, and a sequestration of ourselves from worldly affairs. Enoch had a body as others had, and he needed the refreshment and support of meat, drink, and sleep, and the modest use of conjugal society, and yet walked with God ; that is, in all these comforts he enjoyed God.

[2.] It doth not imply such a strictness and exactness as is wholly exempt from infirmities ; for we read in scripture that Noah was one that walked with God, yet Noah was overcome with drink, Gen. ix. 21. Alas ! in our journey many times carnal affections creep upon us, and bewray themselves by some indecent and impure actions, yet the Lord pardons them out of grace ; though he be displeased with our sins, yet he accepts of our company still, accepts of our persons with Christ. On God's part the society and fellowship is not broken off, because they are interested in Christ ; and on the believer's part the godly do not break off communion with God, because they recover themselves by repentance ; there is a vigilant custody over their ways, but treacherous nature will be tripping now and then, and draw us to inconveniences. Alas ! what then ? The people of God are restless till they rise again, and recover the sense of God's favour ; and when they stumble, they do not lie in the mire of sin, but endeavour to rise and keep on their journey ; their constant purpose is to walk in a constant communion with God.

2. Positively, what is walking with God? There are two terms in the scripture; there is 'walking;' and then walking 'with God.'

[1.] Walking, that doth imply a way, and some motion in that way.

(1.) There must be a way. If we walk with God, it must be in his own ways. Now there are several ways of God; there are ways in which God walks to us, as Ps. xxv. 10, 'All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth.' It is meant of the ways of his providence and dispensations to us; they are all stamped with the character of mercy and truth. And then there are ways in which we walk to God, and with God, and those are spoken of: Isa. ii. 3, 'He will teach us his ways.' And what is that way? that is his revealed will in the word. All our steps are but acts of obedience, conformed to the will of God; our whole course is a declining of evil and doing of good. We walk alone when we go out of the broad path and road of duty: Ps. cxxv. 5, 'They that turn aside to crooked ways shall be led forth with the workers of iniquity.' When they are in any crooked deviations of spirit, which are constant and allowed, they are none of those that God will keep company with. God holds communion with us in all his ways. It is a mistake to think our communion with God is only when we are practising duties of the first table, in the exercises of religion; then we do more intimately converse with him in meditation, prayer, and hearing. This is indeed the heaven of a christian; but God holds communion with us also in the necessary duties of our calling—in the shop, as well as in the closet. A man walks with God, it is true, as travellers sometimes may sit down and refresh themselves, but all the day they keep company. That is somewhat like communion with God in ordinances; but all the day we should keep God company. It is the dotage of foolish men to think all the world must be turned into a cloister, or we can have no company with God. We are indeed to sequester ourselves from the distractions of the world, but not from the employment of the world. There must be an even hand, that we may converse with God in worship, and in the duties of our calling: piety must not make us lazy, nor yet frugal diligence profane.

(2.) Walking doth not only imply choice of a way, but motion. In this motion there are two things—diligence and progress. (1.) An active diligence. Speculation doth not make us christians; no, nor a naked profession. We have a race to run; God cannot endure idlers, and those that merely dress up a profession. Deeds speak louder than words in God's ear; therefore there must be much spiritual diligence to prevent what is displeasing to God, and to practise what is acceptable. Treacherous nature is always apt to draw back and fly out, therefore we had need make a solemn covenant with our mind, will, and senses; with our mind, that we may not think evil, and provoke God with our thoughts; and with our wills, that we do not consent to evil; with our senses, that they may not be inlets to a temptation—all must be under the coercion of a severe discipline: Prov. iv. 23, 'Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.' Christianity was never made for idle ones and lazy persons; as a bird in the air must always be moving on the wing, so we must be always in our flight and motion. There must be a constant diligence to guard the heart, to bring it to a serious performance of the duties of religion, and to keep it upright in duty. (2.) A progress. He that walks makes more steps than one; so a christian is in a continual journey, and God is in his company. Now

we must make a continual progress. It is said, Ps. lxxxiv. 7, 'They shall go from strength to strength, till they appear before God in Zion.' The original word is, they shall go on from troop to troop; for it is an allusion to the solemn journey to the temple thrice a year. This was their ambition, who should outreach one another. When they had overtaken one troop, they strove to overtake the other troop; so in their solemn journey to heaven they shall gather new strength and courage, till they come to the triumphant church, and appear before God in Zion. A christian in his journey is like a man going up a sandy hill, if he doth not go forward, he goes backward; so we go backward when we do not make effectual progress; or like a man rowing against the tide, if he do not ply the oar, he goes backward—if there be not an effectual progress, there will be a sensible decay.

[2.] I come to show what this term 'with God' implies.

(1.) The company and presence of God. He must needs be present with us that walks with us. How can God be absent from any? The apostle saith, Acts xvii. 27, 'He is not far from every one of us.' We are not so near to ourselves as God is to us. Who can keep his breath in his body for a moment if God were not there? God is present with us; but the meaning is this, that we must be present with God. Usually, we are at too great a distance in our minds and affections; therefore walking with God implies actual thoughts of his presence: he must be represented as the beholder of all our thoughts, words, and actions. The world is a great theatre, and the spectators are God and angels. I confess we little think of it; there is a fond levity in our minds. As to us, the world is like a hill of ants; you stand by, and they run up and down, and do not think of your presence and being there: so the Lord stands by and observes all our motions, and we run up and down like busy ants, and do not think of God's presence: there is a great hurry and clutter of business, and few thoughts of God. It is a description of carnal men: Ps. lxxxvi. 14, 'They have not set thee before them.' There are some have never any thoughts of God; they have nothing before their eyes but the world and worldly business. As it is storied of the panther, when she is hunted she hides her head, and when she doth not see the hunters, she thinks she is not seen by them; so we do not think of God, and therefore vainly imagine that he doth not think of us. In heaven, indeed a man doth nothing else but think of God; the divine essence is impressed there upon our minds, it is a part of our glory: Ps. xvii. 15, 'When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness;' we shall endlessly lose ourselves in the contemplation of the divine perfections. Now for the present faith serves instead of vision. God must be acknowledged as present with us, as certainly present as those outward objects with which we do converse, or as a man is whom we see with our bodily eyes. The soul hath its object and its senses as well as the body. There is a commerce between spirits; they see and hear, and converse with one another; so must our souls with God and holy angels. A christian can never be alone; by thoughts his soul converseth with God; they see him whom the world cannot see. We see that according to the different ranks of beings they have different objects: the beasts have eyes and senses to see external objects, and they judge by sight according to the form and outward appearance of things. Men have reason; that is

higher than sight. Reason corrects sense in many things; as a star to sense seems but like a spark or spangle, reason can judge it to be greater—as big as the world. Christians have a higher light; they have faith to see him that is altogether invisible. Now this is the great advantage of religion; to see God by us, with us, and in us; nothing makes a man more holy than this. It is said, 3 John 11, ‘He that doth evil hath not seen God;’ that is, he doth not think of God’s presence; he is as if he had no God to see him. Now, because it is impossible in the present life to have perpetual actual thoughts and considerations of God’s majesty and goodness, there must be set times to represent the truth and glory of his being to the soul, till at length it be habituated to us; and when it is habituated upon every temptation, there will be actual discourses about his presence, especially when you are tempted to secret sins; as Job speaks of his unclean glances, chap. xxxi. 4, ‘Doth he not see my ways, and count all my steps?’ When there is an inward impure thought arising in the heart, it will be checked by this, Is not this liable to God’s eye? as Joseph, when he was tempted to sin by the advantage of privacy, Gen. xxxix. 9, ‘How can I do this wickedness, and sin against God?’ Is any place private to God? The majesty of God will always run upon the thoughts, upon every temptation.

(2.) Familiarity. A beggar may be in the presence of a prince, but cannot be said to walk with him, for that noteth a social communion; a servant may be in company with his master, but he waits upon him, doth not walk with him. But now God hath taken all his saints into the honour of his friends; he is ours in covenant; we do not walk with him as with a stranger, at a distance, and with wary reservation, as with another man’s God, but with our friend—with our God, with our confederate in Christ, one that is in covenant with us. There is abundance of intimate converse and familiarity between God and believers: 1 John i. 3, ‘Truly,’ saith the apostle, ‘our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.’ How? by walking in the light: ver. 7, ‘If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, then have we fellowship one with another;’ that is, we with God, and God with us, as two friends and companions would walk together. There is the familiarity of discourse. It is not a mute, silent walk, but such as is full of sweet and interchangeable discourses, many sweet dialogues between God and us. Sometimes God, and sometimes we begin the conference; sometimes God speaks to the soul, and the heart answers God. God speaks to us by the injection of holy thoughts, by the motions and actual excitations of his grace: and the soul again speaks to God by prayer, meditation, and pious addresses: Ps. xxvii. 8, ‘When thou saidest, Seek ye my face; my heart said, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.’ The heart, moved and inspired by the spirit, gives God an answer. Sometimes, again, we begin the conference; we ask counsel of God in doubtful matters, when the soul is engaged with many anxious traverses, and knows not what to do. Now God answers us by the whispers of his Spirit; as the Israelites, Judges i. 1, ‘Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites?’ In all difficult and uncertain matters they make God their counsellor; and then the Lord leads them by his Spirit, and gives them an answer by casting powerful and overruling considerations into their minds; as David saith, Ps. xvi. 7, ‘My reins instruct me in the night-season.’ In the silence of the night, when we are free from

the hurry of distractions, then God inwardly speaks to us by our own hearts and by our own consciences, and sometimes we crave his help as well as his counsel. There is not a day passeth but there is some occasion offered to confer with God for christians that mind their work and their souls. Carnal men feel no impulses to prayer; they are not only strangers to God, but to their own souls. God and they are unacquainted, and they and themselves are unacquainted; for if men did not converse¹ with themselves, and mind the state of their souls, they would find there are many doubts need to be assailed, many wants to be supplied, many corruptions to be weakened and mortified. But when they leave off conference with themselves, no wonder they are so careless of holding conference and communion with God; when they and themselves are brought together, they will not be quiet till they and God are brought together. David speaks of sevenfold addresses in one day: Ps. cxix. 164, 'Seven times a day do I praise thee.' Oh, what a spirit are they of that can pass whole days and whole weeks and never speak a word to God, never give God a visit! Can these be said to walk with him? Now all our communion and speaking with God does not lie in prayer only; for look, as wants put us upon prayer, so blessings upon praises. The vapours and showers do maintain a mutual commerce between the earth and the air; the earth sends up vapours, and the air sends down showers; so it is here—blessings and praises maintain a mutual communion between God and us; God sends down the shower of blessing, and then we send up the vapour of praise, so that the soul lives in a holy sweet way of communion with him.

(3.) The fear of God. There must be a humble reverence if we keep God company. We are in the presence of the 'great king,' as the prophet calls him, Mal. i. 14; it is his pleasure to hold familiarity with us, but we must never forget our distance; there must be a constant fear and a reverend respect to God. It is a profanation to think of him without reverence, as well as to speak of him without reverence. Our familiarity with God must not be rude and careless, but such as becomes the distance that is between God and us: Micah vi. 8, 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to walk humbly with thy God?' When we converse with God, we must not forget ourselves; we must remember the distance between infinite purity and a poor spotted creature. The angels and blessed spirits that enjoy the highest way of communion with God, they stand in dread of his presence. Fear is a grace in heaven as well as love; the angels clap their wings and cover their faces, and cry, 'Holy, holy, holy,' &c., Isa. vi. 2, 3. Those immaculate spirits are abashed at the glory of his holiness, and do not only praise, but fear him; for fear is an essential respect that is due from the creature to the godhead. It is true, faith is a grace which suits with our present estate, therefore it vanisheth in heaven, where we have full enjoyment; but fear is a necessary respect of the creature to the supreme majesty; there is a reverent and awful, but a delightful dread in the angels; they have higher apprehensions of his holiness than we have, therefore reverence him the more. We have but low thoughts of that which is his chiefest glory, his holiness, therefore we do not reverence him as the angels do. Now if the angels are

¹ Qu. 'Did converse?'—ED.

abashed at his presence, despicable dust and ashes have more cause to fear. Why? because we have sin in us, and are not out of danger of punishment. But angels are out of danger of punishments; they do not fear God for his commutative justice, but only reverence him for his holiness; but here we have sin in us, and can never have an absolute assurance of God's favour, therefore we have more cause to stand in dread. We may sadly reflect upon this, because we are guilty of such a negligent security, and we converse with God rather as an idol of our own fancy than a king of glory; there is not a reverent respect upon the soul. Oh, consider, there is practical atheism in irreverence! It is hard to say which is worse, to deny God, or not to fear him; an atheist makes him nothing, and a careless person makes him an idol—*Malo de me dici nullum esse Plutarchum, quam malum esse Plutarchum*; and in the issue it is all one to deny his being and not to acknowledge his perfection, and to behave ourselves suitably. It is worse to behave ourselves to God as if he were a weak God, than absolutely to deny his being; but, alas! we never tremble but when he thunders, and when God shows himself terrible in some instance of judgment and vengeance. Alas! it is much for us, in our prayers and supplications, to be awful in our special addresses to God, and yet fear is a grace that is never out of season and exercise: Prov. xxviii. 14, 'Happy is the man that feareth always;' not that perplexeth himself with scruples and terrors—that is a torment, not a blessedness—but that bears a constant reverent respect to God's presence. So again, Prov. xxiii. 17, 'Be thou in the fear of God all the day long.' In secret and in company, in the shop and in the closet thou art still in God's company, and still God is to be feared. But you will say, This is very hard, to keep the soul under an actual awe and trembling, and in the fear of God; therefore there must at least be a habitual awe; that is, a reverent and serious constitution of spirit, so that a man would not do anything that is unseemly in God's sight.

(4.) A care of obedience, or a holy ambition to please God and approve ourselves to him. Now in this pleasing of God there must be—

1st. An avoiding of whatever is grievous and displeasing to him. He that seeth God to be always present certainly he will be afraid to displease him; he will be always reasoning and discoursing thus in his soul, How will God like this with whom I am present, and before whom I am? You know the question of Ahasuerus concerning Haman, when he threw himself upon the queen's bed, Esther vii. 8, 'Will he force the queen before my face?' so, should I go about to grieve God before his face? to betray his cause, and comply with his enemies when he looks on? It is impudence to sin before any looker-on,—before a man, or before a child; but this in the presence of the just, powerful, and avenging God. Would a man ease himself, or void his excrements, before a prince? The comparison is not too homely, for this is the type which God gave his ancient church. There was a law, that if they went aside to ease themselves, they should cover their filth with a paddle, 'for the Lord walketh in the midst of the camp,' Deut. xxiii. 12-14. God would teach them by this similitude to avoid whatever is unseemly in his presence. There must be constantly manifested a respect to his presence; so Joseph: Gen. xxxix.

9, 'How shall I do this wickedness, and sin against God?' Sin is, on our part, a departure and a going out of God's presence; and as to God, it makes him to break off the journey—'Can two walk together except they be agreed?' Amos iii. 3. He cannot walk with us, and draw nigh to us, if we turn aside to those crooked paths.

2dly. There must be a constant care of those things God likes of, not only a declining of evil, but a doing of good. Take one disposition that is very pleasing to God. When your hearts are carried out wholly to spiritual things, then God delights to hold company and communion with such. When Solomon desired wisdom, and passed by riches and honour, it is said, 'The thing exceedingly pleased God,' 1 Kings iii. 10; so when the bent and strength of your desires are carried after spiritual blessings, that you may be wise to salvation, the thing is very pleasing to God.

3dly. This pleasing of God implies the uprightness of our aim, that the man is as good as the action. The main intent of the soul must be to please God, as his will must be the rule of your life; so his glory must be the end of your lives: Gen. xvii. 1, 'Walk before me, and be thou perfect.' God can look into the bottom of the heart; he weighs the spirits, and knows what are the inward propensions, the inward inclinations, the proposal we make to ourselves; so Hezekiah: Isa. xxxviii. 3, 'I have walked before thee with a perfect heart.' The heart must be sincere and rightly set, the aim must be to please God; negatively, it must not be to please ourselves, or to gratify the flesh in the conveniences of the present life, in outward profits and delights: Rom. viii. 12, 'We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.' A man that walks with God must dissolve the natural contract and agreement that is between him and the flesh; we are come under the bond of the new contract to please God. Look, as Jesus Christ, when he came to purchase this communion and this society with God, it is said, Rom. xv. 3, 'He pleased not himself;' so when we come to enjoy this communion, we are not to please ourselves, and so also our aims must not be to please men. He is nothing in christianity that doth not count the judgment of man a small thing, 1 Cor. iv. 3. When we give up ourselves to walk with God, we must remember we are not to seek for the humour of men: 1 Peter iv. 3, 'That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.' Men of sociable, sweet dispositions are loth to displease those with whom they do converse; and so they are mightily prone to carnal compliance. The apostle disclaims this, Gal. i. 10, 'If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Jesus Christ.' The Pharisees were angry when Paul revolted from their confederacy, when he that was their prime instrument turned preacher of the gospel. Company and humouring of men many times is a mighty snare to sordid spirits, but if it be done out of worldliness, it is worse; many men would please God so as they may not infringe their secular interest. Oh, consider, God will never walk with us as long as mammon is in company, when the bent of the heart is set that way: the world is to be our servant, not our fellow. When we walk with God we must have no other companion but God alone. Walking with God is usually a counter-motion to the times. Enoch, and Noah, and Levi,

walked contrary to the times ; it is an owning of God when others forsake him. But then, affirmatively, the great aim must be pleasing God alone ; he is our companion. This must be the aim and scope of our lives, to please God ; we must study to please him, and give him content in all things.

Quest. But if you will ask, Whether an actual intention of pleasing God in every good action be always necessary ?

Ans. It is very convenient, but not absolutely necessary. A son is careful to please his father, though he doth not always actually think of it ; there is a general and habitual intention, though in every act of duty the thought be not continued. Many good actions may proceed from the force of the habitual intention, when the actual intention or thought ceaseth ; as an arrow from the aim of the archer, when his eye is taken off from the mark ; or rather, a man that journeys to such a place doth not always think of his journey's end ; but we should retain it in our thoughts as much as we can, that the heart may be more upright, and for the prevention of evil and carnal reflections : Rom. vii. 21, 'When I would do good, evil is present with me.' In short, a purpose of humouring the world or displeasing God cannot stand with grace.

(5.) A continual dependence upon God and a confidence of his assistance : Gen. xvii. 1, 'Walk before me ;' it is different from the phrase of Enoch walking with God ; that is, maintain a courage and confidence becoming my presence. A man may trust himself in God's company and defence. They that are always in the king's presence are sure of his favour and defence if they be in distress ; God is at hand, and they may cast themselves into the bosom of providence in all dangers and troubles, and wait for the divine help. Usually we torment ourselves with unnecessary cares and fears about the event and success of things : a man that is in God's presence may refer himself to his care and protection. That this is plainly intended in this exposition, is clear by what is said in Acts ii. 25, 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for here he is at my right hand, that I should not be moved.' When a man walks with God, whenever he enters into the combat and list, God will be his second, ready to fight for us, in us, and by us. To open that expression, 'He is at my right hand.' When a man is at the right hand of God, that notes honour and glory put upon the creature ; but when God is at the right hand of man, that notes help and aid. If the world offers foul play in our christian course, it is in God's presence ; our second will come to our rescue. He that walks with God walks safely ; when the devil is at our right hand, God is there to check the devil. The way to heaven is a dangerous journey, it lies through a howling wilderness ; we shall meet with wolves and bears in the shape of men, and therefore woe be to him that is alone ; but now when we have such good company, we may adventure freely, when God himself is our guide and leader.

(6.) Contentation. You must give up yourselves to God's disposal to shorten or lengthen out the journey as he shall see cause ; for you walk with God, and follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes ; so as, wherever God leads you, you must follow. Heaven is the place of rest, but for the time of our translation we must not be our own carvers.

It is good to groan and long for home, but still we must wait God's leisure; it is he that appoints the way and the stages of the journey. It is said of David, Acts xiii. 36, 'After he had served his own generation by the will of God, he fell asleep.' The will of God doth determine how long David was to serve him. We have a wise companion, and he knows the way to glory better than we, and he knows by what methods to bring us to glory. When God hath no further work to do by us, then he will give us our wages: Job xiv. 14, 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come;' our time is appointed, therefore we must wait. The walk in paradise is more pleasant than in the garden of the church; but the time of change is appointed; if it comes sooner than we expect, it is no loss; if it comes later, we must be contented. They that walk with God in earth cannot be separated from him in heaven, therefore it is no loss; for if you change place, you shall not change your company; you shall be nearer to him, and have sweeter communion with him, and you shall walk with him in a more glorious way. The heavenly state is described thus, Rev. iii. 4, 'They shall walk with me in white;' that is, in perfect joy and innocency, without sin and without temptation. Our garments here are often defiled, black, and spotted; but there 'they shall walk with me in white.' When we walk with God in the upper garden of paradise, there we shall have the same company in a better way; or, suppose the Lord should leave you to be harassed and worn out with the troubles of the world, if it come later, yet we must wait. The wise God knows when we are fittest for glory, and when glory is fittest for us: Job xiv. 5, 'His days are determined, and the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;' days and months to a precise time, all are defined by God. We live not at our own pleasure, nor at the pleasure of any creature; therefore though your pilgrimage be prolonged, you must be contented. Consider the precedent, Gen. v. 22, 'Enoch walked with God three hundred years:' he spent three hundred years in communing with God—a long age, and, as matters then went, very degenerate. But consider, the way should not be very tedious when we are in God's company; therefore when in trouble, we must refer ourselves to our guide, and with meekness, quietness, and contentation, we must follow him.

Use, Let me exhort you to come to God, and to walk with him; you have all the encouragement in the world to do both.

1. Come to God. You may come, and you must come; you may come, you are invited—'Come to me,' saith Christ, Mat. xi. 28. Though you are poor, guilty sinners, harassed and worn-out with your own fears and dissatisfactions, you may come, and you must come; either you must come to Christ, or lose eternal life: and it is very sweet to come to Christ. All good is in the chiefest good; the nearer we are to God, the nearer to the centre of rest and happiness; therefore every day and in every duty make nearer accesses and approaches to God by Christ.

2. When you are come to God, walk with him. Consider what encouragement you have: God is our companion, the Son is our saviour, and heaven is our patrimony; the way is safe, and the end

is glorious. It is a great honour when a great man will take you into his company and walk with you. The Lord hath put this honour upon all his saints, that they shall walk with him in a way of federal communion.

SERMON XXIII.

For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.—
HEB. xi. 5.

Secondly, Now I come to the other branch, to confirm the point by showing—(1.) The necessity of pleasing God; (2.) The necessity of pleasing God in the present life.

First, The necessity of pleasing God; for whosoever will live happily with the Lord in glory must have a care to please him in the present life.

1. Because this is the means and condition without which we shall never come to enjoy God; it is the way to fit the sons of God for glory, though not the cause of glory: Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' The apostle presseth there peace and holiness; but mark what he saith of holiness—without which no man shall see the Lord. He presseth them to follow both; but observe the difference: we must follow peace, that we may walk with men; and holiness, that we may walk with God. They that prefer peace before holiness may gain favour with men, but they lose fellowship and communion with God. God's stipulation with mankind is not made up together of promises; he promiseth much, but he requireth something; as he giveth many blessings, so he requireth many duties; not for which, but without which we shall never be blessed; it implies not a condignity of merit, but an ordinability to the reward. It is required of all those that will be saved: holiness is appointed by God as the way, heaven as the end of the journey. Wherever the scripture speaks either of the decrees of God, or those ordinances of judgment and justice by which he will govern the world, or the covenant of God, there is a duty left upon man. Thus the apostle, Eph. ii. 10, 'We are created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk therein.' They are not the cause of our salvation, or the merit by which we acquire a right, but they are the way and path by which we get to it. There is a great deal of dispute about the necessity of walks; there is *necessitas presentivæ* though not *efficientivæ*. Observe the constitutions of heaven, this is the order: he will appoint first holiness, then happiness; there is no causality, but order. God's decrees have put salvation into this way and course—first faith, then works, then glory: Eph. i. 4, 'He hath chosen us, that we should be holy.' The eternal counsel of God respecteth both the end and the means. Holiness is a necessary effect of election, and it must have a room; it is necessary, not as a cause, but as a condition. We are not chosen because we were holy, but that we might be holy: Rom. viii. 29,

¹ Qu. 'Works?'—ED.

‘Whom he did foreknow he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.’ This was the solemn appointment of God, that those whom he had marked out by his own choice and eternal counsel to be heirs of the grace of life should be conformed to his Son, first in holiness, then in glory. God hath bound himself by promise to deal this way with the creatures, that whosoever shall embrace the agreement of the new covenant shall be saved.

2. There is a necessity of it by way of sign, and as a pledge of our living with God hereafter—‘Before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.’ This is that testimony which witnesseth to us our interest in the everlasting state. When holiness is our care, it is a token that heaven is our portion: God will not own us for his own, neither can we take this honour upon ourselves unless we have this mark. The merit of Christ, apprehended by faith, gives us our right and title; but holiness doth evidence and confirm our right and title; we can have no assurance till then. Good works are *eternæ felicitatis præsentia*, the necessary forerunners and presages of eternal happiness. Never can there be a sound hope towards God where there is not a religious and conscionable desire of walking before God in all well-pleasing; otherwise men do but confute their hopes, and live down their own expectations. In establishing assurance there is a double witness—the spirit and conscience: both have a voice; the Spirit hath a voice, but none can hear it but holy persons. The person must be qualified first to receive the testimony of the Spirit; for the Spirit when he comes to witness to us, doth not reveal to us so much the purposes of God as the gifts of God: 1 Cor. ii. 11, ‘For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?’ The Spirit’s testimony is always subsequent to that of the renewed conscience; for the Spirit’s testimony is nothing but the evidencing and owning of its own work; and the testimony that we have from the Holy Ghost is not intuitive, but discursive; the Spirit doth not comport at first with such a report as this is, that mercy is prepared for thee from all eternity; but thou art holy, and therefore thou art in a state of grace and favour. Then conscience hath a voice. Now the testimony of conscience ariseth from comparing our actions with the rule, the conversation of men with the stipulation of God. By a single apprehension it looks up to what God requires, then by reflection how we answer it; and so gives sentence: Heb. xiii. 18, ‘We trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly;’ 1 John ii. 3, ‘Hereby we know that we know him, because we keep his commandments.’ The soul is persuaded that it hath an interest in God because it keeps his commandments; there is some ground and warrant for the report of conscience. General hopes are but a deceit, and fond credulity without ground.

3. It is necessary by way of preparation. Those that walk with God are meet to live with God; they change their place, but not their company; here they walk with God, and there they live with him for ever. The vessels of glory are first seasoned and prepared with grace; God’s qualifying grace makes way for his rewarding grace: Col. i. 12, ‘Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.’ Alas! what should carnal and sensual persons do in heaven?

those blessed mansions that are above would be to them as melancholy and obscure shades. How can they endure the perpetual presence of God, that now cannot endure the thoughts of God? or how can they delight in the communion of saints to whom now good company and holy conference is as a prison? how can men leap from the lap of delight into the bosom of Abraham so suddenly? what should swine and dogs do with such a holy place in the upper paradise? Heaven is an intimate familiarity with God, and therefore it is not for mere strangers; heaven is said to be prepared for us, and we are said to be prepared for heaven. Christ is gone in person to heaven to prepare a place for us, and hath left his Spirit upon earth to prepare us for heaven; and this is the reason of those expressions so often used in scripture, of being 'worthy of eternal life,' and walking 'worthy of the high prize of our calling,' and 'worthy of God:' the meaning is, beseeching and becoming. We are put into a holy meetness and fitness for such holy rewards: Rev. iii. 4, 'They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy;' that is, fittingly disposed and prepared; as in another case, Mat. x. 11, 'Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy;' that is, prepared by the Holy Ghost to receive the doctrine of life, and to entertain God's messengers; inquire who hath a good report and are lovers of religion, ready to entertain the word and the messengers of the word. So here they are 'worthy;' that is, fittingly disposed, meet to receive such a portion in glory. It is not any equality of worth that is implied there; but that which is meet, convenient, and becoming. God works in the hearts of believers an aptitude for blessing, then he bestows them upon them; first, he gives the heavenly mind, then the heavenly state; the new creature for the new heavens and the new earth. Wicked men have a portion suiting to them, and becoming their affections; sensual pleasures for a sensual heart; so God's children, before they have their portion, they are suited to it, that they may have a portion suited to their heart. This is the great mercy of God, that he will never advance our condition till he hath changed our hearts. A king may advance a slave to a high place of trust, but he cannot give him gifts and fitness; he may change his state, but he cannot change his nature; but God, before he gives heaven, he gives a heavenly inclination; and before he gives communion with himself in glory, there is communion with himself in grace.

Secondly, The necessity of pleasing God in the present life—'For before his translation,' it is said, 'he had this testimony, that he pleased God.' There is a time for all things, and the time of pleasing God is in the present life.

1. Because this is the time of grace. Here we are invited to walk with God: now we have the means, then we have the recompenses; here Christ saith, Mat. xi. 28, 'Come to me,' in a way of choice communion; then, Mat. xxv. 34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom.' Now we come to receive grace, then we come to him to receive glory; here God makes an offer, and there he makes it good. Upon gospel terms he holds out the golden sceptre, therefore here is the time to please God. When the angels came with a song to publish the tidings of salvation, mark the burden of their song: Luke ii. 14, 'Peace upon earth, and good-will towards men.' Now the Lord offers

to be reconciled: the church is the seminary of heaven, and here we are trained up for glory. We shall never have such golden seasons again; you shall hear of no gospel afterward; there shall be no more tenders and offers of grace. Zanchy speaketh of some that had a fancy that the gospel should be preached in the other world to those that never heard of Christ in this world—to children, Turks and pagans, alleging that place, 1 Peter iii. 19, 'By which he went and preached to the spirits in prison;' but this is as a fancy and nothing to thy case. Now only doth Christ say, 'Come!' If you refuse him now, he will hereafter say, 'Depart!' This is the season of grace.

2. This is the time of our exercise and trial. As death leaves us, so judgment finds us; our everlasting woe or weal hangs upon the present moment. Hereafter is not the time of labour, but of rewards and punishment. Then there will be no more room for repentance, though we should seek the blessing with tears, Heb. xii. 17; therefore here is, the time of our exercise and of our work; we are now put to our choice. There is no triumph without warfare—'They are not crowned except they strive lawfully,' saith the apostle; that is, according to the laws of the race, 2 Tim. ii. 5; so we cannot expect our crown till we have been exercised in the duties of holiness. They that live in the Lord die in the Lord, and they shall hereafter reign with the Lord. It is said of ungodly men, 'their iniquities shall find them out,' Num. xxxii. 23; and of the godly 'their works follow them,' Rev. xiv. 13: they reap the fruit of their works in the other world. We may observe, many live as if they never thought to die; therefore when they come to die they die as if they never thought to live. Oh consider, your works do not die when you die; they are kept in a safe register, and they will find you out: Eccles. xi. 3, 'If the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall lie.' As we live, so we die, and so we shall arise and come to judgment. Here is the time of our trial and exercise. Look, as the Jews upon the sixth day were to provide for the sabbath, and therefore they were to gather two omers of manna then; the present life is our sixth day, here we are to make provision; they that did not provide on the sixth day had nothing on the sabbath; so we shall have nothing to do with the everlasting sabbath unless we make provision in the present life. Here we are *in via*, then *in termino*. Death will at length cut us down and deprive us of further opportunity: Eccles. ix. 10, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.' When this life is ended, all opportunity of doing good ends with it. The next life is not *seculum operis*, but *mercedis*. Therefore now we must be making out our qualification: Gal. vi. 10, 'As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.' Opportunities are passing, and being passed will not return; they are confined within the narrow precincts of the present life. Afterwards, the time of our trial and exercise is past: John ix. 4, 'I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.'

3. The sooner we begin the better.

[1.] Because you make a necessary work sure, and put it out of

doubt and hazard. The time of this life is uncertain : James iv. 14, 'Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow ; for what is your life ? it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.' And a work of necessity should not be left on per-adventures ; therefore we must bestir ourselves without delay. We know not how soon opportunity will be over ; it cannot be done too soon, it may be too late, and therefore it is good to be of the surer side. Ludovicus Capellus telleth us, out of Rabbi Jonah's book of the mystery of repentance, that when a disciple came to his teacher to know what was the fittest time to repent in, he answered, 'One day before death,' meaning presently ; for we have not assurance of another day : Prov. xxvii. 1, 'Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' Our greatest works, and of most absolute necessity should be done first, and have the quickest despatch, lest it be too late before we go about them. Oh, woe to us, if God should call us off before we have minded coming to him, and walking with him !

[2.] In point of obedience, God presseth to 'now.' God doth not only command us to please him, but to do it presently : Heb. iii. 7, 8, 'To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.' God standeth on his authority, and will have a present answer. If he say, 'To-day,' it is flat disobedience for you to say, 'To-morrow : ' 2 Cor. vi. 2, 'Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.' At this instant you are charged in his name, as you will answer the contrary. You say, no ; I will please the flesh a little longer. It were just with God, if you refuse him, never to call you more.

[3.] In point of ingenuity. We receive a plenteous recompense for a small service. When a man thinketh what God hath provided for them that love him and serve him, he should be ashamed that he should receive so much and do so little ; and therefore he should redeem all the time that he can, that he may answer his expectations from God. Shall we adjourn and put off God to our decrepit time, when he hath provided for us eternal happiness ? Can a man, which hath any ingenuity in his breast, be content to dishonour God longer, and grieve his Spirit longer, provided that at length he may be saved ? Those that have any due sense of God's kindness, or their own duty, will think God hath been too long kept out of his right, and that all the time that remaineth is too little to express our love and thankfulness to him : 1 Peter iv. 3, 'For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles.' Men that delay, do in effect say, Let me despise thy commands and abuse thy mercies a little longer ; but then, when my lusts are satisfied and youthful heats are spent, I will see what I can do to be saved. What baseness of spirit is this !

[4.] It is our advantage to begin betimes, both here and hereafter.

(1.) Here. The sooner you begin to please God, the sooner you have an evidence of your interest in his favour, more experience of his love, more hopes of being with him in heaven ; and these are not slight things. When once you taste the comfort of them, you will be sorry that you had begun no sooner ; as Paul complaineth, 'that he was born out of due time,' 1 Cor. xv. 8. He lost the advantage of seeing Christ in the flesh, and personal conference with him, and so you will lose many sweet visits of love and experiences of grace that otherwise might fall to your

share: Rom. xvi. 7, 'Who were in Christ before me.' An early acquaintance with Christ bringeth many benefits with it of peace, and comfort, and joy, and hope, which others that set forth later want. The consolations of God should not be vile and cheap with us; if you were acquainted with them, you would leave your husks for bread in your Father's house.

(2.) The sooner you begin with God, the greater will your glory be hereafter; for the more we improve our talents here, the greater will be our reward in heaven: Luke xix. 16-19, 'Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds; and he said, Well, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds; and he said likewise to him, Be thou over five cities.' See Christ's answer, Mat. xx. 23, 'To sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.' There are degrees of glory set forth, by sitting on the right hand to some, and left hand to others; as in hell, there is a hotter and cooler judgment: certainly, they that have long pleased God and made it the whole business of their lives shall have larger measures of happiness.

Use 1. If there be such a necessity of pleasing God, and giving up ourselves to the severities of religion, then it serves for reproof of divers sorts of persons; as—

1. Those that, though they live as they list; as if they were sent into the world for no other purpose but to gratify their carnal desires, yet lay as bold a claim and title to heaven as the best; they doubt not but glory belongs to them, though they cannot make good their title. It is true, here in this world is the time of God's patience, and God keeps on open house; here the wicked, as well as the godly, have some taste and some experience of God's bounty. The world is a common inn for sons and bastards, but heaven is a pure place; no unclean thing enters there. There are no swine in the upper paradise. At the great assembly and congregation, God will make a separation: Ps. i. 5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment; nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' Wicked men shall not be able to look Christ in the face, they shall not mingle themselves with that glorious assembly of saints—'The place of dogs is without,' Rev. xx. 15. There is no point more pressed in religion than the separation God will then make, and no point less granted; for we all flatter ourselves with general and deceitful hopes of mercy: 'Know ye not,' says the apostle, 1 Cor. 6, 10, 'that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven? Be not deceived,' &c. We are all apt to deceive ourselves with a general loose hope. Universal salvation is written in the heart by nature; that is the reason why we are so prone to hearken to the doctrine of universal grace. Men are apt to deceive themselves with such a lying hope. Our desires do by degrees settle into opinions. Careless people would fain have it so; they would have God guide and govern the world after another manner; they would have heaven, and they would not be at the pains of strictness to conquer lusts and subdue unruly affections; they would not be at the trouble to dedicate and give up themselves to the will of God; and by little and little their desires

grow into hopes. Men will never be persuaded that God will ever damn his own creature; therefore, as ignorant people, they say, He that made me will save me, though there be express words to the contrary, Isa. xxvii. 11; and therefore they please themselves with a naked hope of mercy, without making good their own interest. Consider, you have no liberty to sin by Christ's death. Christ died to gain you to please the Lord, and walk before him in all holiness: 1 Peter i. 18, 'Forasmuch as you were redeemed not with corruptible things, from your vain conversation,' &c.

2. It reproves them that think that every slight profession of the name of God will serve the turn; no, you must walk with God and please God. We are mistaken in the business of pleasing God; it leaves a great burden of duty upon the creature; it notes a universal constant care to please God at all times and in all things; it is resignation and giving up yourselves to the will of God: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you, brethren, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Now worldly men that have not God in all their thoughts, or else wholly devote themselves to humour their own lusts, to please themselves and to please the flesh, not to please the Lord, yet, because of some slight acts of duty, they will foster and cherish great hopes in their bosoms. Oh, consider, you that please the flesh and deny yourselves in no carnal delight, you must look for your reward from the flesh. If you have lived as those that would gratify yourselves in all your carnal desires, you are not meet for heaven. Or else men will rest in this; they will please God where they do not displease themselves, or wrong or endanger their own interest. Alas! this is man-pleasing and walking with mammon, not with God; they mind duty only, as it lies in mammon's road. Consider, walking with God is not a step or two—practising duty now and then; but a 'walking worthy of the Lord,' as the apostle saith, 'unto all well-pleasing,' Col. i. 10. It requires much severity of life and solemn sequestration from the distractions and pleasures of the world, a great deal of self-denial, and still waiting upon God in holy services. Now, men that are only varnished over with the general name of christians are far from this. Oh, consider, what God is, and what you expect from him, and what in reason is suitable hereunto! God will not be put off with anything; you are 'to walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory,' 1 Thes. ii. 12. Oh, but we cannot endure to hear of such strictness, and think it is rank puritanism. But do you know that God is a great king, and will not be served with what costs you nought, you that wipe your mouths, and think sins are but petty slips and small escapes; that God's patience will suffer all and his grace pardon all; that no man can be perfect; that the purest saints have fallen into as great faults; and that you shall do well enough, though you be not so strict and so nice? Oh no, it cannot be; these are vain thoughts—spider's webs, sorry fig-leaves, sandy foundations; all these notions the scripture useth in this case. Our presumption of the end is upheld by our presumption of the means; it is not presumption simply to think you shall be saved, but to make every slight act a ground of hope. Men have no solid grounds of assurance, but usually make up in the

strength of persuasion what is wanting in the grounds and warrant of it, as if bold-faced confidence would serve instead of duty.

3. It reproves those that would please God, but with a limitation and reservation so far as they may not displease men, or displease the flesh. Oh, if you please God, it requireth a solemn sequestration for his use, much self-denial, 'to be followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises,' Heb. vi. 12. There is none went to heaven but one time or another they were sorely put to it; and God will try whose interest is greater in us; the fleshly interest or his interest, whether sensible things have a greater hand and power over us, or his promises: the best have need to look how they acquit themselves upon trial.

4. It reproves those that adjourn and put off the work of religion from time to time, till they have lost all time; that use to put off God to the troubles of sickness or the aches of old age. It is Satan's great artifice to cheat men of the present season by future promises. Oh, consider, the work is great, and life is short! If we did live as many years as days, or as many years as there be days in the year, as Enoch did, yet there would be enough to take up our time. The journey to heaven is long, and we have but little time; we can never outgrow our duty; still there would be room for abounding in the work of the Lord. Consider again, no season can be fitter than the present time. But still we want something; in youth we want wisdom; and in age we want vigour and strength; and, besides, it is very uncertain whether God will give us another opportunity. We have not a lease of tomorrow; if we had, it is doubtful whether ever we shall have a heart to make use of it. We cannot presume of our own hearts, because grace is not in our own power; we cannot presume on God's mercy, for he hath made no absolute promise; we cannot presume of any singular efficacy that will be in old age or in death, because moral means do not work without special grace. Although we see we are declining every day, yet we are as the bad thief who had one foot in hell; yet he mocks and scoffs at Jesus Christ, and dies blaspheming; nay, we have shrewd presumptions of the contrary, because there will be a greater disability either in respect of ourselves or grace—and use makes our hearts readier to sin; and by long continuance the habit of displeasing God will be strengthened. Satan is never more busy than when life draweth to an end, and thou hast never less strength to resist him. Long use makes your hearts obdurate, and long resistance will grieve the Spirit of God, and sins of an unregenerate life will make death more terrible: and therefore do not adjourn and put off God. Certainly when a man is unfit for every common secular employment, he is much more for spiritual; the trouble of pains and aches, and decay of spirit, and the diversion of business, and the importunity of Satan's temptations, these things should put us upon taking hold of the present season. It is to be suspected, when we will not leave our sins till we leave our lives, how shall we then distinguish nature from grace? or that it is more than natural affrightment, arising from the sense of disease and pain, or natural desires of happiness? And besides, the invitations of scripture call for a present obedience, a yielding up ourselves, not upon force, as when we come to die; but they call for

willing and ready obedience : Heb. iii. 13, 'While it is called to-day;' and Eccles. xii. 1, 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth :' in thy young and flowery age, when thou mayest more glorify God. And then we do not know how long the day of grace will continue ; the day of grace is not always as long as a man's life : the Lord may pass the sentence of obduration and final hardness upon us. Alas ! corruptions will grow upon us, and carnal desires grow up with us, and our affections grow more stiff and hardened every day, as letters in the bark of a tree. Consider, a man cannot come soon enough into the arms of mercy, nor soon enough out of Satan's power ; a man can never too soon begin his journey towards heaven. If you did but mind your salvation in earnest, you would be more in haste. The heirs of promise are described to be 'those that fly for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before them,' Heb. vi. 18 ; there is an avenger of blood at their heels, they see wrath pursues after them ; therefore they fly for refuge. And consider again, there is little love of God showed in this, that you repent only when you can sin no longer ; when you can be content God should be dishonoured for a long time, provided that at length you should be saved. Oh, do but consider what an ill requital you make to the Lord for his purposes of grace towards you ! he thought of us before there was hill or mountain. As long as God is God, he is the God of the elect : Ps. ciii. 17, 'From everlasting to everlasting thy loving-kindness is to them that fear thee.' If God hath loved us from one eternity to another, what ingratitude is this to confine him to the odd corner of our lives, to the aches and phlegm of old age ! Again, it is a great honour to seek the Lord betimes. Mnason is famous for this in scripture, because he was 'an old disciple :' and the apostle speaks of Andronicus and Junia, 'who were in Christ before me,' Rom. xvi. 7—sooner than me in grace. It is a mighty privilege to be in Christ before others.

Use 2. If there be no hope of living with God without pleasing God, oh, then make it the aim and scope of your lives to please the Lord ! You that have already given up yourselves to the will of God had need to be quickened again and again to make good your resolution. See how earnestly the apostle speaks : 1 Thes. iv. 1, 'We beseech and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us, how you ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.' This is the work and business of your lives, to keep company with God, to enjoy him in a gracious communion. Take a direction or two what you shall do ; take the commandment for your rule ; take the promises for your encouragement ; and make the glory of God your great aim. Look to the commands that you do not err ; look to the promises that you may not be disconsolate ; look to the glory of God that you may be sincere, and keep on in an even course of holiness.

1. Look to the commandments as your rule : Micah vi. 8, 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ?' God hath told you what will please him. Because the characters that are engraven upon your hearts are blurred, and a man can hardly read them ; therefore God hath given us his word, and there are his decrees and ordinances of judgment and justice recorded

how he governs the world. A man is pleased when we do his will; God's will is in his word. God will accept of nothing but what he hath required, otherwise we walk at random. I shall not unravel the decalogue; a short summary is useful to us. It is good to have all christian obedience summed up into brief heads. Sometimes the will of God is summed up in one word, sometimes in two, sometimes in three; the apostle sums it up in one word: 1 Thes. iv. 3, 'This is the will of God, even your sanctification,' that you should grow more holy and holy every day; so Gal. v. 14. 'The law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Sometimes the scripture doth sum up all christian obedience into two heads, as all sins by the apostle are referred unto two heads: Rom. i. 18, there are the breaches of God's will, 'unrighteousness and ungodliness;' so the great things required are holiness, or godliness and righteousness, the exercise of religion, and a civil honest conversation: Luke i. 74, 75, 'That we should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.' Sometimes the Spirit of God abridgeth all duty into three heads. Titus ii. 12, would you please God and walk with God; there is the sum of all; to live 'soberly' with respect to ourselves, 'righteously' in respect of others, and 'godly' with respect to the Lord himself: 'soberly' in opposition to the lusts of the flesh. You should make straight steps to your feet; there is need of a great deal of severity; all your affections should be under a prudent coercion and restraint. There is too great a wantonness in professors. Men justify sensuality, and call it living to the height of the creature; the apostle taxeth such, Jude 19, 'Sensual, having not the Spirit.' They pretend to a special singularity of having the Spirit, yet walk to the utmost of christian liberty, yea, and many times exceed their bounds, burden their souls with excesses; therefore you should walk soberly, take all the creatures with thanksgiving, and use them as medicines to repair nature when it is tired with services, not as fuel to brutish lusts. Then the will of God is, that you should walk 'righteously.' Oh, the sadness of the fraud, oppression, and seeking to aspire and domineer by faction that is among professors! Now you are to walk righteously; that is, not only not to snatch from others, but to give of your own, to give and forgive. As you are not to take from others by looking-in their estates by violent oppressions, so you should also lay out yourselves and part with your worldly comforts for the glory of God and necessities of the saints; you should walk with holy meekness and patience, not returning injury for injury. The next is 'godliness;' you should give God his portion, and bewail it that you have so often denied it him. If our bodies be but defrauded of a night's sleep, we are troubled and complain; if we feel the pain of hunger, we complain. Oh, do not neglect God and your precious souls! I remember St Bernard hath a pretty note of Martha's complaining of Mary, that she sat at Jesus' feet, while herself was employed in all the business of the family. Oh, saith St Bernard, 'That is a happy family where Martha complains of Mary!' Oh, how few families do thus complain! The world eats up our time, our care, and our thoughts, and God hath but little share, little worship, and little reverence.

2. Let the promises of God be your encouragement. All the sweet thoughts of a christian arise from the ample and gracious thoughts of God, expressed in the promises: Ps. xciv. 19, 'In the multitude of my thoughts within me (saith David) thy comforts delight my soul;' when his thoughts were interwoven and intricated like the boughs of a tree. It is good to see that you fetch all your comforts and encouragements from God's promises, and not from carnal hopes: 2 Cor. v. 7, 'We walk by faith, not by sight.' This is to live by faith, to have recourse to the promises of a better life, when we have any burden upon us. A christian's comforts all lie within the veil; they are not taken from visible enjoyments or carnal hopes; the promises of God are his enjoyment.

3. You should make the glory of God your chiefest end, or you will be very irregular, and cannot keep pace with God in a constant course of duty. Look, as a man that hath a nail in his foot may walk in soft ground, but when he comes to hard ground he is soon turned out of the way, so when a man hath a perverse aim, he will soon be discouraged with the inconveniences that will trouble him in religion. The spiritual life is called 'a living to God,' Gal. ii. 19. The end must be right, otherwise the conversation will be but a vain pretence, that will please men, but not God: Prov. xvi. 2, 'All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits.' The chiefest thing God puts into the balance is the temper of the mind, the bent of the heart; what you are moved by, and what sways you. Therefore your chiefest care must be to set the heart right in all actions, those that are of the most trivial concernment; in the use of our christian liberty, the necessary actions of our life; in our duties: 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.' This must be the bias upon the christian spirit, that he may be led on with a constant respect to the Lord's glory; as we act from him, so we should act for him and more to him—a by-end will make you eccentric in your motions.

SERMON XXIV.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.—HEB. xi. 6.

THE Apostle had spoken of Enoch's translation as a consequent of his pleasing God, and upon the supposition of his pleasing God he proves his faith. The reason is rendered in this verse, because 'Without faith, it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God,' &c. In the words there are two general parts—

1. A proposition—*Without faith it is impossible to please God.*

2. The reason of it—*For he that cometh to God must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*