

Now this is not in naked ascriptions of praise to him, prattling over words; but when we confess all the glory we have above other men, in gifts or dignity, is given us of God, this is to make him the Father of glory: Eph. i. 17, '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.'

[3.] When we make the advantage of his kingdom the end of all our actions: 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God;' Phil. i. 20, 'Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.' Christ had glorified him, yet he seeks now to do it more. Self will be mixing with our ends, but it must be beaten back. We differ little from beasts if we mind only our own conveniences.

[4.] By making this the aim of our prayers. We should desire glory and happiness upon no other terms: Eph. i. 6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.' It is a mighty encouragement in prayer when we are sure to be heard: John xii. 28, 'Father, glorify thy name: then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.' He begs that God would glorify his name in giving him the victory in this last combat. We ask of God for God: 'Those that honour me, I will honour them,' 1 Sam. ii. 30.

[5.] When we are content to be put to shame so God be honoured, to hazard all so we may glorify his name, though it be with the loss of life itself: Josh. vii. 19, 'My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him;' Mal. ii. 2, 'If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name' (that is, by an ingenuous confession), 'I will even send a curse upon you.'

[6.] When you make others to glorify God: 2 Cor. ix. 13, 'They glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ.' Christians are to be holy, for Christ's honour lieth at stake.

[7.] When we can rejoice in God's glory, though advanced by others, be the instruments who they will; as Paul did, Phil. i. 18, 'Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached, and I herein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.'

[8.] When we are affected for God's dishonour, though done by others.

SERMON II.

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.—JOHN XVII. 2.

HERE is the next reason of Christ's request; the former was the glory of God, and here is another, the salvation of men. Unless the Father glorified him he could not accomplish the ends of his office, which was to glorify the Father in the salvation of man; which could not be unless he were sustained in death, delivered out of death, and received

into glory: 'If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, and ye are yet in your sins,' 1 Cor. xv. 17. How should we know our discharge from sin, if our surety had not been let out of prison? Where should we have gotten an advocate to appear for us in the heavens, or a king to pour out the royal largess of gifts and graces to accompany the gospel, that it might be successful for our souls? From the context I shall observe two points:—

1. Observe, that, next to God's glory, Christ's aim was at our salvation. Christ doth not mention his own profit, but that 'thy Son may glorify thee,' and that he may give eternal life. These two were the scope of his sufferings and rising again to glory.

[1.] Of his sufferings: Dan. ix. 26, 'The Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself;' not for his own desert, nor his own profit; for no fault, no benefit of his own. So Rom. xv. 3, 'Christ pleased not himself; as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me.' The meaning is, he suffered the outrages of the wicked to promote the salvation of the elect; or the burden of our sins, by which God was dishonoured, fell on him. Christ sought not sweet things for himself; he had no respect to his own ease, but our happiness.

[2.] In his rising to glory he still eyed us; when he went to heaven he went thither on our errand, to seize upon it in our right, and to prepare it for our coming: John xiv. 3, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' Not so much to be glorified himself, as to get us thither: Heb. ix. 24, *ἐμφανισθῆναι*, 'There to appear in the presence of God for us.' Christ went to heaven that we might have a friend in court. He is entered into the heavens to appear for us; as if that were all the business of Christ in heaven, to remain there as our advocate.

Use 1. To show us the great love and condescension of Christ. The cross was sad work; all the wages was the salvation of our souls. In the eternal covenant he aimed at no other bargain: Isa. liii. 10, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands;' that he might be effectual to save souls. They told David, 2 Sam. xviii. 3, 'Thou art worth ten thousand of us: if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us.' Public relation makes kings more valuable. Christ's soul was worth millions of ours; and his life was more valuable than the life of men and angels; yet, to save ours, Christ layeth down his own, and he pleased not himself, that the pleasure of the Lord might prosper in our salvation.

Use 2. It teacheth us more self-denial, to do all for God's glory, and the good of the elect, both in life and death: Phil. ii. 17, 'Yea, and if I be offered up on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.' A man that mindeth altogether his own things, liveth but a brutish life, beneath grace and reason. Reason will tell us that man was made sociable, and not only born for himself: grace raiseth actions to the highest self-denial. To deny ourselves is one of the first and most glorious precepts of christianity.

2. Observe, that the comfort and salvation of man doth much depend upon the glorification of Christ: 'Glorify me, that I may give eternal life.' The ends of his office are much furthered.

[1.] His glorification is a pledge of ours. God would do everything first in Christ; elect him, adopt him, pour out the Spirit on him, raise him, glorify him, as the scripture everywhere manifests. Our nature is in heaven, as an earnest of our persons being there. He is called our forerunner, Heb. vi. 20, being gone before into heaven as a forerunner and harbinger, to take up room; and 'the captain of our salvation,' Heb. ii. 11. When the head is in heaven, the members will follow. Whole Christ must be there; he is not content with his heaven without us: John xiv. 3, 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also;' John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory that thou hast given me.'

[2.] His glorification is a pledge of his satisfaction. Our surety is let out of prison; and when the surety is released, the debt is paid; all the work is accomplished and effected: John xvi. 10, 'He will convince the world of righteousness, because I go to the Father.' There is enough done to bring souls to glory, for Christ is received to glory; I am satisfied, I have found a ransom. So John xvii. 4, 5, 'I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou hast given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self. Christ had never come out of the grave, never ascended, if anything else had remained to be done.'

[3.] Christ glorified is a clearer ground of hope to the creature. When Christ was in the flesh he was poor, despised, crucified; the apostle calleth it 'the weakness of God.' Many looked for a kingdom from him; many believed in him when he was upon earth; the thief owned him upon his cross: 'Remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom.' If the thief could spy his royalty under the ignominy of the cross, what may we expect from Christ in his glorified estate? When David was hunted as a flea, or a partridge upon the mountains, there were six hundred clave to him, and had great hopes of his future exaltation; they might look for more from David on the throne. Christ is now exalted, and hath a name above all names; he still retaineth our nature, and that is an argument of love; we go to one that is bone of our bone: and he is glorified in our nature; that is an argument of his power.

[4.] Christ is really put into a greater capacity to do us good.

(1.) He hath seized on heaven in our right: John xiv. 3, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' God the Father prepared it by his decree; but Christ, by his ascension, went to hold it in our name; he took possession of it for himself, and his people, and ever since heaven's door hath stood open.

(2.) The advantage of his intercession: 1 John ii. 1, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' Christ is our advocate at God's right hand; we have a friend at court. Offenders hope to be spared if they have interest in any that have the prince's ear. Jesus Christ is now in heaven at God's right hand, representing his merits. How can our prayers choose but be heard? The Spirit is our notary to indite them, and Christ is our advocate to present them in court.

(3.) The mission of the Spirit. Christ carried up our flesh, and sent down his own Spirit; as to fit heaven for us, Mat. xxv. 34, so to fit us for heaven: Rom. ix. 23, 'Vessels fitted for glory;' vessels of glory seasoned with grace. Now the Spirit is not given but by Christ's ascension: Eph. iv. 11, 12, 'When he ascended, he gave first apostles, then prophets, then evangelists, then pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.' This was his royal largess on the day of his coronation.

(4.) By his ascension all Christ's offices have a new qualification, and are exercised in another manner. Christ hath been mediator, king, priest, and prophet from the beginning of the world; but the administration is different before his incarnation, in the days of his flesh, and after his ascension. Before his coming in the flesh, Christ was the great prophet of the church, foreshowing what was to come; in his incarnation, pointing at what he did; after his glorification, working faith, by representing what was past. So a priest; before his incarnation, undertaking payment and satisfaction for our debts. In the days of his flesh, he made good his engagement; after his ascension, he representeth his satisfaction made by his intercession, he appeareth as a righteous mediator, not by entreaty. Christ was a king by designation; before he was incarnate, the old church had a taste of his kingly power; when he lived upon earth, he was as a king fighting for the crown, a king in warfare; after the resurrection, a king in triumph, solemnly inaugurated, he enters into his throne. Christ cometh into the Father's presence royally attended: Dan. vii. 13, 14, 'And I saw in the night visions, the Son of man with the clouds of heaven; and he came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and all people, nations, and languages, that should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, that shall not pass away.' After his resurrection, Christ is brought into God's presence, receiving all power in heaven and earth. Christ had this power from the beginning, but was not solemnly installed till then. As David had the power given him when anointed by Samuel, yet he endured banishment and tedious conflicts, and showed not himself till after the death of Saul, and till chosen by the tribes at Hebron; so Christ was a Prince and Saviour before his ascension; but it is said, Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted by his right hand, to be a prince and a saviour.' He was prince by eternal right, and by gift and designation. In the midst of his abasement, Christ acknowledged himself king, John viii. 37. But after his ascension, he solemnly exercised it, and administered it for the good of the elect.

Well, then, let us meditate on these things, and draw water out of the wells of salvation with joy. It is better for us that Christ should be in heaven, than with us upon earth. A woman had rather have her husband live with her, than go to the Indies; but yieldeth to his absence, when she considereth the profit of that traffic. We are all apt to wish for the apostles' days, to enjoy Christ with us in person; but when we consider the fruit of his negotiation in heaven, we should be contented. It is better for us he should be there, to plead with the Father, and send his Spirit to us.

I come to the words.

'As.'—Some take this particle, *συγκριτικῶς*, comparatively; others *αἰτιαλογικῶς*, causally. Comparatively; 'Glorify me,' *i.e.*, as thou hast given me a power over all flesh, &c., give me a glory suitable to the authority; handle me according to the power and command which thou hast given me, as the plenipotentiary of the heaven. But it is rather taken causally, by way of argument. It is not *ὡς*, but *καθὼς*, which may be rendered *because*. Now the argument is double—(1.) It may be taken from a former grant of power, 'As thou hast given,' &c. Hitherto he had a right; now he pleadeth for possession, and a more full exercise of it; and (2.) From the end which that power is to be exercised for, the good of the elect, that he 'may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.'

1. I may observe something from that, 'As thou hast given him.' The memory of former benefits is an encouragement to ask anew. Experience begetteth confidence. The heart is much confirmed when faith hath sense and experience on its side; and the belief of what is to come is facilitated by considering what is past. We should believe God upon his bare word; yet it is an encouragement to have experience and trial. By former mercies we have a double experience; we know that he will and can do for creatures. Signal mercies are standing monuments of God's power: Isa. li. 9, 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?' Rahab is Egypt, the dragon is Pharaoh; he that hath helped can and will. We should not entertain jealousies without a cause: 1 Sam. xvii. 37, 'The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.' Former mercies are pledges of future. *Deus donando debet*—God by giving becometh our debtor: Mat. vi. 25, 'Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?' He enticeth hope by former mercies: Judges xiii. 23, 'If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things.' God would not weary us altogether with expectation; something we have in hand, and therefore may expect more. Well, then, when your hearts are apt to faint, take the cordial of experiences: Ps. lxxvii. 10, 'I said, This is mine infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.' We are apt to indulge the peevishness of distrust after many deliverances: 1 Sam. xxvii. 1, 'I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul;' though God had put him twice into his hands: Rom. viii. 32, 'He that spared not his own son, &c., how will he not with him also freely give us all things?' In common experiences, where we can have no absolute assurance, let us not baulk duty for danger: 2 Cor. i. 10, 'Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.' Paul would finish his ministry notwithstanding danger.

2. Observe again from this, 'As thou hast given;' *daturum te promissisti*—thou hast promised to give. God had promised to make over to him the plenary possession and administration of the kingdom; Christ pleadeth the grant and promise. It is an excellent encourage-

ment in prayer when we can back our requests with promises: Ps. cxix. 49, 'Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.' It is a modest challenge. God alloweth it, 'Put me in remembrance, let us plead together,' &c., Isa. xliii. 26. We may argue and dispute with God upon his own word; *chirographa tua injiciebat tibi, domine*—show him his own hand. Lord, thou hast said this and that, let it be fulfilled.

'Thou hast given him.'—As he was man and mediator; for as he was God, he had an eternal right, and an actual visible right by creation and providence; but Christ, as mediator, was to receive a crown. By gift: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance.'

1. It noteth that Christ hath his kingdom by right, not by mere power. It is by the Father's grant he was solemnly invested and set upon the hill of Sion. They are rebels to God who do not acknowledge Christ to be King. There are several manners of possession. Satan is prince of the world, but he is a robber; he holdeth it not by grant from the Father, but by power; he hath actual possession of many nations, but no right.

2. It noteth what kind of right it is that Christ hath; it was by grant and donation. It is the great condescension of our Lord that he would hold all things by our tenure, by way of gift and grant from the Father. Free grace is no dishonourable tenure. Christ himself holdeth his kingdom by it. Why should proud creatures disdain this manner of holding? The lordship of the world was Christ's natural inheritance, yet he would hold all by grace.

'Power over all flesh.'—Flesh is chiefly put for men, though all creatures are under his dominion. We are sometimes expressed by our better, and sometimes by our baser part. By our better; every soul, that is, every man, Rom. ii. 9, and xiii. 1. Sometimes by the baser part: Isa. xl. 6, 'All flesh is grass;' Mat. xxiv. 22, 'No flesh would be saved;' and elsewhere. Here 'flesh' is fitly used; it is put for the nature of man in common, in opposition to those who are peculiarly Christ's by tradition and purchase. And by 'power over all flesh,' is meant a judiciary power to dispose of them according to pleasure; yea, of their everlasting estate. *Potestatem omnis hominis accepit, ut liberet quos voluerit, et damnet quos voluerit.* John v. 27, 'He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.' It is the style of God himself; he is called, Num. xvi. 22, 'The God of the spirits of all flesh;' and more express to this purpose, Jer. xxxii. 27, 'Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?' So that it noteth not a naked authority, but an authority armed with a divine power. Now because God will not give his glory to another, we may hence observe:—

1. That Christ is true God, for otherwise he could not have such an absolute power. It is proper to his divine nature, though, as it is a gift, his whole person God-man be invested with it. He is called the only God, not excluding the Father, who subsisteth with him in the same essence, but including the Son: Isa. xlv. 22, 23, 'I am God, and there is none else: I have sworn by myself; the word is gone out in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall

bow, and every tongue shall swear ;' which is applied to Christ, Rom. xiv. 11, and Phil. ii. 9-11. He is called the great God ; the supper of the Lamb is called ' the supper of the great God,' Rev. xix. 17 ; ' the true God,' 1 John v. 20. It should fortify christians against those abominable opinions wherein the godhead of Christ is questioned.

2. Observe that Christ as mediator hath power over all flesh. All kings and monarchs have certain bounds and limits, by which their empire is terminated ; but God hath set Christ higher than the kings of the earth. He is the true catholic king ; his government is unlimited : Ps. lxxxix. 27, ' Also I will make him, my first born, higher than the kings of the earth ;' Mat. xxviii. 18, ' All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth ;' and Dan. vii. 14, ' There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away ; and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.' There is some difference about the extent of Christ's mediatory kingdom.

[1.] It is not only confined to the elect. We must distinguish between Christ's power and his charge. He hath a power given him over all ; but there are some given to him by way of special charge, which is given for the elect, as to all spiritual ends, to rescue them from the power of Satan, as in this verse. As Joseph in Egypt ; the power of all the land was made over to him, though his brethren had a special right in his affections. The kingdom of Christ, as merely spiritual and inward, is proper to the elect ; that kingdom where Christ hath no other deputy and vicar but his Spirit ; but for his judiciary kingdom, that is universal : Ps. ii. 8, ' I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.' There is a reign over mankind, and those that do not subject themselves to Christ as a redeemer shall find him as a judge. Therefore, in Ps. ii., the judiciary acts of his power are only mentioned, ' breaking them with a rod of iron,' and ' vexing them in his hot displeasure.' He is lord over them in power and justice as God's lieutenant ; they shall pay him homage and subjection as king of the world, or else they shall perish. He overruleth them as rebels, but he reigneth in the church as over voluntary subjects.

[2.] It is not confined to the church and things merely spiritual. This kingdom is as large as providence ; and in the exercise of justice and equity magistrates are but his deputies. Christ is *δεσπότης καὶ κύριος*, ' the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.' He is ' king of nations,' Jer. x. 7 ; ' king of saints,' Rev. xv. 3 ; ' head over all things to the church,' Eph. i. 22. Supreme and absolute in the world, but head to the church. He hath a rod of iron to rule the nations, and a golden sceptre to guide the church. In the world he ruleth by providence ; in the church, by his testimonies : Ps. xciii., ' The Lord reigneth,' Ps. xxiv. 1, ' The earth is the Lord's.' And then, ver. 4, ' Who shall dwell in his holy hill ?' I confess there is a question whether magistrates be under Christ as mediator ? whether they hold their power from him ? But I see no reason why we should doubt of it, since all things are put into Christ's hands ; and that not

only by an eternal right, but given to him ; which noteth his right as mediator. Christ hath a right of merit, as lord of all creatures. He is 'lord both of the dead and living,' Rom. xiv. 9. The whole creature is delivered up to Christ, upon his undertaking the work of redemption ; he hath a right of executing the dominion of God over every creature. Christ, the wisdom of the Father, saith, 'By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles ; even all the judges of the earth,' Prov. viii. 15, 16. And expressly he is said to be 'ruler of the kings of the earth.' Rev. i. 5.

Use 1. Comfort to God's children. All is put into the hands of Christ. A devil cannot stir further than he giveth leave ; as the devils could not enter into the herd of swine without Christ's leave, Mark viii. When thou art in Satan's hands, the devil is in Christ's. Neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers can hurt. The reins of the world are in a wise hand : 'The Lord reigneth, though the waves roar,' Ps. xcix. 1. It was much comfort to Jacob and his children to hear that Joseph did all in Egypt. It should be so to us that Jesus doth all in heaven. He holdeth the chain of causes in his own hand. It will be much more for thy comfort at the last day. A client conceiveth great hope when one formerly his advocate is advanced to be judge of the court. Thy advocate is thy judge. He that died for thee will not destroy thee. Thy Christ hath power over all flesh, to damn whom he will, and save whom he will.

Use 2. An invitation to bring in men to Christ. Oh ! who would not choose him to be Lord that, whether we will or no, is our master ? He can hold thee by the chains of an invincible providence, that art not held with the bonds of duty. Oh ! it is better to touch the golden sceptre than to be broken with the iron rod, and to feel the efficacy of his grace than the power of his anger. Christ is resolved creatures shall stoop. The apostle proveth the day of judgment : Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ : for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,' &c. Christ will bring the creatures on their knees ; at the last day all faces shall gather blackness, and the stoutest hearts be appalled. Christ will have the better ; it is better be his subjects than his captives.

Use 3. To magistrates, to own the mediator. You hold your power from Christ, and therefore must exercise it for him : Ps. ii. 10-12, 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings : be instructed, ye judges of the earth' (it is their duty chiefly to observe Jesus Christ) ; 'serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.' Acknowledge Christ your Lord, or else he will blast your counsels ; you shall perish in the midway : when you have carried on your designs a little while, you shall perish ere you are aware : Christ will call you to an account.

Two things Christ is tender of, his servants and his truth.

His servants are weak to appearance, but they have a great champion : what is done to them Christ counteth as done to himself : 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?' Acts ix. 4, when he raged against the saints : Isa. xlix. 23, 'Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers,

and their queens thy nursing-mothers.' Christ hath little ones, that should be nursed and not oppressed.

But chiefly his truth. It is truth maketh saints: John xvii. 17, 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.' You should own your Lord and master, and not be indifferent to Christ or Satan. To tolerate errors, especially directly against Christ's person, nature, and mediatory offices, is but sorry thankfulness to your great master. He did not give you a commission to countenance rebels against himself. Whilst you maintain the power and purity of his ordinances, Christ will own you, and bear you out; but when, for secular ends, men hug his enemies, they are in danger to perish in the midway, in the course of their attempts.

'That he should give eternal life.'—*That* signifieth the end why Christ received so much power for the elect's sake, that he might be in a capacity to conduct them to glory; which otherwise could not be, if Christ's power were more limited and restrained. I might—

1. Observe, that Christ's power in the world is exercised for the church's good: Eph. i. 22, 'He is the head over all things to the church.' All dispensations are in the hand of a mediator for the elect's sake, to gain them from among others, to protect them against the assaults of others.

[1.] To gain them: 2 Peter iii. 9, 'He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' If the elect were gathered, providence would be soon at an end. God's dispensations are guided by his decrees.

[2.] To protect them when they are gained. You must pluck Christ from the throne ere you can pluck a member from his body: John x. 28, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' By his conduct and government we are secured against all dangers; they may pluck joint from joint, but they cannot pluck the soul from Christ that is once really implanted into him.

2. Observe that eternal life is Christ's gift. It is not the merit of our works, but the fruit of his grace: Rom. vi. 23, 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.' It is good to observe how the expression is diversified. Sin and death are suited like work and wages; but eternal life is a mere donative, not from the merit of the receiver, but the bounty of the giver. Works that need pardon can never deserve glory. Grace in us runneth as water in a muddy channel: the child hath more of the mother. It is true there is a concurrence of works, but not by way of causality, but order. God will first justify, then sanctify, then glorify. Justification is the cause and foundation of eternal life, and sanctification the beginning and introduction of it; and we have both by Christ. The first is obtained by Christ's blood, the second wrought by his Spirit. See Eph. ii. 8, 9, 'By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.' The instrument of salvation is faith, which requireth a renouncing of works; and faith also is of grace. The Papists, to excuse the gross conceit of merit, say our works do not

merit but as they come from the grace of God, and are washed with the blood of Christ. But neither salve will serve for this sore.

[1.] It is not enough to ascribe grace to God. All justiciaries will do so. The pharisee said, God, I thank thee I am so and so. You confound the covenants when you think we may merit of God by his own grace. God maketh us righteous by grace; and if by the exercise of it we deserve life, Adam under the covenant of works must then have been said to be saved by grace, because he could not persevere in the use of his free-will unless he had received it from God.

[2.] Nor as dyed in the blood of Christ, because faith disclaimeth all works as to the act of justification; and there is no merit if it be of grace. Learn then to admire grace with comfort and hope. Merit-mongers are left to be confuted by experience. Surely men that cry up works seldom look into their own consciences. Let them use the same plea in their prayers they do in their disputes: give me not eternal life till I deserve it; Lord, let me have no mercy till I deserve it. Or let them dispute thus, when they come to dispute with their own consciences in the agonies of death; then, *Optimum est ininiti meritis Christi*.

3. Observe, the gifts that God is wont to give are not earthly riches, worldly power, transitory honours, but eternal life. This was the great end for which he was ordained by the Father. Many come to Christ as that man, Luke xii. 13, 'Master, speak to my brother, to divide the inheritance with me.' He looked upon him as *aliquem magnum*, one furnished with great power, fit to serve his carnal ends. Such fleshly requests are not acceptable to our mediator. The Lord loveth to give blessings suitable to his own being. He liveth for ever, and he giveth eternal life to the elect. Learn, then, how to frame your requests. Say, I will not be satisfied with these things: 'Remember me with the favour of thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation; that I may glory with thine inheritance,' Ps. cvi. 4, 5.

4. Observe, from the expression, 'eternal life.' Our estate in heaven is expressed by life and eternal life. This is a term frequently used to signify the glorified estate. Now it doth imply not only our bare subsistence for ever, but also the tranquillity and happiness of that state.

[1.] It is life: 'Heirs together of the grace of life,' 1 Peter iii. 7. Life is the most precious possession and heritage of the creature; there can be no happiness without it. All our comforts begin and end with life. Life is better than food: Mat. vi. 25, 'Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?' Poisons and cordials are all one to a dead man. Creatures base, if they have life, are better than those which are most excellent: 'a living dog is better than a dead lion.' All creatures desire to preserve life. All the travail of men under the sun is for life, to prop up a tabernacle that is always falling: Job ii. 7, 'Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.' All our labour and care is for it; and when we have made provision for it, it is taken from us. It is called 'the life of our hands,' Isa. lviii. 10. We make hard shift to maintain it. This life is a poor thing, it is no

great matter to be heir to it: James iv. 14, 'What is your life? it is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.'

[2.] It is life eternal; not like the earthly life, which is but as a vapour, a little warm breath, or warm smoke, turned in and out by the nostrils. Our present life is a lamp that may be soon quenched; it is in the power of every ruffian and assassinate. But this is life eternal. In heaven there is a fair estate; the tenure is for life; but we need not take thought for heirs; we and our happiness shall always live together. The blossoms of paradise are for ever fresh and green: therefore if we love life, why should we not love heaven? This is a life that is never spent, and we are never weary of living. This life is short, yet we soon grow weary of it. The shortest life is long enough to be encumbered with a thousand miseries. If you live till old age, age is a burden to itself: 'The days shall come in which they shall say, We have no pleasure,' Eccles. xii. 1. Life itself may become a burden, but you will never wish for an end of eternal life; that is a long date of days without misery and without weariness. Eternity is every day more lovely. Well might David say, 'The loving-kindness of God is better than life.' Men have cursed the day of their birth, but never the day of their new birth. Those that have once tasted the sweet and benefit of God's life never grow weary of it.

[3.] This life is begun, and carried on by degrees.

(1.) The foundation of it is laid in regeneration: then do we begin to live when Christ beginneth to live in us; and we may reckon from that day when, in the power of his life, we began to advance towards heaven; for then there was a seed laid of a life which cannot be destroyed. The life of nature may be extinguished, but not of grace: Rom. viii. 11, 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.' The Spirit cannot leave his dwelling-place. It is said, John v. 24, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.' The change is wrought as soon as we begin to be acquainted with God in Christ.

(2.) Presently after death there is a further progress made. As soon as the soul is separated from the body, it begins to live gloriously. It is with Christ: Phil. i. 23, 'I desire to depart and to be with Christ;' it is in Christ here, but not so properly with him. And it is in paradise: Luke xxiii. 43, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' In Abraham's bosom: Luke xvi. 25, 'He seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.' And enjoyeth the fruit of good works: Rev. xiv. 13, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.' There is not only a cessation from sin and misery, but an enjoyment of glory; and the body resteth without pain and labour till the resurrection, as in a bed: Isa. lvii. 2, 'He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.'

(3.) After, at the resurrection of the body, there is a consummation

of all joy. That is called 'the day of regeneration,' Mat. xix. 28. Body and soul shall be renewed perfectly, for immortality and glory. Then we live indeed. Therefore Christ saith, John xi. 25, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' All is consummate and full then; death hath some power till that day.

Use 1. To press us to labour after this holy life: John vi. 27, 'Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat that endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you.' Grace is the beginning and pledge of it. It is the beginning and seed of life; this is an immortal spark, that shall never be quenched: it is the pledge, 1 Tim. vi. 19; you may seize life as your right and inheritance. Oh! labour for it. This life is made bitter that thou mayest desire the other. Consider, all dependeth on thy state in this world; either thou art a child of wrath or an heir of life. Wicked men do die rather than live in the other world. It is better not to be than to be for ever miserable; to lie under the wrath of God, to be shut out of the presence of God for evermore.

Use 2. Bless the Lord Jesus Christ for opening a door of life for them that were dead in and by sin. The tree of life was fenced by a flaming sword: no creature could enter till Christ opened the way: 2 Tim. i. 10, 'By his appearing he hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.' Christ came from heaven on purpose to overcome death and take away the sting of it; and he is gone to heaven on purpose to make way for us. Our life cost Christ his death: John xvi. 5, 'Now I go away to him that sent me.'

'To as many as thou hast given him.'—Let us see the import of this phrase.

1. How we are said to be given to Christ.

2. Who are they that are given to Christ.

1. How we are said to be given to Christ.

[1.] By way of reward. There was an eternal bargain and compact: Isa. liii. 10, 'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed,' &c. We are members of his body, children of his family, subjects of his kingdom. This is a ground of certainty to the elect: 'The Lord knoweth those that are his,' 2 Tim. ii. 18. He made no blind bargain; he had leisure enough to cast up his account from all eternity.

[2.] By way of charge, to be redeemed, justified, sanctified, glorified: John vi. 37-40, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.' When the elect were made over to Christ, it was not by way of alienation, but oppignoration; they were laid to pledge in his hands, and God will call Christ to an account. None given to him by way of charge can miscarry. You trust Christ, and God trusted him with all the souls of the elect.

2. Who are they that are given to Christ? I answer—The elect are intended in this scripture, as is clear: ‘He hath a power over all flesh,’ but, ‘to give eternal life to as many as are given to him.’ So ver. 24, ‘I will that all they whom thou hast given me may be with me.’ None but the elect are saved. So ver. 10, ‘All mine are thine, and thine are mine;’ where Christ’s charge and the Father’s election are made commensurable and of the same extent and latitude. They are opposed to the world: ver. 9, ‘I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, for they are thine.’ I confess it is sometimes used in a more restrained sense, of the apostles and believers of that age; as ver. 6, ‘Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word;’ and ver. 12, ‘Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition.’ These were *ἐκλεκτῶν ἐκλεκτότεροι*, the elect of the elect. I confess sometimes the word is used in a larger sense, for Christ’s universal power over all flesh: Ps. ii. 8, ‘Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession;’ not by way of charge, but by way of reward, they were given to him; or rather, a power over them was given to him. There is a peculiar difficulty, ver. 12, concerning the son of perdition, how he was given to Christ. But I shall handle it when I come to that place. Christ, having spoken of the apostles keeping his word, taketh occasion to speak of Judas his apostasy.

Note hence:—

1. That there was, from all eternity, a solemn tradition and disposition of all that shall be saved into the hands of Christ. All God’s flock are committed to his keeping. This giving souls to Christ was founded in an eternal treaty, Isa. liii. 10. Christ received them by way of grant and charge; he hath a book where all their names are recorded and written: Rev. xiii. 8, ‘All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;’ Rev. xxi. 27, ‘None shall enter in who are not written in the Lamb’s book of life.’ The book of life is there attributed to Christ, because he took this solemn charge upon himself, to conduct the heirs of salvation to glory. He is to see they come to him: John vi. 37, ‘All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.’ He knoweth them by head and poll: Isa. xlix. 12, ‘Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the land of the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.’ Man by man they are told out to him.

2. He is to keep them and look after them. Though there be many thousands, yet every single believer falleth under the care of Christ; and accordingly he knoweth their names and their necessities: John x. 3, ‘He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.’ He knoweth his sheep by name, John, Anna, Thomas. As the high priest carried the names of the tribes upon his bosom, so Christ knows the names of all the flock of God. There is not a poor servant or scullion (who are despicable creatures in the world) but Christ looks after him: Ps. xxxiv. 6, ‘This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.’ Poor soul! he is under such temptations, encumbered with such troubles, in such a task or

service. My Father gave me a charge of him, I must look to him. So many lambs as there are in the flock of Christ, there is not one forgotten.

3. Christ is to give an account of them unto God. He doth it by his constant intercession; of which this prayer is a copy: 'They have kept thy word: I am glorified in them.' Christ is speaking good words of them to the Father; he giveth you a good report behind your back. Satan is an accuser; he loveth to report ill of believers; but Christ telleth the Father how his lambs thrive. It is a grief to your advocate when he cannot speak well of you in heaven. But solemnly he will do it at the last day, when he is to present the elect to the tribunal of God: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold I and the children which God hath given me.' Oh! it is a goodly sight to see Christ and all his little ones come together to the throne of grace. There is not one forgotten in the presence of Christ and all his angels. Christ will not be ashamed to own a poor despicable boy, a manservant, or a maid-servant, so they be faithful: Luke xii. 8, 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.' I died for this poor creature, and shed my blood for him. This is intended: 1 Cor. xv. 24, 'Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.' A kingdom is sometimes put for the form of government, sometimes for subjects governed. The kingdom, that is the church, is solemnly presented as a prey snatched out of the teeth of lions: Eph. v. 27, *ἵνα παραστήσῃ*, 'That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.' Christ will present his bride in triumph.

Use 1. Comfort to believers.

1. Concerning the safety of their eternal estate. Christ bargained for thee by name. That the Father and the Son should pitch upon such a forlorn and wretched piece of the creation as thou art, and they should talk together of thy heaven,¹ Son, this is one for whom thou must die! That thy name should be in the eternal register, written with the Lamb's blood in his own book of life. I must have a care of him. Ay! you will say, this were an excellent comfort, if I were sure I were one of them that is given to Christ. I answer—If he hath given Christ to you, he hath given you to Christ. God maketh an offer in the gospel. Are you willing to receive him for Lord and Saviour? Then you put it out of question: 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God.' You are fellow-heirs with Christ. Christ is given to you in time.

2. In your particular straits Christ hath a care of you. Do you think he will break his engagement? Christ hath plighted his truth to God the Father. Our groundless jealousies question the truth of Christ's word and solemn agreement. When we say, The Lord hath forgotten me, this is in effect to say, Christ is not faithful in his charge. The prophet chideth them: Isa. xl. 27, 'Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?' God doth not take notice of my case: such mistrust is a lie against the care of Christ.

Use 2. To press us, especially humble sinners, you that walk in

¹ Qu. "thee in heaven"?—Ed.

darkness, to come under these sweet hopes. God hath laid souls to pledge in the hand of Christ. Why should we be scrupulous? All the Father's acts are ratified in time by believers. He ordaineth, we consent; he chooseth Christ for lord and king: 'They shall appoint themselves one head,' Hosea i. 11. So he hath given souls to Christ, so should you.

1. Commit your souls to him by faith; this answereth to Christ's receiving the elect by way of charge: 1 Peter iv. 19, 'Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creator.' A man ventureth upon duty, and trusteth God with his soul: Ps. xxxi. 5, 'Into thy hands do I commit my spirit.' Paul knew Christ was an able and trusty friend: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' Committing the soul to God is a notion often used in the matter of faith, and doth most formally express the nature of trust and adherence. He is willing to receive your souls, and he is able to make good the trust. Therefore, in all times of distress and danger, when all things are dark to us, upon the warrant of the gospel, let us commit the soul to Christ, to be kept to salvation; refer yourselves to his care for pardon, defence, support, and glory.

2. Consecrate yourselves to Christ. Committing noteth trust; consecrating, obedience. You commit yourselves to his care, you resign and yield up yourselves to his discipline. Committing answereth the charge, but consecration the grant: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.' By full consent a man embarketh with Christ, and is resolved no longer to be at his own keeping and disposal: Ps. cxix. 94, 'I am thine, save me, for I have sought thy precepts.' I am thine; Lord, I would not be my own, unless I be thine. As those who being denied protection by the Romans, offered up themselves and their whole estate to them. *Si nostra tueri non vultis, at vestra defendetis; quicquid passuri sumus, dedititii vestri patientur, &c.*

SERMON III.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.—JOHN XVII. 3.

HERE our Lord declareth the way, means, and order how he would give eternal life to the elect; and so it is added as an amplification of the former argument. The words must be expounded by a metonymy. Such kind of predications are frequent in scripture: John iii. 19, 'This is the condemnation,' &c.; that is, the cause of it. Sometimes it signifies the outward means: John xii. 50, 'His commandment is life everlasting;' that is, his word is the most assured means of it. Sometimes the principal cause: 'Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life,' 1 John v. 20; that is, the author of it.