

honour.' The Father's heart was so taken with it, that he honoureth Christ for this reason. And again, he giveth power and authority to save sinners: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' He hath raised him up to be a prince of salvation. Here is the end of all, that Christ as mediator might be in a capacity to bring souls to heaven. And in this work there is a constant co-operation of the divine power; 1 Cor. i. 30, 'Of God he is made to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.' All the emanations of grace come originally from the Father, in and through Christ, to all his members.

Use 1. Comfort. What would have become of us, if the Father himself had not found out such a remedy? God had power to punish sins in our own person, he needed no mediator. To save sinners is not *proprietas divinæ naturæ*, but *opus liberi consilii*; it dependeth on God's appointment; and if Christ had been a mediator only by the vote of the creature, he might have been refused: Exod. xxxii. 33, 'Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.' There is much in the Father's act. Now God hath given Christ a faculty to this purpose; when we go to God, we may offer a mediator authorised by himself: Thou hast sent thy blessed Son to be a mediator for me: 2 John 9, 'He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath the Father and the Son.' You may urge it upon your fears and suggestions of Satan. God is not only the wronged party, but supreme judge; it is no matter what Satan saith, or your own hearts say, if the Lord hath said he will accept sinners in Christ: Rom. viii. 33, 34, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.' Who can condemn? Satan may say, I can; and conscience, I can. God, whose act is sovereign, doth acquit. God hath so great an interest in Christ, that he can deny him nothing: John xiv. 31, 'That the world may know that I love the Father.' He will be the sinner's surety for his Father's sake.

Use 2. Glorify God the Father; it is the end of the whole dispensation of grace. Glorify him in your expectations; the Father himself loveth you. Glorify him in your enjoyments, all is 'from the Father of lights,' James i. 17. There is no defect in Christ: John xvii. 23, 'I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.' God hath loved him, not only as his own Son, but our saviour: John x. 17, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.'

SERMON XI.

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.—JOHN XVII. 8.

CHRIST in this verse further explaineth the argument that was urged before, which was taken from their proficiency in his school, and that

they had a right sense of and faith in the dignity and quality of his person. This faith is set forth by all the requisites of it.

First, The means by which it is wrought; that is, the word, the doctrine given to him by his Father, and by him to his apostles: *for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.*

Secondly, The nature of faith, which consisteth in knowledge and acceptance: *they have known surely, and they have believed them.* Ἀγψις and γνῶσις are the two acts of faith.

Thirdly, The object of faith, the mission of Christ, and his coming out from the Father: *that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou hast sent me.*

First, I begin with the means of faith: 'For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.' The only difficulty is how the word was given unto Christ. Some think it is meant of the divine and infinite knowledge and wisdom which was communicated to Christ by eternal generation; but that is very improper, *quæcumque Christo dantur, secundum humanitatem dantur.* It is meant of that giving which Christ had as mediator, as the ambassador hath his instructions according to which he is to act. Now saith Christ, I have taught them according to the instructions which I received as mediator. These are said to be given, to be infused and revealed to his human soul.

1. Observe, the word is the proper means to work faith. We see here the apostles had no other means of salvation than Christ's word; when Christ giveth an account of their faith, he doth not mention his miracles, but his doctrine. Again, he doth not speak only of the internal manifestation of the Spirit, 'I have manifested thy name;' but also of the outward revelation, 'I have given to them the words which thou gavest me.' We have a general saying, Rom. x. 17, 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' This is the usual method and way of grace's working; God will insinuate the efficacy of his Spirit by outward counsel and instruction, and by the ear transmit his grace to the heart, that he might work *fortiter, suaviter.*

Use 1. It reproveth the folly of two sorts of men; there are some that think the word cannot work unless it be accompanied with miracles, and others that think the Spirit will work without the word.

1. Those that think the word will not work without miracles, and therefore expect a reviving of miracles, to authorise that ministry which they mean to receive. Vain thoughts! In the primitive times, when miracles were in force, we read of some converted by the word without miracles, but of none converted by miracles without the word: Acts xi. 20, 21, 'Some of Cyprus and Cyrene, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord.' They wrought no signs, only preached the Lord Jesus. There is not one instance in the whole word of any one converted by a single miracle. It is natural to us to idolise visible helps and confirmations. Those mentioned Acts xi. were not apostles, but private brethren, who in that extraordinary time used their gifts, and were successful.

2. Those that expect the illapses of the Spirit, without waiting upon the word. It is true God can work immediately, but the question is about

his will. God is not tied to means, but we are bound and tied. God may use his liberty, but this doth not dissolve our duty and obligation; we are to lie at the pool, if we expect the stirring of the waters. There is a great deal of difference between the want of means and the contempt of them. I should always suspect that grace that is wrought in us in the neglect of the means. The regular way of faith is by the word; it hath pleased God to consecrate it. God could have converted the eunuch without Philip, but we are to submit to his will. Paul that received his consternation miraculously, had his confirmation from Ananias; Christ had preached him into terror from heaven, but he sendeth him to Ananias for comfort.

Use 2. It stirreth us up to attend upon the word; it is God's instrument: Rom. i. 16, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth;' the meaning is, it is a powerful instrument to work faith; as the first sermon that ever was preached, after the pouring out of the Spirit, converted three thousand souls. An angel could slay a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in a night by his own natural strength; but it is easier to kill so many men than to convert one soul. All the angels in heaven, if they should join all their forces together, they could not convert one soul to God; but yet this power will God discover in the ministry and co-operation of weak men. Those that do not delight to hear the word have no mind to see the miracles of grace. The power is of God, yet it is wonderfully joined with the word; it is not enclosed in it, but sent out together with it when God pleaseth. It is God's ordinance, and under the blessing of an institution.

2. Observe, again, the certainty of christian doctrine. The word delivered to the apostles was received from the Father by Christ. It was no invention of his own, but brought out of the bosom of the Father: John vii. 16, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.' So John xiv. 10, 'The words that I speak, I speak not of myself;' that is, not as mediator. It was prophesied of Christ, who was the great prophet of the church: Deut. xviii. 18, 'I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.' Christ said, 'his Father gave it him.' Christ was consecrated prophet of the church by the Trinity: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' There was the Father's voice, the Holy Ghost as a dove, and the Son was there in person.

Use. Which should stablish us the more in the truth, and is a pattern to ministers. It is excellent when we can say, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me;' or, as Paul, 'That which I received of the Lord I have delivered to you,' 1 Cor. xi. 23.

3. Observe, among the things which the Father gave to the Son, one of the chiefest is the doctrine of the gospel. Let us look upon it as a gift; the Father gave it, the Son gave it. Here is a double gift; it was a gift from the Father to Christ, and from Christ to the apostles: 'I have given them the word which thou gavest me.' Next to Christ the gospel is the greatest benefit which God hath given to men. He that despiseth the gospel, despiseth the very bounty of God, and men cannot endure to have their love and bounty despised. As when David

sent a courteous message to Nabal, and he was refused, he threatened to 'cut off from Nabal every one that pisseth against the wall.' Take heed you despise not God's special gifts. The preaching of the word, it was Christ's largest in the day of his royalty: Eph. iv. 8, 11, 'When he ascended up on high, he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;' as princes, when crowned, have their royal donatives. Those that grudge at the ministry, and count it a burden, they do in effect upbraid Christ with his gift, as if it were not worth the giving. Those that labour in the ministry, are his especial gift to us. They are but sottish swine that trample such pearls under feet. We should think of them as the special favours of Christ. I do not speak of the persons, but the calling. This disposition showeth no love to Christ.

Secondly, The next thing is the nature of faith. There are two things spoken of in the text—*γνώσις* and *λήψις*, 'they have received them, and have known surely.'

First, I begin with the latter, in order of words, as first in order of nature, *ἐγνώσαν ἀληθῶς*, 'they have known surely.' The word *ἀληθῶς*, which signifieth truly, surely, is used to exclude that literal historical knowledge which may be in carnal men.

1. Observe, faith cannot be without knowledge. It is not a blind assent: Rom. x. 14, 'How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?' We must know what Christ is before we can trust him with our souls: 1 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed.' We must see the stay and prop before we lean upon it, otherwise we shall neither be satisfied in ourselves, nor be able to plead with Satau, nor answer doubts of conscience. He that is impleaded in court, and doth not know the privileges of the law, how shall he be able to purge himself? Fears are in the dark. The blind man spoke reason in that conference between Christ and him, when Christ asked him, 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?' He answered and said, 'Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?' John ix. 35, 36. We must know what God is. Till we have a distinct knowledge of the nature of God, and the tenor of the covenant, we shall be full of scruples. Well then—

Use 1. It discovereth the wretched condition of ignorant persons. We are not so sensible of the danger of ignorance as we should be. God will render vengeance 'to them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel,' 2 Thes. i. 8. Poor wretches! they live sinfully and die sottishly; they live sinfully, they are under no awe of conscience, because they have no knowledge; and when they come to die, they die sottishly; like men that leap over a deep gulf blindfold, they know not where their feet shall light. In their lifetime, at best they live but by guess and some devout aims; and when they come to die, they die by guess, in a doubtful, uncertain way.

Use 2. To press christians to gain more distinct knowledge, if you would settle your souls in a certainty of salvation. God may lay trouble of conscience upon a knowing person; but usually persons ignorant are full of scruples, which vanish before the light as mists do before the sun.

2. Observe, they know surely. In the knowledge of faith there is an undoubted certain light. It dependeth upon two things that cannot

deceive us—the revelation of the word, and the illumination of the Spirit. The knowledge of faith is less than the light of glory for clearness, but equal for certainty; it hath as much assurance from God's word, though not so much evidence as ariseth from enjoyment.

3. Observe, they know *ἀληθῶς*, truly, indeed. Every kind of knowledge is not enough for faith, but a true, sound knowledge. There is a form of knowledge as well as a form of godliness; Rom. ii. 20, compared with 2 Tim. iii. 5. A form of knowledge is nothing else but an artificial speculation, a naked model of truth in the brain, which, like a winter sun, shineth, but warmeth not.

But let us a little state the differences.

[1.] The light of faith is serious and considerate. Faith is a spiritual prudence, it is opposed to folly as well as ignorance: Luke xxiv. 25, 'O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have said!' Faith always draweth to use and practice. It is a knowledge with consideration: Eph. i. 17, 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.' Many have parts, but they have not wisdom to make the best choice for their souls. There is a great deal of difference between knowledge and prudence; it is excellent when both are joined together: 'I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,' Prov. viii. 12. Wisdom is the knowledge of principles, prudence is an ability to use them to our comfort. Knowledge is settled in the brain, not the heart. When wisdom 'entereth into thy heart,' Prov. ii. 10, it stirreth up esteem, affiance, love. A carnal man may have a model of truth, a traditional disciplinary knowledge, such as lieth in generals, not particulars, and is rather for discourse than life. A vintner's cellar may be better stored than a nobleman's; he hath wines, not to taste, but sell; a carnal man hath a great deal of knowledge for discourse, not to warm his own heart.

[2.] The light of faith is a realising light, *ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων*, 'Faith is in the evidence of things not seen,' Heb. xi. 1; it maketh absent things present to the soul. But the light of parts is a naked, abstract speculation, it is without feeling, there is no sense and feeling of the things apprehended. True knowledge is expressed by tasting; 1 Peter ii. 5, 'If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' Tasting implieth more than seeing; there is not only apprehension, but experience: Phil. i. 9, 'I pray God that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, *ἐν πάσῃ αἰσθήσει*, in all sense. To others it is but an empty barren, notion: Phil. iii. 10, 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection,' that is, experimentally. Carnal men have no feeling of the force of the truths they apprehend, only now and then some fleeting joys; it is not realising and affective. Strong water and running water differ not in colour, but in taste and virtue. They may know the same truths, but it differeth in relish; they know the things of God only as things in conceit, not in being.

[3.] The light of faith is wrought by the Spirit, this but a hearsay, knowledge gathered out of books and sermons; they shine with a borrowed light, as the moon that is dark in itself, and hath no light rooted in its own body. These shine with other men's light: John

iv. 42, 'Now we believe, not for thy saying, but we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.' Men talk of things by rote after others, and are rather said to rehearse than understand; it is not written in their hearts, but only reported to their ears: Heb. viii. 10, 'I will write my law in their hearts.' Truth is written there by the finger of the Spirit, to others it is but traditional, learned as other arts by man. Now there is a great deal of difference between seeing God in the light of the Spirit, and seeing God and the things of God by the reports of men, as between seeing countries in a map, or book of geography, and knowing them by travel and experience.

[4.] It is a transforming light: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'We all as in a glass beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' Looking upon the image of Christ, we are changed into the same image and likeness, from glory to glory; as Moses his face shone. Conversing with Christ, it altereth and changeth the soul, which is hereby 'renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,' Col. iii. 10. That is no true light and knowledge of God that doth not bridle lusts and purify the heart; a wicked man's knowledge, it is light without fire, directive, not persuasive: 1 John ii. 3, 4, 'Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;' it is a lie and pretence; unactive light is but darkness. In paradise there was a tree of life and a tree of knowledge; many taste of the tree of knowledge that never taste of the tree of life.

[5.] The light of faith is an undoubted certain light, but in wicked men it is always mingled with doubting, ignorance, error, and unbelief. It is not convictive, but a loose, wavering opinion, not a settled, grounded persuasion; they have not 'the riches of the assurance of understanding,' Col. ii. 2; that dependeth on experience, and inward sense of the truth, and is wrought by the Holy Ghost. And therefore the apostle speaketh of the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit: 1 Cor. ii. 4, *ἐν ἀποδείξει τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως*, 'in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.' *Ἀποδείξις* is a clear, convincing argument, by which the judgment is settled; it cometh in upon the soul with evident confirmation.

Secondly, The next thing in the nature of faith is *λήψις*: 'I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them.' There is a receiving Christ and a receiving the word. Sometimes the act of faith is terminated on the person of Christ; as John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name.' Sometimes on the promises; to show that as there is no closing with Christ without the promise, so there is no closing with the promise without Christ; first we receive the word of Christ, and then Christ himself, and in Christ life and salvation; that is the progress of faith: Acts x. 42, 'Through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.'

Observe that faith is a receiving the word of Christ. The notion is elsewhere used: Acts ii. 41, 'Then they that gladly received the

word were baptized.' Unbelief, it is a rejecting the counsel of the word, and faith a receiving it. Unbelief is thus described: Acts xiii. 46, 'Since ye put away the word of God from you.' So Luke vii. 30, 'But the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves;' that is, refused the counsel of God, to their own loss and ruin. On the contrary, when Cornelius was converted, it is said, Acts xi. 1, 'The apostles heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.' So that we may describe faith with reference to this act, a motion in the heart of man, stirred up by the Spirit of God, to receive the whole word of God.

Let me open it a little.

1. Receiving is a relative word, and supposeth an offer. God offereth on his part, and we receive on ours. As in all contracts and covenants between party and party, one party offereth such an advantage or commodity upon such conditions, the other receiveth the offer, consenteth to the conditions, and expecteth that the covenant should be made good; so in the covenant of grace, Christ offereth remission of sins, and the whole blessings of the gospel, under the condition of faith and repentance. We are said to receive this word, or this gospel, when we consent to the conditions, and wait for the accomplishment of the blessing; we are willing to come to trust him for the grace of the covenant, and to come under the bond of the duty of it.

2. In this receiving, the soul must be convinced that it is the word of God, and that he will deal with creatures upon such a covenant. For in this covenant it is not as it is in other contracts; the party contracting doth not appear in person, but dealeth with us by officers and substitutes. God tendereth his covenant by the ministry of man. Now, whosoever would receive it in God's name, must be undoubtedly persuaded that they are commissioned and authorised by God to tender such a covenant to us. Therefore the apostle saith, 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'When ye received the word which ye have heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is indeed) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.' A man that would profit by the ministry must settle himself in this persuasion, that the doctrines delivered in scripture have God for their author. We come in God's stead, to strike up a bargain with you for your souls; this bindeth the ear to attention, the mind to faith, the heart to reverence, the will and conscience to obedience. We are to entertain all the doctrines of the word, without any suspense of judgment and contradiction. We are to put to our seal to Christ's testimony: John iii. 33, 'He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.' Usually there is some privy atheism in us; we look upon the gospel as a golden dream, and well-devised fable. This is properly assent, and should be soundly laid. Lord, thou wilt not fail thy poor creatures, if they venture their souls on thy word.

3. The whole word must be received. In every covenant there is a precept as well as a promise. We mar the very form of it when we reflect on the promise, and neglect the precept. It is great error in them that think that receiving of the word is done when we apply the promises, as if nothing were needful to salvation but to say, I trust that my sins are forgiven me in Christ. The gospel hath not only

promises, but commands, conditions, and articles of the covenant, which are no less to be received than the promises. First, receive the commandment concerning repentance and conversion, with a resolution to cast thyself on Christ; and then be of good confidence, thy sins shall be forgiven thee. There is in faith not only an assent, but consent; assent to the truth of God, consent to the articles of the covenant; assent to the truth of the contract, consent to the terms, and affianced or confident waiting for the promise; all these are in faith. Hypocrites are said 'to receive the word with joy,' Luke viii. 13; but they received only the word of promise with joy. It is pleasing to the conscience to hear of pardon of sins. Men may have vanishing fleeting joys. A carnal man would have God's grace, but he would have none of his counsel.

4. This must be received with all the heart. The work of faith is not confined to the acts of the understanding; there are some motions of the heart. Philip puts the eunuch to this trial, Acts viii. 37, 'Believest thou with all thy heart?' and he said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' God is as careful of the duty of the gospel as of the duty of the law; he that required that we should love him with all our hearts hath also required that we should believe in him with all our hearts; he required the whole heart in love, and he expecteth the whole heart in faith.

Now, because this is the critical difference between true faith and counterfeit, I shall apply this receiving to both the objects of faith, the word and the person of Christ, because the doctrine concerning both is of near affinity, and the one is opened by the other. In receiving the person of Christ, there is the same method of the acts of faith as there is in receiving the word of God. (1.) There is an offer. Faith receiving, presupposeth an offering; we do not snatch at Christ, but receive him. Sinners snatch at Christ sometimes, when God's hand is not open to give him. (2.) We must look at this offering as made by God himself. Faith taketh Christ out of his Father's hands. (3.) We must take whole Christ, as Lord and Saviour; and (4.) We must take him with our whole hearts.

Therefore I shall explain this receiving with the whole heart in reference to both objects, the word and Christ.

First, What is it to receive the word with our whole hearts? There is nothing so difficult as to draw the acts of faith into a method.

1. It implieth an act of the will; there must not only be knowledge and acknowledgment that the doctrine is true, but an actual choice and a willing acceptation. Faith apprehendeth the covenant made in Christ, not only as true, but good; and so answerably there is not only a believing with the mind, but a believing with the heart: Rom. x. 10, 'With the heart man believeth.' The faculty answereth the object: 1 Tim. i. 15, 'This is a faithful saying,' *πιστὸς ὁ λόγος*, and then, *πάνσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος*, 'worthy of all acceptation,' &c. So that there is required some motion of the heart, besides intellectual assent.

2. This act of the will is accompanied with some sensible affection: Heb. xi. 13, *ἀσπασάμενοι τὰς ἐπαγγελίας*, 'they embraced the promises;' they hugged and clasped about, and embraced the promises. All acts of faith do necessarily imply answerable affections. The

children of God embrace the promises with delight, receive the threatenings with trembling and reverence, and the commandments with all cheerfulness: Acts ii. 41, 'Then they that received the word gladly,' ἀσπέρως, not as a people that are overcome receive laws from the conqueror, or as Zipporah circumcised her child, with grudging and discontent, but with hearty and cheerful consent. I confess there is, and ever will be, an opposition of the flesh: a man doth not receive the whole word as a thirsty man receiveth sweet drink, but as a sick man, or one that is thirsty after health receiveth physic, or a bitter potion, with an earnest serious desire, though his appetite loatheth it. There is a hearty consent to God's terms, because they know it will be for their welfare; as Laban, when he heard Jacob's proposals, 'What shall I give thee? the speckled and spotted among the flocks.' Gen. xxx. 34. Laban said, 'Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.' Oh! would to God that this were my share, that God would take up the quarrel between himself and me!

3. This affection is accompanied with a pursuit, or serious making after those hopes. There is a care and anxiousness of obedience, or taking the next course to speed, that we may find him, and feel him in our consciences: 'They received the word gladly, and were baptized,' Acts ii. 41. In every contract where the parties are agreed there is a signing and sealing; so 'they received the word,' and 'were baptized;' that was the next course to come under these hopes. A contract lieth void and dead if there be consent yet no performance. So 'faith without works is dead.' Faith is a consent to God's covenant, yet because there is no answerable obedience, this consent is void, and to no effect. Now this is the utmost extension of the will, in motions and addresses towards Christ. Faith is expressed by coming to Christ, *qui se dat in viam*. A man putteth himself into the way of salvation, upon a search and inquiry after Christ. We know not what will come of it, but we will continue seeking: 'I will go to my father.'

4. These endeavours are supported by affiance, or a resolution to wait upon God till the blessings of the covenant be accomplished and made good. Though they meet with difficulties, they keep wrestling with God: Gen. xxxii. 26, 'I will not let thee go unless thou bless me.' There is an obstinate purpose: Job xiii. 15, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' So they will have Christ, whatever it cost them: Phil. iii. 8, 9, 'I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is after the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' Faith may be shaken, but it will not lose its hold; as a tree groweth though it be bended with the wind. Thus you see what it is to receive the word with our whole heart: not only to acknowledge the truth of it, but to choose and accept it as our direction, with all cheerfulness, and accordingly make out after the hopes of christianity, resolving not to be discouraged, whatever entertainment we meet with from God and the world.

Secondly, There is a receiving Christ with the whole heart. Art thou willing to take Christ upon these terms? Yes, saith the soul,

with all my heart. This answer were enough, if it were simple and genuine. But because we profane and prostitute these words to every slight matter, the deceit is not so easily discovered. We are wont to say of every trifle, I love such a thing with all my heart; I will do it with all my heart; whereas these words are of a sacred sound and importance; and did not we adulterate them so often as we do, but keep them consecrate to God, to whom alone they are proper, the very pronouncing of them would awaken conscience; we could not give such an answer but conscience would give us the lie. Let us then inquire into the thing, and see a little in the nature of the thing (for there is no trust in the expression), what this believing in Christ with all the heart, or receiving Christ with all the heart, doth imply. I answer—

1. It implieth that your whole and sole dependence must be entirely carried out to him. God will have no rivals in the trust and confidence of the creature. A king in his progress, that takes up an inn, will have it wholly to himself, much less will he have any to share with him in his own bedchamber. So here, you must trust Christ alone with your welfare. We believe with our whole heart when we have such a persuasion of his sufficiency that we durst venture all in his hands; in matter of remission of sin we mind no confidence but in his grace: Heb. x. 22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,' ἀληθινῇ καρδίᾳ, a heart that doth not secretly run out to other props and confidences. Truth and sincerity in believing is there intended, not in obedience. Faith is a simple single trust in God's mercy; the heart is very deceitful. Christ beareth the name, but the confidence is secretly built on our own merits; as those women in Isaiah, chap. iv. 1, 'We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name.' People will say they trust in Christ alone, and yet secretly rest on their own innocency and good meanings. But most sensibly this perverseness of trust is discovered in matters of providence; those that put half their trust in Christ, and half in the world, do not believe with their whole hearts. They pretend they can trust Christ for pardon, grace, and glory, and yet cannot trust him for a morsel of bread; they find no difficulty in believing in Christ for salvation and remission of sins, and yet cannot believe that he will give them daily bread. What should be the reason? Heaven and pardon of sins are greater mercies, and, if conscience were opened, we should see the difficulty to obtain them to be greater. There are more natural prejudices, but bodily wants are more pressing to a conscience not sufficiently convinced. And here faith is presently to be exercised with difficulties. In matters of grace, men are more slight and inconsiderate, and content themselves with some general cold persuasions, and therefore do not believe with their whole hearts. Alas! temporal salvation is more easy. Can you look for heaven, who cannot trust him for a crust of bread? Do you know what it is to venture your souls in Christ's hands, notwithstanding sins, notwithstanding death, and yet soon despond in time of danger, and when outward means of preservation fail?

2. To receive Christ with the whole heart is to receive him as an all-sufficient saviour, when every faculty seeketh contentment in Christ.

We ought not only to acknowledge him to be the true mediator, but to choose and receive him for our all-sufficient portion. Worldly men look to Christ as fit for their consciences, but look to the world as an object for their affections. Now Christ should not only pacify the conscience, but satisfy the heart. We should come to him, not only as a physician to heal our wounds, but as a husband to satisfy and content our love, as a meet object for our affections. The whole soul is to clasp about him. He is not only good in a way of profit, but amiable in a way of excellency; therefore the whole heart is to be given him. The things of the world are good but for one thing; food is good to satisfy the appetite, yet we must have clothes to warm the back. But Christ is good for all things; he is not only the physician of the soul, but the beloved: Ps. lxxiii. 25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee;' since there is none so fit to match and wed their affections.

3. To receive him with the whole heart is to make after him with the earnest motions and lively affections of the soul, as desire and delight. Carnal men have a naked imaginary persuasion, but no lively affections to Christ, unless it be for a very small while. They never felt the bitterness of sin, and so have not such vehement and strong motions of heart towards Christ. Conviction of conscience differeth much from literal assent. Carnal men have a literal assent, and a speculative delight in contemplation, but not such labour and travail of soul to get an interest in Christ. Swimming is for life and death; it is not a work proper for him that standeth on firm land, but for those that are ready to be swallowed up of the waves. Nor have they such delight; a stomach always full knoweth not the sweetness of bread. Christ relisheth only with troubled consciences.

Use of the whole. Well, then, you see that there is required to faith, *γνώσις* and *λήψις*, knowledge and receiving.

1. *Γνώσις*, knowledge. There is a knowledge before faith, in faith, and after faith. Before faith; a man must know what he believes, or else he cannot believe. See scriptures: John x. 38, 'That ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him;' 1 John iv. 16, 'We have known, and have believed the love that God hath to us;' John vi. 69, 'We know and believe that thou art Christ.' We must first know before we can believe. In faith there is a knowledge, an apprehension as well as discourse, a pregnant apprehension. Faith is a clear light, it freeth the soul from the mists of prejudice, by representing God in the all-sufficiency of grace and power: Heb. xi. 3, 'Through faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God.' It puzzled the philosophers, but faith maketh all clear. After faith, 2 Peter i. 5, 'Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge.' Faith is the fruit of knowledge, knowledge is the fruit of faith. So Ps. cxix. 66, 'Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandments;' that is, a fuller manifestation. First we receive the word by faith, then we know more. *Oportet discentem credere.* First we know that it is, then how it is. The ground of faith is that they are revealed. How or what they are we learn by more acquaintance and experience. Light is always increasing, most necessary to the christian life. Faith is as knowledge is, more or less

explicit, yet not so explicit but that there is some implicitness in it, as long as we live here: 1 John iii. 2, 'It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but this we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.' We have not a particular account, not a reason of the thing, but we have a reason why we believe it.

2. *Αἰψως*. This is a proper act of faith. God is always on the giving, and we on the receiving hand; we receive the word, we receive Christ, and we receive remission of sins, and glory; the main of our duty is but a receiving.

Let me press you to receive the word, to receive Christ.

1. Receive the word, give it a kind entertainment. There is an act of consideration; meditate upon it seriously, that truth may not float in the understanding, but sink into the heart: Luke ix. 44, 'Let these sayings sink down into your hearts.' Believe it: the truth is a sovereign remedy; but there wanteth one ingredient to make it work, and that is faith: Heb. iv. 2, 'The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.' There is an act of the will and affections, which is called, 'a receiving the truth in love,' 2 Thes. ii. 10. Make room for it, that carnal affections may not vomit and throw it up again. Christ complaineth that 'his word had no place in them,' John viii. 37, *οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν*, like a queasy stomach possessed with cholera, that casts up all that is taken into it: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'A natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.' Let it lodge, and quietly exercise a sovereign command over the soul.

2. Receive Christ in the word. In a contract, there is not only a receiving a bond, but, by virtue of the bond, an inheritance conveyed to us. So you must not only receive the word; we are not saved by giving credit to any maxim of religion, *fides non est assensus axiomati*. Not they that saw the ark—many saw it, and scoffed—but they that were in it, were saved from drowning. When a man is ready to perish in the floods, it is not enough to see land, but we must reach it, stand upon it, if we would be safe. It is not a naked contemplation, but a real implantation into Christ. Now, if you will know it, whatever was in Christ in the history, must be in you in the mystery. You are adopted sons, 1 John iii. 1. Christ must be formed and conceived in you, Gal. iv. 19. You must suffer, and be crucified to the world and sin, Rom. vi. 6. You must be buried and raised up again, Col. ii. 12. All is to be done in a spiritual manner. I speak not this to turn all scripture into an allegory, but every act of Christ hath some spiritual accommodation.

So much for these two acts or parts of faith, they have known surely, and have received thy word.

Before I go off from this clause, there are two or three observations to be raised, especially if we compare this verse with John xvi. 27–31, 'For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them. Do

ye now believe?' From whence I observe, that this was but a late acknowledgment: ver. 30, 'Now we are sure, and by this we believe, that thou camest forth from God.' And presently, within an hour, Christ commendeth it to his Father, 'They have known surely, and have believed.'

1. Observe, how ready Christ is to take notice of the good that is wrought in us. He watcheth for an occasion to commend us to God. Satan and his instruments, they watch for our halting: Jer. xx. 10, 'All my familiars watched for my halting, peradventure he will be enticed.' Let us watch, say they, we may have matter against him. The devil is a spy, that lieth upon the catch that he may frame an accusation against you before God—(a dog doth not wait for a bit from his master's trencher, more than he doth for a passionate word)—some evil gesture and practice, whereof to accuse us; so his instruments watch to defame you in the world. But now Jesus Christ looketh after matter of praise and commendation. 'Now we know verily, and believe;' and Christ presently telleth his Father of it. Oh! what an encouragement should this be to press us to grow in knowledge, and to abound in every good work! You furnish your intercessor with matter of praise, and give your advocate an advantage against your accuser. Christ watcheth for a good action as the devil doth for a bad. He is a swift witness, not only against his adversaries, but for his people: Mal. iii. 5, 'I will come near to you in judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers,' &c. He cometh to convince them sooner than they are aware; none of their sins are unknown to him, and they are brought in court before they dream of it. And the godly have a witness in heaven too. So Job xvi. 20, 'Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.' And he is a swift witness; we reap the fruit of many actions as soon as they are performed. A continual experience we have of this disposition of Christ in the speedy answer of prayers: Isa. lxiv. 24, 'And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.' He is more ready to answer than we to crave. So it is said to Daniel, Dan. x. 12, 'From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard.' See God's readiness to accept the services of his people; in the first day of the three weeks he had set apart, ver. 2. Daniel thought it would be long work, and God heard him the first day. Certainly God delighteth in the graces of his children, when he doth so readily take notice of the first act and exercise of them.

2. I observe, by comparing that place with this, that the apostles' faith was weak, not only imperfect, but inconstant, and subject to wavering, and yet Christ commendeth it to his Father: John xvi. 30, 31, 32, 'We are sure thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should tell thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? behold, the hour cometh, and now is, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.' Yea, and indeed, if we look into the history of the gospel, we shall find their faith was very weak. It is true they did receive him for the Messiah, and did acknowledge that he was the Son of God, his natural and only Son, which they knew by his baptism,

by his transfiguration, by his miracles; they believed that he was the Lamb taking away the sins of the world, that he was the living manna that came down from heaven; but all this while their faith was weak; they had but a confused sight of his godhead, of his eternal generation by the Father; they knew little of his death, were leavened with the thoughts of a terrene kingdom and pompous Messiah; understood not his predictions of his death and passion. Peter gave him advice to the contrary, and at his death denied him. So that though they knew him to be the Redeemer and Saviour of the world, yet the manner of his death and passion they knew not: 'We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel,' Luke xxiv. 21. Observe how Christ commendeth weak faith. Certainly he loveth to encourage poor sinners when he praiseth their mean and weak beginnings: Mat. xii. 20, 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, until he send forth judgment unto victory.' Christ will not despise weak beginnings, though there be more smoke than flame, but little strength. Certainly we should not despise the day of small things, nor discourage learners, and blast the early blossoms with reproach and censure: Cant. ii. 13, 'The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.' Christ taketh notice in his garden of the green figs; the green knots or buds are acceptable to him, though they want ripeness and sweetness, as well as the softer clusters, the imperfect offers of the spring. We should learn hence to do our best in believing; Christ will help you against weakness, and pardon imperfection.

3. Observe again, from Christ's mentioning their obedience, their knowledge, their faith. The Father knew for whom Christ prayed; neither was there need to set forth their faith and obedience in so many words, but that in the hearing of the apostles he would draw forth the grounds of their thankfulness, and the evidences of their interest. Well, then, this is the use we should make of our graces and duties, to praise the Lord, and to look upon them as so many arguments and evidences of his love; partly to show them what kind of persons God will hear, such as know, and believe, and obey, though in a weak measure.

Thirdly, The next thing in the text is the chief object of justifying faith, and that is the authority of Christ's mediation.

Observe, the sum of christian doctrine is to show that Christ was sent by God to save sinners. This is the ground of all hope and firm confidence; he came out from the Father to purchase grace, and went back again that we might receive it.

But let us consider the parts.

1. 'They have surely known that I came out from thee.'—This may be expounded two ways:—(1.) From thy essence, by eternal generation; (2.) By thy command, as mediator. If you take the former sense, it showeth that the authority of Christ and of his Father were equal; he came out from him. If you take the latter, it denotes their equal charity and love; the Father sent him; and out of the same love, the Son came out from the Father; he assumed flesh, emptied himself, and performed the office of a mediator, committed to him by the Father.

Which is to be preferred? Some say the first, *παρὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλθον*, it is a word proper to the natural generation of the Son: Micah v. 2, 'Whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.' The Spirit's procession is expressed by *ἐκπορεύεται*, as the generation of Son by *ἐξέρχεται*. It is said of none of the saints that they come out from God. But though this eternal generation must not be excluded, yet that which is chiefly intended here is that he came out by the command of God as mediator, as is clear by that place, John xvi. 28, 'I came forth from my Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go unto the Father.' It is applied to his appearing as mediator before God.

Observe the great love of Christ, in that he came out from God for our sakes.

[1.] Consider from whom he came, from the Father, from his bosom, from the full fruition of the godhead, from the centre of rest, the seat of blessedness. We shall know what place the bosom of the Father is, when we shall come to heaven, and shall be glorified with Christ.

[2.] How he came; not in pomp, or the equipage of a prince, but in the form of a servant. He was lord of all things, but he came now as the servant of God's decrees: John vi. 38, 'I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' He was God's servant, not upon terms of grace; his covenant was a covenant of works: Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' He was subject to worldly powers, 'a servant of rulers,' Isa. xlix. 7. He voluntarily submitted himself to worldly powers. Nay, he came to be our servant: Mat. xx. 28, 'Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' He came to serve in the ministry of the gospel, to lay aside all the interests of his human nature: Rom. xv. 3, 'Even as Christ pleased not himself.'

[3.] For whom he came, for wretched men, to seat us in the vacant places of fallen angels.

2. 'And they have believed that thou hast sent me.'—There is a mission on God's part, as well as obedience on Christ's.

Observe the love of God in sending Christ, and giving him a charge concerning us. This sending implieth distinction, but not inferiority. Persons equal by mutual consent may send one another. The Father sent him because in the business of salvation the original authority is said to reside in God the Father. God would not trust an angel with your salvation, but sent his own Son: 1 John iv. 9, 10, 'In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' He thought nothing too dear nor too near for us. His Son was not sent to treat with us, but to take our nature, to be substituted into our room and place. But this point, of God's sending Christ, hath fallen under our consideration in handling other verses of this chapter.