

sorrow, and ended in indignation; we fear it as damning; we are ashamed of it as defiling; we sorrow for it, as it is an act of unkindness against God; and we have indignation against it, as unsuitable to our glorious hopes, and present interest: Isa. xxx. 22, 'And thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, get ye hence.' Hos. xiv. 8, 'Ephraim shall say, what have I any more to do with idols?' This is the soul's expulsive faculty.

8. Thankfulness for the grace received: 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33, 'Blessed be God, that kept me from shedding of innocent blood;' Gen. xx. 6, 'I withheld thee from sinning against me.' Disappointments of providence, restraints of grace, the power of saving grace: Rom. vii. 25, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

9. Diligence in God's work. Standing pools are apt to putrify; when men are not taken up for God, they are at leisure for evil: 2 Sam. xi. 2, 'And it came to pass in the evening tide, that David arose from his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon, and the king sent for her,' etc.

10. The remembrance of the other world, whither you are hastening: 1 Pet. ii. 11, 'I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.' You need not long for the flesh-pots of Egypt, when you are going to a land that floweth with milk and honey.

## SERMON XXI.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.—*  
ROM. VIII. 14.

THESE words are given as a reason of what went before; that which immediately went before is a promise of eternal life to those who by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body. The reason may be supposed to relate to the promise, or the qualification: first, to the reward promised. Thus; they shall live in eternal happiness and glory, for they are the sons of God; if we be children, God will deal with us as children, bestow the inheritance upon us, and therefore we shall live. Secondly, the qualification. They do by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body; the Spirit of God sustaineth a double relation,—as our sanctifier, and our comforter. The former is proper to this place; he is our sanctifier, either with respect to the first infusion of grace, or the continual direction and ordering of grace so infused. Now this must be interpreted with respect to the twofold work of a christian, the mortifying of sin, or the perfecting of holiness; his restraining or inviting motions. The first belongeth to the one, the second to the other; if we obey the Spirit's motions in the curbing and restraining evil, and subduing our proneness thereunto, then we shall live; 'for as many as are led,' etc. He proveth it *a signo*

*notificativo* ; this being led and guided by the Holy Ghost is an infallible proof of our adoption, or being taken into God's family : ' for as many as are led by the Spirit of God,' etc.

Observe here,—

1. A sure note and qualification, ' as many as are led by the Spirit.'  
 2. A blessed privilege, ' are the sons of God.' In the former,—

[1.] The note itself, or the duty which evidences our claim, ' being led.'

[2.] The universality of it, ' as many.' It is to be understood *inclusive* and *exclusive* ; they, and none but they. There is in the proposition that which they call *simplex conversio*, all that are led are the sons of God ; and backward, all that are the sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.

*Doct.* That all that are led by the Spirit of God may know and conclude themselves to be children of God.

I shall first explain, (1.) The qualification ; (2.) The privilege.

*First*, The qualification ;— We are said to be led by the Spirit.

It must be understood actively, with respect to his direction ; and passively on our parts, as we submit to that direction. The Spirit is our guide, and we must obey his motions.

1. The Spirit performeth the office of a guide and leader to the godly.

The Spirit giveth us life, motion, and direction—these three things are inseparable in nature and grace ; life, motion, and conduct. The same causes which make us live, make us act. The creature dependeth upon God in his motion, as well as his being, Acts xvii. 28 ; and the regulation of our motions belongeth to the same power. It is so in nature, and it is much more so in grace, and they succeed in this order ; it is a work that followeth regeneration ; first, we are born of the Spirit, before we are moved and guided by the Spirit. The Spirit first infuseth the gracious habits : Ezek. xxxvi. 26, ' A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put into you.' Secondly, He exciteth the soul to act, and assisteth the new creature in acting according to these habits and principles : Phil. ii. 13, ' He worketh in us both to will and to do according to his own pleasure ;' Gal. v. 25, ' If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.' Thirdly, He directeth our actions by enlightening our understandings, and governing and guiding our inclinations, to do that which is pleasing to God. This is that which I am to speak of ; and here I shall show you, that.—

[1.] This direction is promised : Isa. xxx. 21, ' And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.' God guideth his people in all their ways to heaven and happiness ; not only by general directions, but particular motions and excitations : Ps. xxv. 9, ' The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way.' This is the privilege of poor, meek, and humble souls, that they shall not want a guide to direct them in the way to heaven ; so ver. 12, ' What man is he that feareth God ? him will he teach in the way that he shall choose.' An humble believer, that would not displease God for all the world, and counts the least sin a greater evil than the greatest temporal loss, may be encouraged to expect light and direction from God, to order all his actions so as he may best please God :

Isa. xlviii. 17, 'Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, that leadeth thee by the way thou shouldst go.'

[2.] So it is begged by the saints, as a great and necessary blessing: Ps. xxv. 4, 5, 'Show me thy ways, O God, teach me thy paths; lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day long.' Mark how earnest he is—show me, teach me, lead me; as if he could never enough express his desire and value of this benefit. Mark his argument, 'Thou art the God of my salvation,' in covenant with us, and the God of our salvation; so he hath undertaken in the covenant to save us; as God is our God, so he hath undertaken to be our guide, to teach and lead us; and doth not lay aside this relation till our salvation be accomplished. And mark his continual necessity, 'on thee do I wait all the day long;' as if he would not be left for a moment in the hand of his own counsel. So, Ps. cxix. 33, 'Teach me, O God, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.' The way to heaven is a narrow way, hard to be found, hardly to be kept, and easily mistaken, except God teach us daily by his Spirit. There are innumerable by-paths from terrors and allurements without, and we of ourselves are weak, and subject to errors within: so Ps. cxliii. 10, 'Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.' They that would walk circumspectly, and incur no blame from God, and hazard to their souls, need ever to seek direction from God according to his covenant. We need such teaching, as hath with it leading; and such direction, as hath with it strengthening unto obedience; such as will not only help us to understand the general rule, but also how to apply it to particular actions, that no part of our duty may be left upon ourselves; and this only can we have from the Spirit of God, who directeth and leadeth us in all our choices and actions. Well then, whosoever would walk in a regular course of life, in an exact obedience to all the commands of God, and do nothing but what is all perfectly good and acceptable in God's sight, must thus beg for the leading of his gracious and sanctifying Spirit, who is the only fountain of all goodness and holiness, to direct him and assist him in every turn and motion of his life.

[3.] The necessity of it; because we are unable to guide ourselves: 'The way of man is not in himself,' Jer. x. 23; 'it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.' The metaphor of leading is taken from the blind or the weak; the blind who cannot see their way, must have one to lead them; and the lame, who though they can see, yet cannot walk of themselves, but must have one to help them. The ignorant traveller needs a guide, and the weak child a nurse to attend upon him. It is true, the children of God are light in the Lord; besides their natural reason, they have some understanding of the way of godliness; but yet to a steady, constant course of obedience, strict and righteous living, we need to be directed by the good Spirit, to make that light which we have both directive and persuasive.

(1.) Directive: Though we have a general understanding of our duty, yet to make use of it in all particular cases needeth new grace from God. The heathens were wise in generals, Rom. i. 20; they became vain

ἐν διαλογισμοῖς in their imaginations, and their practical inferences from these general truths; their foolish heart was darkened, and professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And though the people of God have greater advantages by that knowledge they have from the scripture, whereby they are made wise unto salvation, and get more by God's putting his laws into their minds in regeneration, whereby they become light in the Lord; yet being not impeccable, and having many mixtures of sin yet remaining in every faculty, in particular cases are apt to err, and turn out of the way, being in part ignorant and heedless, and too often blinded by their own rebellious lusts and passions; therefore they desire that God would not leave them to themselves, but warn them of their snares and dangers, that they may still keep the path of life without defection or turning aside: Ps. cxix. 133, 'Order my steps in thy word; and let not any one iniquity have dominion over me.' They would not only have their path right, but their steps ordered; as not their general course wrong,—as those who walk in the way of everlasting perdition,—so not a step awry; they would not miss the way to heaven, either in whole or in part. Men that have such a tenderness upon them, see a continual need of God's counsel, which careless and slight spirits do not; they would not be corrupted by their covetousness, or sensuality, or ambition; these things blind them in particular cases, though they see their way, or know their duty in the general. Therefore they need the constant assistance of the Spirit, to rescue them from the power of every known sin, and to keep them in exact obedience. For all our general light, pride or passion, or sensual and worldly inclinations may make us err.

(2.) That our light may be persuasive, and overcome temptations and inclinations to sin. Alas! how weak are our arguings, and how easily are our considerations of our duty overborne, when a temptation sets our lusts to work, and comes on upon us with fresh strength! We see what we should do, but, yet we are carried away by our rebellious affections to do the contrary; or through sloth and negligence omit to do that which conscience calleth for at our hands. Poor truth is taken captive, and held prisoner, detained in unrighteousness, Rom. i. 18; it may talk, like a man in chains, but hath no power, can do nothing to break the force of the temptation. But now the Spirit's leading is lively and effectual; to be led is to be excited, moved, stirred forward, yea, effectually inclined to do those things which please God; he leadeth us not only *movendo*, by warning us of our duty, or enlightening our minds; but *movendo*, by inclining our hearts. The Holy Ghost doth enlighten our minds, and warm our affections, and purge away their impurities; we are moved, that we may move; and we receive the impression of his grace, that we may act, and do the things he inclineth us unto. This powerful leading the saints beg: Ps. cxix. 34, 35, 'Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight.' God's teaching begets obedience; he showeth us the path of life, and he maketh us to go in it. It is such direction that giveth strength, that exciteth the sluggish will, and breaketh the force of corrupt inclinations; it removeth the darkness which corruption and sin have brought upon the mind, and maketh us

pliable and ready to obey; yea, it giveth not only the will, but the deed; in short, it engageth us in a watchful, careful, uniform, and constant obedience.

[4.] The nature or manner how the Spirit performeth the office of a guide, or a leader to us. He guide thus, partly by his word; and partly by his inspirations and motions, or the light of internal grace. By his word, that containeth the matter of his guidance and direction: Ps. cxix. 105, 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.' Mark, there is *path*, and *feet*; not only direction for our general choice and course, but our particular actions; and mark also the notions by which the word is expressed, *lamp*, and *light*. We have the light of the sun by day, and we make use of a lamp or candle by night; whether it be day or night, in all conditions, as well as in all actions, here is a sure direction; therefore the word is called the sword of the Spirit; now this is the light the Spirit maketh use of. Partly, the inward inspirations and motions of his grace, that we may have a spiritual discerning, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Besides the outward letter, there must be an inward light, that the understanding be opened, as well as the Scriptures; as it is said of Christ, Luke xxiv. 45, that he first opened the scriptures, and then opened their understandings. Otherwise our light is only literal and speculative, not operative and efficacious.

[5.] The parts and branches of this leading are two; First, His restraining motions for the mortifying of sin, and his inviting motions for the perfecting of holiness. He teacheth us, as he leadeth us into all truth, what we are to reject, what to believe in religion. Again, what is to be left undone in the practice of our lives; and he backeth both with what we ought to hope and fear after death in the other world.

(1.) His leading consisteth in his restraining motions, for the mortifying of sin, or the avoiding of sin. When we are running into the snare, he mindeth us of our danger; as when any evil habit, or spiritual disease is growing upon our spirits, or when we are about to do something unseemly and offensive to God,—the Spirit in effect saith, 'O do not this abominable thing which I hate! but cast out pride, worldliness, and sensuality; do not give way to such and such lusts.' The Holy Ghost is in a singular manner familiar with God's people, taking up a place of abode in their hearts, and furnishing them with sweet and necessary counsel and advice from time to time; therefore he is said to strive with us, when he opposeth himself to our corrupt inclinations: Gen. vi. 3, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.' He striveth by inward motions and checks of conscience, by which he seeketh to humble us for sin, and to reclaim us from sin; if we struggle against these, we lose our advantage: Neh. ix. 20–30, 'Thou gavest them also thy good Spirit to instruct them. Thou testifiedst against them by the Spirit to bring them back to thy law.' In these and many places, we read of the Spirit's guidance: 'If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body.' We must avoid those things he dissuadeth us from.

(2.) There are his inviting and quickening motions, to bring us on in a way of holiness, and to perfect the work of grace in us, and fit us

more for God's use and service. He doth not only close us at first with Christ, but is the agent and worker of the life of Christ within us, to do his work, and maintain his interest, and sanctify us throughout, as we have experience of his restraining motions, that we may be more and more conformed to God's blessed will, and seek our delight and happiness in communion with his blessed self: Ps. xxvii. 8, 'The Lord said, Seek ye my face: and my heart said, thy face, Lord, will I seek.' God speaketh to us by the injection of holy thoughts, and the secret inspirations of his grace, and we speak to God by the inclinations and resolutions of our own souls. This dialogue is carried on in soul language; there need no audible words between God and the soul; so in other places, how often doth he solicit us by his holy motions and inspirations! The Spirit inclineth and presseth us to that which is good.

2. As the office of the Spirit is to guide and lead, so it is our duty to submit to his direction; to be led by him. That maketh the evidence in the passive sense, if we suffer ourselves to be led and guided by him in all things; for otherwise the Spirit worketh on many, but they will not hear; they either neglect or resist his motions. There is a double voice within us, the flesh and the Spirit; and men's spiritual estate is determined by submission and compliance with either: Rom. viii. 1, 'That walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' The flesh is near and dear to us, and very imperious and importunate to be pleased. Now some men live in a perfect obedience to the flesh, according to the fancies and appetites of corrupt nature, and deny it nothing which it craveth at their hands; but there is another voice within us, saying, This is the way, walk in it; thus you must do, if you mean to be happy. Now let us not hear and pass by, as if you heard not; no, you must suffer yourselves to be led and governed by this voice, or this blessed Spirit in all; you must improve his assistance, wait for his approaches, obey his sanctifying motions, direct all the actions of your lives according to his guidance and counsel; that is your evidence.

[1.] I shall urge it in conformity to Christ. There is a perfect likeness between christians and Christ; all the privileges which Christ had, are conveyed to us by the Spirit. If Jesus be the natural Son of the Father, the christian is his adopted son, John xx. 17; if Jesus be the heir of all things, a christian is a co-heir with Christ, Rom. viii. 17; if Jesus be innocent, the christian is justified; if Jesus be born of the Spirit, or framed by the Holy Ghost, the christian is regenerated, born also of water, and the Holy Ghost, John iii. 5; if Jesus be evidenced to be the Son of God by the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon him, the Spirit beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God. Jesus was led by the Spirit continually, so we; if he retire into the desert, if he come back again into Galilee, he is still led by the Spirit: Mat. iv., 'Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness,' the Holy Ghost aiding him in that conflict; when it was ended, Luke iv. 14, 'Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee,' that is, to preach, or to execute his prophetic office; if he cast out devils, Mat. xii. 14, 'I cast out devils by the Spirit of God.' Thus it was with Christ; certainly therefore whatever design we conceive,

whatever resolution we take, whatever enterprize we would bring to pass, we are always bound to depend upon the Holy Ghost; the Spirit must still lead us and move us in all our operations.

[2.] The great mischief which will ensue, if we obey not his sanctifying motions and inspirations. You will resist the Spirit and vex him: Isa. lxiii. 10, 'They rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit; and therefore he turned to be their enemy.' The other expression, Eph. iv. 30, 'Grieve not the holy Spirit.' He is grieved when the flesh is obeyed before him; the Spirit sustaineth a double relation,—our sanctifier, and our comforter; let us not resist our sanctifier, nor grieve our comforter. Surely we should not be ungrateful to this Holy Spirit; if we be holy, he sanctifieth us; if free, it is he sets us at liberty; if wise, he enlighteneth us. If gratitude cannot prevail, yet our interest should; he is our comforter, and we blot our evidence, darken his seal, and so deprive ourselves of that joy and peace which we might have in our souls, if he were obeyed. There is one great mischief above this, which God sets up as a dreadful warning for our caution, despiting the Spirit of grace, Heb. x. 29. To resist the Spirit is dangerous. To resist the Father speaking in the law; to resist the Son speaking in the gospel, offering our remedy; but to resist the Holy Ghost, who would help us to accept this remedy, there is no other relief for us, no other divine person to give it us. The mission of the Holy Ghost is the last offer for the recovery of mankind; there is nothing more to be expected; if we submit not to his inspirations, and wilfully refuse to give ear to his counsel, our salvation is hopeless.

Secondly, let me now open the privilege,—*they are the sons of God*. This privilege may be considered,—

1. As to the real grant on God's part.

2. As to their own sense of their adoption on the believers' part.

1. As to the real grant on God's part. It was intended to the elect from all eternity: Eph. i. 5, 'Being predestinated to the adoption of children;' in time it is brought about by Christ's death, or the work of redemption, Gal. iv. 4, 5; But actually instated upon us, when we are regenerated, and do believe: John i. 12, 13, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' They are born of God, and so made the sons of God. Being called out of nature to grace, in their effectual calling, they are made sons and daughters to the most High God; first he doth renew their natures, and make them holy, then reconciled to God as their Father in Christ; this is the first grant.

2. As to their own sense of their adoption, that is spoken of heres they show themselves to be God's children, and so may know themselves; to be God's children.

[1.] Because they have the certain evidence that they are received for children by God, through faith in Christ; and that is holiness. If our carriage be suitable to our estate and privileges, why should we doubt? Eph. i. 4, 5, 'Elected to be holy, without blame before him in love, having predestinated us to the adoption of children.' They have

the true pledge of God's love, and that is the Spirit; and they show the true fruit of their love to God, and that is obedience to his sanctifying motions; they are led by the Spirit, and so without blame before him in love; as they have a greater measure of the fruits, so it is every day more clear to them.

[2.] The same Spirit that leadeth them, doth assure and ascertain them; for our sanctifier is our comforter. And the more a sanctifier, the more a comforter; first in a darker way, leaving a child-like impression upon them, inclining them to go to God as a father; though their adoption be not so explicit and clear: ver. 15, 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;' and Gal. iv. 6, 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.' The children of God deal with God as a father, cry to him as a father, cannot keep away from him, when they dare not so expressly entitle themselves his children. Secondly, in a clearer way, when he manifests his presence by a supernatural and powerful change wrought in the heart, and discovered; whereby they conclude their own gracious estate: ver. 16, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.' The Spirit helps to discern his own work, or the image of Christ stamped upon them, in a fair and bright character.

[3.] This is a great privilege; that will appear if we consider our present relation to God, or our future inheritance.

(1.) Our present relation to God: 1 John iii. 1, 'Behold what love the Father hath showed us, that we should be called the children of God.' We are his children; and God is, as our father, pleased to own us as his children; we are not born sons, but made so by grace; by nature we are children of wrath, Eph. ii. 3; the very term *adoption* implieth it. A child by adoption is opposed to a child by nature; for men are not said to adopt their own children, but strangers; now that strangers and enemies should not only be reconciled, but also be called the sons of God,—O what unspeakable mercy is it! To have the blessed God, whom we had so often offended, to become our reconciled father in Christ! It is not an empty title that he assumeth; but hath more abundant love and tenderness to our welfare than any title can make us understand.

(2.) Our future inheritance. Our right floweth from our sonship: Rom. viii. 17, 'And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ;' Titus iii. 5, 6, 7, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.' 1 Pet. i. 3, 4, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.' Luke xii. 32, 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you



a kingdom.' What may we not expect from the bounty of such a father? Surely he that would pardon his enemies, will bless his children, and that for evermore.

Use 1. Is to inform us,—

1. Of the nature of the Spirit's conduct. It is sweet, but powerful: it accomplisheth its effect without offering violence to the liberty of man; we are not drawn, taken, or driven as beasts, but led, guided to happiness; not forced thither against our wills, or without our consent. The inclinations of man are free; there is not a violent impulsion, but a sweet guidance and direction; yet he is subject to the leading, government, and drawing of the Spirit.

2. It informeth us of the great condescension of God to new creatures.

[1.] In his care over them. They are led by the Spirit during their pilgrimage; well guided, and well guarded: Heb. i. 14, 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?' They have the Spirit for direction, and the angels for defence; their charge is not *cura animarum*, but *custodia corporis*.

[2.] In the great honour he puts upon them, and reserveth for them. Now these are the children of God; hereafter they shall have the inheritance; then is adoption complete: Rom. viii. 23, 'Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies.' If annihilated after death, or their life drawn out to all eternity upon earth, allowing them so tolerable contentment, there had been a favour, comparing their estate with damned reprobates; but he hath done better for them; having after a short time of trial and service here, appointed endless joys and pleasures for them at his right hand for evermore. Now he taketh them into his family, then into his bosom.

Use 2. Is to press us to put ourselves under the conduct and government of the Holy Spirit. It is implied in our baptism: Mat. xxviii. 19, 'Go therefore, teach and baptise all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' By our express consent, we take God for our lord and portion, and Christ for our redeemer and saviour; and the Spirit for our guide, sanctifier, and comforter. There is all the reason to press us to it: First, From his *excellency*. He cannot deceive us, because he is the Spirit of truth; he cannot engage us in evil, because he is the Spirit of holiness. From his *readiness* to do good: Ps. xxv. 9, 'Good and upright is the Lord, therefore he will teach sinners in the way,'—the poor sinner that is weary of his wandering, that is truly humble for his failings and wanderings, and comes to him for pardon and grace. Secondly, From our *necessity*. Our heedless headlong spirit will soon transport us to some inconveniency: Prov. iii. 5, 6, 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not on thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy path.' It is the greatest judgment to be given up to our own hearts' counsels. Thirdly, From the *effects*, the peace and comfort which followeth his guidance: Jer. vi. 16, 'Stand ye on the ways and see, and ask for the good old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and you shall find rest to your souls;' and Ps. cxliii., 10, 'Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good. lead me into the land of uprightness.' But what must we do?

*Answer*, 1. Continually desire his assistance and powerful conduct: Luke xi. 13, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' It is pleasing to God: 1 Kings iii. 9, 10, 'Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; and the speech pleased the Lord.'

2. Let us co-operate with his motions, mortifying the wisdom and the desires of the flesh; avoiding all those things he dissuadeth us from. You grieve him, when you disturb his comforting work, or disobey his sanctifying motions: Eph. iv. 30, 'And grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption.' Do not break through when he would restrain you, or refuse or draw back when he would impel and invite you to good. The Spirit of God will not forsake you, unless you forsake him first; he is grieved when the wisdom of the flesh is obeyed before his counsel, and his holy inclinations smothered, and we yield easily to the requests of sin, but are deaf to his motions.

3. Let us humble ourselves when we sin through frailty, and leave the directions of the Holy Ghost; let us ever be more wary afterwards: Ps. li. 6, 'In the inward parts shalt thou make me to know wisdom.' We catch many a fall when we leave our guide; as the child when without his nurse he will take to his own feet.

*Use* 3. Is trial; for it is propounded as a mark of the children of God. Now by whose counsel are you guided? Some follow their own spirit, not the Spirit of God; are guided by the wisdom of the flesh, and their own carnal affections; led away from God by the lusts of their own heart, and the temptations of the devil; taken captive by him at his will and pleasure, 2 Tim. ii. 26. Our conversations will declare that which is prevalent. *Principiata respondent suis principiis*, the constant effects declare the prevailing principle.

1. The effects of the Spirit's leading are an heavenly life: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God;' and Eph. i. 17, 18, 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understandings being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' The Spirit leadeth us to those things that are above; the flesh leadeth us to those things here below; to flesh-pleasing vanities, vain perishing delights, grateful only to sense.

2. The Spirit leadeth to an holy life, and obedience to God: Eph. iv. 24, 'And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.'

3. To spiritual things: Rom. viii. 5, 'They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit;' and Gal. vi. 8, 'He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting,'—to excel in these things, though with the loss of carnal pleasures.

4. To all duties to our neighbour: Eph. v. 9, 'For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth;' Gal. v. 22, 23, 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.'

## SERMON XXII.

*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.—Rom. VIII. 15.*

THE words contain a reason why those who are led by the Spirit are the children of God. The reason is, because they have received the covenant of grace; and the spirit which accompanieth the new covenant is not the spirit of bondage, but adoption. It is propounded,—1. Negatively; 2. Affirmatively.

1. Negatively. They were freed from the servile fear of condemnation, which the legal covenant wrought in them.

2. Affirmatively. They were endowed with the spirit of adoption, or a persuasion of their Father's love, or of God's admitting them into his family, and the right of inheritance; and so were drawn to obedience by noble motives, suitable to the covenant they were under.

For the first clause in the text, *ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.*

In which words observe,—

1. The state of men under the law-covenant—it is a state of bondage.

2. The operation of the Spirit during that dispensation,—it made men sensible of their bondage: 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage.' There is the Spirit mentioned, and, *παλιw*, *again*, implying that during that dispensation they had it.

3. The impression left upon the heart of man, *εις φόβον*, unto fear. There is a twofold fear, filial and servile, child-like and slavish. The one is a lawful and necessary fear, which doth quicken us to our duty: Phil. ii. 12, 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling;' and is either the fear of reverence, or the fear of caution. The fear of *reverence* is nothing but that awe which we, as creatures, are to have of the divine majesty, or an humble sense of the condition, place, and duty of a creature towards its creator. The fear of *caution* is a due sense of the importance and weight of the business we are engaged in, in order to our salvation. Certainly none can consider the danger we are to escape, and the blessedness we aim at, but will see a need to be serious; and therefore this fear is good and holy. Secondly, There is besides this, a *slavish* fear, which doth not further, but extremely hinder our work; for though we are to fear God, yet we are not to be afraid of God. This servile fear may be interpreted either with respect to the precept or the sanction of the law. First, with respect to the precept; and so it showeth us how men stand naturally affected to the duty of the law;