

tianity, yet for some of Christ's lesser institutions; present truths usually go cross to interests.

3. The less trouble abroad, the more at home; if you do not conflict with a naughty world, yet with a naughty heart. There are doubts in point of comfort, difficulties in point of obedience. A christian, in good earnest, never meeteth with a sleepy lazy time, all calm and rest. It is good to be jealous of ourselves; it doth not weaken our confidence in Christ, but our fleshly security.

Object. 5. But I have many self-ends, and do what I can, they will be interposing; and I can do nothing for Christ, but am ready to be biassed by some carnal aims.

Ans. It is impossible to think to be without failings, as to our ends and principles, as well as the manner of duty; but a christian is judged by his main scope and purpose of his life. If this be the main thing, Christ will own you, and intercede with God for you.

SERMON XIV.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.—JOHN XVII. 11.

HITHERTO Christ had argued with the Father, and showed many reasons why he would pray for the disciples. Now he cometh from arguments to requests. Here the prayer itself beginneth. His first request is, that God would have a care of them when he was gone from them; as a father, when he is about to die, commendeth his children to the care and tutelage of a near friend; so doth Christ commend his disciples to God: 'And now I am no more in the world,' &c.

The circumstances notable in the verse are these—

1. The occasion of the prayer, wherein there is a new cause and reason why he commendeth them to the Father, 'And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.'

2. The compellation of the party to whom the prayer is made, 'Holy Father.' Titles are suited to requests: Rom. xv. 13, 'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.'

3. The matter of the prayer, for perseverance in grace, 'Keep through thine own name.'

4. The parties prayed for, 'Those which thou hast given me;' an argument often urged before.

5. The end of the prayer, or of the blessing asked in prayer, 'That they may be one;' which is amplified by the exemplary pattern, 'as we are one.' Or rather, the whole is a new request; two matters are prayed for—conservation from evil, and perfection in good. Christ prayed for *conservationem a malo, et perfectionem in bono*.

In this verse there is a large field of matter. Let me explain the words, and then raise some practical observations.

First, I begin with the occasion.

'I am no more in the world;' that is, by and by I shall be no more. Christ was yet in the world; for he saith, ver. 13, 'These things I speak in the world;' still subject to the miseries of it; his passion was not over, his sorest combat was at last, and that was nigh at hand; but Christ went to it with such a resolved mind, that he seemed already to be exempted from a worldly condition. But how 'no more in the world,' since he saith, 'I am with you to the end of the world'? He is spiritually still with us, but he was about to withdraw his corporal presence.

'But these are in the world.'—I am almost on shore, but these are still to remain at sea, floating upon the waves; out of the duty of their calling, they are to stay behind, and must expect tempests, labours, dangers, and persecutions, infirmities within, and temptations without. The world is a step-mother to the saints; Christ pitieth their case that they are to stay in the world, as those that are in the haven pity their fellows that are left behind at sea in the midst of the storm.

'And I come unto thee.'—An explication of what he said before, 'I am no more in the world;' only it addeth something more. 'I am no more in the world,' implieth only his death; but 'I come to thee,' his ascension. It is expressed before: John xvi. 5, 'I go my way to him that sent me: I go to the Father,' ver. 10. I am about to enter into the glory of the Father. It doth not signify, as Lyrannus would have it, I come to thee in prayer, by way of address and supplication; but, I come to be with thee in glory. Mark, there was a great deal of time yet to pass, forty days after the resurrection. Faith presents things future as present; in this sense we enter heaven before our time.

In this clause, the occasion, I observe three things:—

1. Christ's ascension, *Father, I come to thee.*
2. The necessary ceasing of his corporal presence by virtue of that ascension, *I am no more in the world.*
3. Christ's care to make up that defect to his people; it is the occasion of the present address to God.

Of these in their order.

First, Of Christ's ascension, 'I come to thee.' Here is—(1.) The history; (2.) The reasons; (3.) The benefits; (4.) The use that we may make of it.

1. The history of Christ's ascension. There are many circumstances; I shall touch upon them briefly.

[1.] The time when he had finished his work, not only of doing and suffering, but giving sufficient instructions to the apostles about his kingdom: Acts i. 3, 'He was seen of them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.' As Hezekiah was to 'set his house in order before he died,' Isa. xxxviii. 1, so Christ would not ascend into heaven till he had set all at rights upon earth. Christ would have his house well governed after his death, and therefore stayeth forty days to give instructions.

[2.] The place from whence he ascended; from the Mount of Olives, Acts i. 12. A mount, a high and eminent place, to ascertain them of the truth of his ascension; he did not withdraw himself secretly, as at other times, but in open view. The place is yet again notable: the

Mount of Olives was the place from whence he went to be crucified : the same mountain yielded him a passage to his cross and his crown ; there his pains and torments began, in the garden of that mount, and thence he ascended. How often doth the Lord make that place that hath been the scene of our sorrows to be the first steps to our rising and advancement ! Wherever the saints die, they have their Olivet, in the prison, on the scaffold, their sick beds, where they have been racked with tormenting pains. As sometimes with wicked men, the place of sin is the place of vengeance. So Ahab's dogs licked up his blood in the same place where he shed the blood of Naboth.

[3.] The place to which, the third heaven. The tabernacle figured the church, the temple heaven. In the temple were three partitions ; the court, where was the altar of burnt-offerings ; the holy place, where was the table, candlestick, shew-bread, and the altar of burnt-incense ; then the holy of holies, where the high priest came once a year. So in that vast space which the scriptures call heaven, there are, as it were, three storeys—the etherial heaven, the starry heaven, and the heaven of heavens ; into this Christ, as our high priest, is entered. There was not only a change of his presence, but a translation of his body into the high and holy place.

[4.] The witnesses, the eleven apostles ; these were his choice witnesses, not the whole company of believers.

[5.] Another circumstance was his last action a little before his ascension : Luke xxiv. 50, ' He blessed his disciples ; ' nay, it is added again, to put the greater emphasis upon it, ver. 51, ' And while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.' It is the fashion of good men to die blessing ; Jacob and Moses, when they were to take their leaves of the world, they blessed the tribes. Christ, before he would go, would first leave his blessing ; nay, the last act with which he would close up his life was an act of blessing, to show that now the curse was removed, and he was going to heaven to convey the blessing to all the heirs of salvation : Acts iii. 26, ' Unto you first, God having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities ; ' as God blessed Adam and Eve, when his work was done.

[6.] The manner : Acts i. 9, ' When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.' The cloud answered to God's appearance in the tabernacle. When we look on the clouds, this was Christ's chariot ; he will come again in like manner.

[7.] In his ascension he went to heaven as a conqueror, he triumphed over his enemies, and gave gifts to his friends : Eph. iv. 8, ' When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' As glorious conquerors lead their chief enemies fettered in iron chains. So Col. ii. 15, ' Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it,' *ἐν ἀπτῶ, non sudore et sanguine aliorum, ut quondam imperatores solebant.* There is some difficulty about the exposition of that place ; those seem too literally to interpret it that think there was some open pomp and show. The Papists say he went to the *limbus patrum*, and took Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other holy men of the Old Testament, along with

him in triumph to heaven ; but then he should have taken the devils. Zanchy thinks there was some real visible triumph, visible not to all, but to God, angels, and men, leading the devils through the air. Still it seemeth too gross, and to be asserted without warrant. But this must be interpreted suitably to the other acts of his office; this triumph must be referred to his ascension. Christ fought for heaven, and struck the last stroke on the cross, seized on the spoil at his resurrection, led them in triumph at his ascension, and by his quiet sitting on the throne his subjects enjoy the benefit.

[8.] Christ's entertainment by the angels. Some were left to comfort the apostles: Acts i. 10, 'While they looked steadfastly towards heaven, two men stood by in white apparel.' These two men were two angels in the shape of men. When the husband is to go a long journey, he writeth to the wife from the next stage, whilst her grief is fresh and running, and giveth an account of his welfare. Christ despatcheth two messengers out of his glorious train, which message being done, they accompany him with other angels into heaven: Dan. vii. 13, 'I saw one like the Son of man, with the clouds of heaven, and they brought him near before him.' They, that is, the angels; the Son of man, that is, Christ, as appeareth by the next verse, they wait upon him, and guard him into the presence of God. Certainly if the angels came so cheerfully to proclaim his incarnation when born, what triumph is there by that blessed company in heaven at his ascension ! Still the angels are in Christ's company ; when he cometh to judgment, the angels shall come with him. Christ coming into the presence of the Father, is royally attended ; his entrance into heaven is glorious, with glorious applauses and acclamations: Ps. xxiv. 11, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in ;' viz., at the coming of his humanity ; so Justin Martyr, Basil, Euthymius. But clearly there is an allusion to the bringing the ark into the place prepared by David for it ; a figure of Christ's entrance into heaven. They applaud him as mighty in battle, as newly returned from the spoils of his enemies. The entrance of a victorious and triumphant captain is there described, and so it is proper to Christ. Once more, the blessed saints have the like applause. Isaiah describes it, Isa. lxiii. 1-3, 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah ? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength ? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat ? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me,' &c. There is a dialogue, as before, to express the saints' acclamations to Christ ; the church is brought in there wondering at Christ's glorious triumph over all his enemies, as returning victorious from some bloody fight, like a great commander in goodly rich robes, besprinkled with the blood of his enemies.

[9.] The last thing is his welcome from God: Ps. ii. 8, 'I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,' &c. ; Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool ;' compared with Mat. xxii. 44. In the day of his inauguration God will say, Welcome, Son ; sit at my right hand ; all the

kingdoms of the earth are thine. Christ doth not only enter as a conqueror, but as a favourite: Son, thy work is well done; sit at my right hand; that is God's first word to him; and then, Ask what thou wilt, it is thine. It is a fashion among great princes, when they would show great affection or extraordinary liking to any, they bid them ask what they would; as Herod to Herodias's daughter: Mat. xiv. 6, 7, 'When Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod: whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.' And Ahasuerus to Esther: Esth. v. 3, 'What wilt thou, queen Esther, and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee, to the half of the kingdom.'

2. The reasons why. Christ would not have gone, if it had not been expedient: John xvi. 7, 'Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away.' A woman had rather have her husband live at home than go to the Indies, but when she considereth that it is to do her good, to enrich the family by traffic, she yieldeth her consent, it is a profitable voyage. So it is expedient that Christ should go to heaven. In the infancy of the church Christ was present as a nurse, but he would not have them always hang on the teat. The reasons of Christ's ascension are these:—

[1.] He is gone that we may look upon him as in a greater capacity to do us good. All weakness is now removed from him, his human nature glorified, and placed in heaven, his majesty restored; we may now reflect upon the glory of his person with comfort; he is now a king on the throne, a king in his palace, and a place of royal residence. David was king as soon as anointed by Samuel, but when he was crowned in Hebron then did he actually administer the kingdom. Christ had his followers in the days of his flesh, as David had his four hundred companions in the desert. The thief owned Christ upon the cross, and Christ tells him, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' Luke xxiii. 43. What may we not expect from Christ now in heaven! Every office is royally exercised; as a prophet he sendeth out his Spirit; as a king, he ruineth his adversaries; as a priest, he intercedeth with God.

[2.] To prepare a place for us: John xiv. 2, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' It is good to consider how Christ prepareth heaven for us by his ascension. It was prepared before the world began, by the decree of God the Father: Mat. xxv. 34, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit a kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' This was an inheritance intended for the heirs of promise; by a free choice he designed the persons, and their particular portion and degree of glory. But because we are to hold heaven, not only by gift, but by purchase, Christ came from heaven to prepare it, and went to heaven again to prepare; yet further to open the door that was before shut up; as our head, he went to seize upon it in our right; as our legal head, he possesseth heaven in our names; as a guardian taketh up lands for the heir, Christ holdeth heaven in our right; till we be ready for it, he keepeth possession. And as our mystical head and author of grace, he dispenseth the Spirit, and maketh us fit for that place, making intercession for us, that our sins be no impediment. He is called our forerunner: Heb. vi. 20,^a 'Whither the forerunner is for us entered,

even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.' His going is to make way for us; as our harbinger, to take up rooms and lodgings for us. As the captain of our salvation, he hath taken up quarters for himself and all his company: Heb. ii. 10, 'It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings.' Christ hath opened heaven's door that was shut up; there was a guard set upon paradise, but Christ hath removed it. He is gone to fit all things for our entertainment, as Joseph was sent into Egypt to prepare for Jacob. Die when we will, our place is ready; there is nothing to keep us out. The church is tossed with waves, but Christ is gone ashore, and hath secured for us a landing-place; and his ascension is a pledge of ours, as he rose as the firstfruits of them that slept. It is the meritorious, exemplary, efficient cause of our ascension.

[3.] To represent his satisfaction. The Levitical priest was to enter into the sanctuary with blood, so doth Christ into heaven, to show that he had done his work. The apostle hath an expression which needeth opening: Heb. viii. 4, 'If he were on earth, he should not be a priest.' What is the meaning? Was not Christ a priest when he was on earth? I answer—Yes. Why then doth the apostle say that 'if he were on earth he should not be a priest?' that is, he could not discharge the whole office of the priesthood; for the high priest once a year carried the sacrifice through the court before the sanctuary, and there killed it, and there took the blood thereof into the holiest of all, and presented himself before the Lord to intercede for the people: so Christ carried his sacrifice out of the city, offered it up to God, and then entered into the heavenly sanctuary, where he liveth for ever to intercede for us, and his blood always runneth fresh; and therefore, if he were on earth he could not discharge the whole office of a priest. So Heb. ix. 24, 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us,' *ἐμφανισθῆναι*. As the high priest entered on the behalf of the people, with the names of the twelve tribes on his breast and shoulders, so Christ is entered on the behalf of us all, bearing the memorial of every saint on his heart. Mark, the apostle saith, 'Now to appear,' not only once. The high priest stayed not within the sanctuary, but Christ is our constant lieger in heaven, all the time from his ascension unto this day, constantly, still, while it is called *now*.

[4.] To pour out the Spirit; John vii. 39, 'The Holy Ghost was not yet given, for Christ was not yet glorified.' When the husband is wanting, then he sendeth tokens; so when Christ is glorified, then he giveth out the Spirit; as Elijah, when he ascended, let fall his mantle. Proper acts have their proper fruits. Christ in earth established our right, and in heaven he puts us in actual possession; the purchase was by Christ's exinanition, the application by his advancement. It was not meet Christ should use a royal act till his advancement, and till he went to the Father; he ascended then, that his blood might not be spilt in vain, but that he might be in a capacity to execute his own testament; unless Christ had ascended, we needed not this supply.

3. The fruits and benefits of his ascension.

[1.] It is a sign God hath received satisfaction. His resurrection was a pledge of it, then our surety was let out of prison, the Lord sent an angel to remove the stone; not to supply any power in Christ, but as a judge when the law is satisfied, sendeth an officer to open the prison doors with power and authority: Heb. xiii. 20, 'The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus.' Christ was not to break prison. While the surety lieth in prison, the debtor can have no discharge. But now Christ's ascension gives a further degree of assurance. Christ is not only taken out of prison, but taken up to God with glory and honour. God hath taken up our surety to himself, and rewarded him. Christ hath perfectly done his work, or else he had never been taken out of the grave, much less taken up to God. God is well pleased with him; he hath not only a discharge, but a reward. Christ is said not only to ascend, but to be received into glory, 1 Tim. iii. 16, *ἀνέβη, ἀνελήφθη*, an active, and a passive word; the one noteth the power of his godhead, the other noteth the grant of the Father. Christ took upon him the quality of our surety, and he must pay every farthing ere he can go to his Father. It is a sufficient pledge: John xvi. 10, 'Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more.' Thus there was an everlasting righteousness established; he was never to see God's face more if he had not perfectly done his work: Gen. xliii. 5, 'Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.' He is God's favourite.

[2.] It is a pledge of our ascension: John iii. 13, 'No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man that is in heaven.' *Ascendit solus, sed non totus*. Head and members must be together; our head being there before, the members must follow after. Christ speaketh as if he were not content with his own heaven without us: ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.' Christ took our flesh to heaven, and left his Spirit, which is an earnest of our glory: 2 Cor. v. 5, 'He hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.' God never taketh anything from his children, but he sendeth them a better thing in the room of it.

[3.] We have an intercessor at God's right hand, a favourite in the court of heaven: 1 John ii. 1, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous;' as when offenders have a favourite in court. We need a mediator in heaven; he is gone to disannul all Satan's accusation. The sacrificing part is done and ended, and his intercession now taketh place. We have these two great advantages in prayer—Christ is our advocate, and the Spirit our notary.

Use 1. Information.

1. It informeth us of the privileges of God's children. When a child of God dieth, he doth but go to his Father. Christ and we have the same relation: John xx. 17, 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' He is no more in the world, but still he is. He doth not say, 'I am no more,' but 'I am no more in the world;' they do not leave life, but the world. As Christ was the Son of God by nature, they are the sons of God by grace, and when they die, they go to their heavenly Father, to a sweet rest, to the bosom

of God. The same entertainment Christ had, we shall have, a joyful entertainment, a sweet welcome when we come to heaven, and the conduct of angels thither: Luke xvi. 22, 'The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.' God will take us as it were by the hand, with a 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,' Mat. xxv. 21.

2. It informeth us that all that Christ did was for a believer's use and comfort; if he cometh into the world, it is to merit; if he ascendeth into heaven, it is to apply. He descended from heaven for the redemption of man; after that work is accomplished, he ascendeth thither again to bestow it on us; and at the last day he will come again and fetch his bride; as when all things are ready, the heir cometh in person to fetch the bride into his father's house. Going, coming, staying, still Christ is ours. He was born for us, he lived for us, he rose again and ascended for us: it is for our good that he went away; whatever he did, in his abasement and exaltation, it was for our good.

3. It informeth us that the greatest comforts may be supplied, Christ's corporal presence by the presence of the Spirit: 2 Cor. i. 5, 'That as our sufferings in Christ Jesus have abounded, so our consolation also hath abounded through Christ.' They should lose nothing by his departure: John xiv. 16, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.' He would not leave them orphans. We cannot be made unhappy by the want of any outward comfort; we have the more of God, the less we have of these outward helps. If the corporal presence of Christ can be recompensed by the presence of the Spirit, certainly lesser supports of life will be recompensed.

Use 2. Exhortation.

1. To all sorts of persons to get an interest in Christ, and to clear it up to their souls. How sweet would it be if when we are no more to be in this world, we could say, 'Holy Father, I come to thee!' We all affect this, 'Let my latter end be like his,' as Balaam spake. *At oportuit sic vixisse.* An evidence of this is, if you ascend with Christ: Eph. ii. 6, 'He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' Head and heart ought to be together. Your head is in heaven; if your heart be there too, you are members of his mystical body. How shall a man know that he is ascended with Christ?—

[1.] If the things of the world seem small; as when we are in a high place, men seem as ants. Worldly glory will appear to be small, and worldly profits small. But when we are upon earth, heavenly things seem small, as stars appear but as spangles.

[2.] If you behave yourselves to him as to a glorified person. Do you serve him? John xii. 26, 'If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.' Carnal men crucify him again.

[3.] If you keep yourselves 'unspotted from the world,' James i. 26. No unclean thing shall enter into heaven. The world is a defiling thing; that filth that cleaveth to our fingers in telling of money is an emblem of the filthiness of the world. A man that looketh to

be like Christ in glory certainly would not defile himself in the world. If a prince marry a mean woman, would he endure to see her live like a scullion? Christ hath married our nature. A man that loveth the world, and would always live here, is like a scullion that lieth among the pots. Would you yourselves hug nastiness, and embrace the dunghill?

2. To press God's children to be holy and heavenly in their minds, to wean their affections from the world. We should be where Christ is: Phil. iii. 20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;' Col. iii. 1, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.' Who would not desire to be in heaven now Christ is there? As the loadstone draws iron to it, let us be present in heaven, as Christ is present on the earth by the Spirit. Though our bodies are tied with the fetters of the flesh, yet let our souls ascend, let our minds be there, our wishes, our desires there; by these means we walk in heaven before our time. A stone, though it breaks to pieces by the fall, will move to its centre; though we naturally abhor death, we should desire it to be with Christ. It is a shame that a stone should be carried with greater force to its centre than we to Christ.

Use 3. Comfort. We have Christ for us in the heavens: Heb. iv. 14, 'Seeing therefore that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.' We have Christ always for us in heaven; he hath a part of his office to perform there. His absence doth not hinder us from having a right to him, or a spiritual possession of him. He is ours, and he hath his residence in heaven, and hath power to open it to us and give us entrance. His high honour doth not hinder him from the discharge of his office to do us good. He is at God's right hand, and yet 'a minister of the sanctuary.' Christ hath a ministry, and part of his service to perform in heaven; is our faithful agent: Heb. viii. 1, 2, 'We have such a high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary.' For all his glory, Christ is called τῶν ἁγίων λειτουργός, a minister of holy things; he taketh care of all holy things which we present to God, and to convey holy and spiritual things to us. Christ is not stately: many forget their poor friends when advanced; Christ regardeth his poor church as much as ever. The butler, when he was advanced, forgot Joseph: but he remembereth us; he disdaineth not to look after every poor christian: Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' His heart is not changed by his honour, but he in a greater capacity to do us good. Having such a friend in heaven, we need not fear a foe upon earth. Heaven is open for us: Heb. x. 19, 20, 'Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh.'

Use 4. Direction in the sacrament. If we have anything to do with Christ, we know where to seek him: 'Blessed are they that believe, and have not seen,' John xx. 19. Those that are far from court never saw the king. God hath removed Christ out of sight that we might behold him by faith. Let us look for him in the sacrament,

not for his bodily presence. How can he be there bodily, when he is received into glory? But for his spiritual presence, the influences of his grace, and a derivation of virtue from his person.

Secondly. The next point is the necessary ceasing of his corporal presence upon his ascension: 'I am no more in the world, but these are in the world.' Let us see the reason why he will be no more with us. Now the reasons why Christ would withdraw his bodily presence from us are these:—

1. That he might try the world, and yet in a way suitable to his glorious estate. Christ, when he came to try the Jews, he came in disguise, not as the Son of God, in majesty and glory: John i. 11, 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not.' Still to try men's obedience there must be some veil. If he should be present in the world, in a glorious way becoming his majesty and empire, there would be no trial; and therefore in a manner he still cometh in disguise, his glory is veiled under the ministry of men, and carried on in a spiritual manner. If he should appear in glory and power, sinners durst not quack, and so the wickedness of man would not be discovered, nor would the faith of his people be exercised with such praise and honour if he were personally and gloriously present. This is the commendation and praise of christianity, that they can 'walk by faith' when they cannot 'walk by sight;' 2 Cor. v. 7, 'We walk by faith, not by sight.' They see not Christ, because he is absent in body; yet they believe in him, and love him, and send their hearts after him. So 1 Peter i. 8, 'Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' Faith is eagle-eyed, and can look above the clouds. The absence of Christ did not prejudice their comfort and hope. Faith contenteth itself with an intellectual sight and certainty. This is a trial of christians, when they can believe in Christ, and rejoice in Christ as if they did see him with their bodily eyes, and hear him with their bodily ears. *Ibi figunt desiderium, quo nequeunt inferre conspectum*, saith Leo—They fasten their hearts upon him, though they cannot fasten their eyes. Faith is sight enough. Thus would Christ try the world; but yet, as I said, in a way suitable to his glorious estate. If he should still have continued his body among us in that state of weakness wherein he conversed in the world, his holy body would still be subject to abuse, and the injuries and scorn of wicked men, which would not agree with his glorification; and therefore, after his resurrection, he only showed his body to some few chosen witnesses, and so departed into heaven, that it might be no more seen, till he cometh to the last judgment with glory and power. So Christ himself saith, Mat. xxiii. 39, 'Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;' that is, till ye be compelled to say so, though now ye are angry at the children that welcomed me in this manner: Mat. xxvi. 64, 'Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.' Never till then, after I am taken down from the cross and buried.

2. That way might be made for his spiritual presence. Some presence of Christ there must be for our comfort and safety: 'I will not leave you comfortless, *ὀρφάνους*, but will come unto you,' John xiv. 18.

That Christ is still spiritually present with the church is clear by those promises to the apostles and to believers. To the apostles and their successors : Mat. xxviii. 20, 'I am with you always, to the end of the world.' Into whatsoever place and time of the world our lot is cast, we may have an assurance of Christ's presence, that is, of his assistance and blessing, as much as if he were actually and corporally present with us. To ministers : now if they improve their interest, they might have Christ in their company, as the apostles had ; they are taken into the same patent and charter. So also to all believers : Mat. xviii. 20, 'Wherever two or three are met together in my name, I am present in the midst of them.' Whenever we are met together in any religious work and business, Christ's gracious presence is with us ; in this sense he will never depart from believers. Now this gracious presence was not vouchsafed till his corporal presence was removed. Partly because Christ will do nothing unnecessarily. When he was personally present, to solve their doubts, to instruct them in all cases, the Spirit was not poured out in such abundance ; as it is usual still with God to make up to us in spiritual supplies what we want in outward helps. Partly because his disciples had carnal thoughts of his bodily presence, and rested in it, which was to be confuted by his absence. Partly to make way for his unlimited universal influence ; his bodily presence could only be in some places ; but now he is ascended, 'he filleth all things,' Eph. iv. 10. As the sun, if it should come down and shine on one particular field, it could not diffuse its beams far and near ; but now it is fixed in the firmament, nothing is hidden from its light. So Christ exalted, scattereth his beams and influences everywhere, into all parts and corners of the world. Partly because it was meet that Christ should enter into his glory and kingdom, before he declared his efficacy to men by the more plentiful pouring out the Spirit ; as princes use at their coronation to give gifts and send abroad ambassadors. So when Christ was in his royal palace, 'he gave gifts unto men, and he gave some, apostles ; and some, prophets ; and some, evangelists ; and some, pastors and teachers,' Eph. iv. 8-11.

Use 1. For confutation of the Lutherans, who, to establish their doctrine of consubstantiation, make Christ's ascension to be, not a local remove, but only a change of the manner of his presence ; they say he is still corporally present, but not visibly ; as if the human nature of Christ were made invisibly omnipresent, and not locally removed and carried into heaven. This is a doctrine contrary to scriptures ; for it is expressly said, Acts i. 11, that 'he was taken up into heaven.' And by virtue of this taking up he is no more in the world, no more in the earth, nor in any place thereof ; for it is said, Acts iii. 21, 'That the heavens must contain him till the time of the restitution of all things ;' there is his personal presence fixed. And therefore 'if any say, Lo here, or Lo there, believe him not.' It is flatly contradictory to scripture that Christ should be corporally present on earth till he cometh to judgment ; and it is contrary to the truth of Christ's body ; though it be glorified, it is not deified ; a body cannot be omnipresent and without quantity, for then it is no more a body. And it is a doctrine barren, and of no use ; the presence of Christ's

body is not so absolutely necessary to the comfort of a christian : John vi. 63, 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.' Nearness or distance of place doth not help or hinder his presence with us or efficacy upon us. The degree of his gracious operation doth not depend upon the degree of his personal presence ; as if Christ were like the sun, shining more or less hot according to the difference of his posture and situation. Christ doth not work like a natural agent, by contact, but according to his free pleasure, and the wise dispensation of his own will ; and our communion with him is wholly spiritual and mystical, not gross and carnal : 'The flesh profiteth nothing.' Yea, it is against our comfort. Christ hath business to do for us in heaven, and it is our advantage that he is no more in the world. If he were not in heaven, he were not a priest : Heb. viii. 4, 'If he were on earth, he could not be a priest.' And again, Heb. vii. 26, we had need of a priest 'who is made higher than the heavens ;' that is, that is ascended into the third heaven, those *ἀχειροποίητα ἅγια*, 'those holy places not made with hands, now to appear in the presence of God for us,' Heb. ix. 24. But to leave this.

Use 2. To press christians to look for the spiritual presence of Christ, though they do not enjoy his bodily. You may make use of Christ, now he is in heaven, as the disciples did on earth, to ask him questions, to seek his counsel, to commend your prayers and persons to God. It is no disadvantage to faith that Christ is removed out of sight, but only an occasion given whereby it may discover itself with more praise. Therefore let us believe in Christ, though we see him not ; we shall one day see him in the heavens to our comfort, and to the terror of the wicked ; in the meantime, let faith serve instead of vision. It will be your commendation, 'whom having not seen, ye love,' 1 Peter i. 8. God hath removed Christ out of sight, to make way for the exercise of faith and love ; and it is much better by faith to converse with him in heaven, than by sight to see him upon earth : John xx. 29, 'Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe.' Thomas would make his senses the judge ; he must feel the wounds, and put his finger in the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side ; which discovered the weakness of his faith. Faith is not grounded on sense, but testimony. Be not discouraged, though you never saw him in the flesh, you shall one day see him in heaven ; though you could not hear his gracious words, yet you have whispers and counsels from his Spirit. You saw him not hanging on the cross, yet 'he is crucified before your eyes,' Gal. iii. 1. In the word and sacraments he is notably and plainly laid forth to faith. The gospel is a magical glass, as it were, wherein God will have the soul look, that we may see our absent friend, *sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat* ; there are the very postures of Christ. Therefore let us make use of our present advantages ; you may expect as powerful influences from him as if present in person ; as the sun doth not come down from heaven, but only his influence. There is a derivation of virtue from his person ; yea, Christ is not like the sun ; the farther absent from us in body, the more powerful is his influence : Eph. iv. 10, 'When he ascended up on high, he filled all things.' Briefly then, if you have anything to do with Christ, you know where to seek him. Those

that live far from court, never saw their king, yet they enjoy the benefit of his government, and are bound to allegiance. Christ is as meek, as gentle, as easy to be entreated as ever.

Use 3. For the conviction of them that please themselves in fond wishes and excuses; they think that if they had lived in the days of Christ's flesh, and had heard his words, full of grace and wisdom, it could not have been but they should have believed in him; they would never have crucified him, as the carnal Jews, and never have rejected his person and doctrine. Thus they bind the efficacy and virtue of Christ to his corporal presence; as if it would have been a greater advantage to them than his spiritual. A great deceit of the heart! This plea proceedeth upon a false supposal, as if Christ's virtue depended upon the nearness and distance of place. If there be any difference, now in heaven he is most apt to work, because he is entered upon his royalty, and the actual exercise of his kingdom. The apostles themselves, when they had Christ's presence, were more gross, dull, and carnal; but afterwards they savoured nothing but heaven and life eternal. And again, it is usual for men to dislike present dispensations, and betray their duties by their wishes. Alas! if Christ were now present in the form of a servant, what sorry entertainment would most give him! We think we should not have done what the Jews did; in probability we would have done worse: you grieve his Spirit as much as they did affront his person; the malice of the Jews was more gross, but ours is as inexcusable. Besides, there is a natural reverence that even hypocrites will bear to their godly ancestors: Mat. xxiii. 29, 30, 'Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Dead things and persons do not exasperate and cross present interests; the prophets, that lived in their ancestors' days, were out of sight, no eyesore to present practices, their speeches were not personally directed to them. The worst men usually honour the dead, but are injurious to the living. As much as we detest the memory of Annas and Caiphas, so do they of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The name of Judas is not more odious to us than Ahab to them; therefore our detestation of the Jews, or longing for the person of Christ, is no argument of great devotion to him.

SERMON XV.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.—JOHN XVII. 11.

THIRDLY, The next point is taken from that clause, 'But these are in the world.' Christ's apprehensiveness of the danger of believers in their worldly state.

In managing this argument—(1.) I will open the danger ; (2.) Why God permitteth it ; (1.) Christ's apprehensiveness of it.

1. To open the danger. There is danger from within and from without ; within are lusts, and without are temptations ; they are subject to many infirmities, and exposed to infinite dangers and temptations.

[1.] From within. If we could live as fish in the salt sea, fresh, without any taint of saltness, without receiving a savour from things without, the danger would not be so great : 2 Peter i. 4, 'Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust ;' the root of the matter is within us. The world without would do no harm were it not for the world in our own hearts. Pleasures, honours, profits are dangerous snares, but not to an angel. When John reckoneth up the contents of the world, he doth not reckon up the objects, but the lusts : 1 John ii. 16, 'The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' Satan is our enemy, the world is the bait, but our heart is the traitor. Baalam could not hurt Israel till he corrupted them by whoredoms. The worst enemy is within us ; we carry the danger in our own bosoms. We must look for blows in the world, but inward ulcers are worse than wounds, because the evil is inward, and the constitution of the body helpeth it. Sins are more dangerous than troubles, because they are aided by nature.

[2.] From without. The world is an evil place, both in regard of sin and misery ; we are sure to be vexed or defiled, to be corrupted by the favours or discouraged by the frowns of it. In the world we have a great many enemies ; there is the god of the world, and the powers of the world, and the men of the world, and the things of the world.

(1.) There is the god of this world. This country in which we dwell, it is the kingdom of Satan, Christ's bitter enemy. He is called 'the prince of the world,' John xii. 31, not by right, but the world hath made him so. Can God's children live long in peace in the kingdom of Satan ? He cannot endure to lose one corner of his empire, therefore frowns and flatters, and seeks to corrupt or discourage the saints : 2 Cor. iv. 4, 'The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not.' Titles are suited to the matter in hand. Satan blindeth most, as the god of this world ; the creature is but suborned, Satan is at the back of it, and lieth in ambush to surprise our souls ; 'Is not the hand of Joab in all this ?' The devil is in the snare. The world is Satan's chessboard ; we can hardly move back or forth but the devil sets out one creature or another to attack us, either by fear, causing us to draw back, or by the love of some worldly creatures alluring us out of the lists wherein we should walk.

(2.) The powers of the world ; usually they are set against Christ, and therefore at the latter end of the world they shall be broken and dashed to pieces. The world is a country wherein the church is a stranger ; every man fearing God is like a strange plant brought from a far country, hath much ado to grow. The wicked are like nettles and thistles, that grow without ploughing or watering, because they grow in their own place ; but the soil and air of the world doth not

suit with the saints; one time or other they are nipped, here is no kindly weather for them. A christian is not only a stranger, but an unconformist to the world: Rom. xii. 2, 'And be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed in the renewing of your minds.' In every age there is something or other started up for his trouble and exercise. In his Father's house he is taught to do otherwise, and this putteth him upon trouble. If God giveth the church a little rest, it is but like a well day out of the fit of an ague, to recover strength for the next trial; a mortified saint, that is drawn up to heaven, and would live by the laws of his Father's house, must look for frowns: 'Yea, and all those that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution,' 2 Tim. iii. 12. Christ's grapes must expect the winepress; all their care should be to yield good liquor. It is a statute, like the laws of the Medes and Persians: Acts xiv. 22, 'That through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.' Neither doth experience cross that rule; the apostle saith, Rom. viii. 35, 36, 'Who shall separate us from the love of God? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' The world is the slaughter-house and shambles of the saints; here Christ was slain, all his witnesses butchered. Christ's lambs must look to have their throats cut. There is an old enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; it lasteth from Abel till the day of judgment. Jacob's and Esau's quarrel began from the day of their birth: Ps. cxxxix. 1, 'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say;' from my youth upward, ever since Christ had a seed in the world. The world would not be the world, nor you christians, if the world did not hate you. Satan cannot change his nature, and the world waxeth worse and worse. Instead of marvelling to see the children of God afflicted and persecuted, we should marvel to see it otherwise. If one should tell you that your way lieth through a stony country, full of bushes and briars, you would think yourselves out of the way if you should meet with nothing but green and pleasant plains. The roadway to heaven is through a howling wilderness; if you have a foot of good land, it is God's blessing.

(3.) The men of the world. A man cannot hold any communion with them, but he shall be the worse for them: 1 John v. 19, 'We know we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.' The men of the world are sooty dirty creatures; we cannot converse with them, but they leave their filthiness upon us. It is hard to touch pitch and not be defiled: Acts ii. 40, 'Save yourselves from this untoward generation.' We grow in a wilderness, and there are many crooked trees that are like to twine about us, and to hinder our growth towards heaven. To disentangle ourselves, there must be a great deal of care. So 2 Tim. ii. 21, 'If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour.' 'From these;' from what? In a great house, there are vessels of gold and vessels of earth, some to honour, and some to dishonour. There are carnal seducers that are apt to pervert us by their enticement and example, as black pots leave their soil upon those that touch them; so base per-

sons and carnal heretics infect us with their sinful pollutions. By converse we are tainted unawares; as antinomian doctrines make the children of God less strict; though they do not pervert their judgment, yet they weaken their care and strictness. Nature is more susceptible of evil than of good. We easily catch a sickness, but we do not get health from one another. Ears of corn do not catch and hang upon men, but thorns do: Phil. ii. 15, 'We live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,' that are as briars and thorns, very catching.

(4.) The things of this world. The world is the valley of snares, and so to the children of God it often proveth the valley of sorrows. Frequency of converse maketh the snare more easily to insinuate. It is hard to be much conversant in any matter, and not to receive some tincture from it. These things, honours, pleasures, profits, they are accustomed objects, they are bred up with us; we must of necessity be conversant with meats and drinks and worldly substance, and insensibly they leave a taint upon the soul, especially where we have them at full. Worldly prosperity is a great snare to the saints; and things are better preserved in brine than honey. How soon is the soul corrupted. The warm sunshine maketh the weeds grow as well as the flowers. I observe great alterations in David's spirit; in adversity he spared his enemy, when he found Saul in the cave; in prosperity, he killed his servant, when he plotted Uriah's death; when he threatened Nabal in affliction, he bore with Shimei. God's children have a better country when they have the world's best advantages. Some fruits are not natural in England; though the weather be good, they do not agree with the soil.

2. Why God permitteth them to be in the world; he might have taken them to himself, and glorify them as soon as sanctify them, or else have gathered them into some island, some obscure angle and corner of the world, out of harm's way. But I answer—That doth not suit with God's dispensations: John xvii. 15, 'I pray not that thou wouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.' The Lord hath some ends to be accomplished. He can at first conversion make us perfect and glorified saints; it is his wisdom to take a time; as Absalom was not to see the king's face presently, so we must wait our time.

[1.] For his own glory. The sweetness and power of grace is more discovered in this worldly estate. It is more wonder to maintain a candle in a bucket of water than in a lanthorn, or a spark in the midst of the sea: 'God's power is made perfect in weakness,' 2 Cor. xii. 9; that is, it is more gloriously discovered. Excellent things suffer a kind of imperfection till there be an occasion to discover them; therefore the apostle would glory in infirmities, as they occasioned a greater exercise of the divine grace. In this worldly estate, grace is discovered not only by its operation, but by conquest and victory; not only as it worketh, but as it fighteth: 1 John iv. 4, 5, 'Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world: they are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.' There is a spirit that worketh in the saints, and a spirit that worketh in the world; these two are conflicting; the world is the lists and place of battle, but Satan is

beaten in his own territory: 'Stronger is he that is in you than he that is in the world.' The saints may be molested, but not overcome. Still God hath his elect, and Christ his members, though Satan hath so many factors and agents for his kingdom. Look, as Israel was sent into Egypt that God's power might be made known—'For this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth,' saith God to Pharaoh, Exod. ix. 16—so we are in the world that his power may be known. We had missed many wonderful passages of providence if Israel had not been in Egypt. God will have us take many experiences of the sweetness and power of grace along with us to heaven. As travellers at night talk of the foul way and the dangers of the journey, so in heaven we shall discourse of the praises of our Redeemer, and his wise and powerful conduct. God would have us take these frequent experiences of grace along with us.

[2.] To try us. Were it not for the worldly state, there would be no place for temptation, nor room for the exercise of grace. He will not glorify us as soon as convert us; neither can we expect to go singing to heaven, and without blows: Heb. vi. 12, 'Be ye followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promises.' Never any went to heaven, but there was a time to exercise both his faith and patience; we are to run and fight, this is common to all the saints. In the way to heaven many things will befall us, that will make it seem unlikely that we shall ever come thither; so we have need of faith; and troubles must have their turn ere heaven be possessed, so we have need of patience. Why should we look for a peculiar privilege? 1 Peter v. 9, 'The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.' All the saints are troubled with a busy devil, a naughty world, and a corrupt heart. Name but one saint of God that hath been excused, that went to heaven without trials and temptations. That quiet estate which you dream of is without precedent. The cross is the badge of this society; as Elijah said, 'Am I better than my fathers?' You are not better than all the saints, than your other brethren that are in the world. You should be ashamed to be alone, and never called out to exercise. There is a measure of sufferings appointed, and every member must take his share. It is distributed by a wise hand, so much for the head, so much for the shoulders, so much for hands and feet: Col. i. 24, 'Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh.' Would we only be irregular, and refuse to take our burden? Briefly, there would be no temptation, no trial, were it not for the worldly estate, but here we must look for it. The skill of a mariner is known in a storm, and so is our fortitude and other graces tried and discovered. I have read in the lives of the fathers of a devout man that being one year without any trial, cried out, *Domine, reliquisti me, quia non me visitasti hoc anno*—Lord! thou hast forgotten me, and for a whole year hast not put me upon any exercise. Those whom God will make most perfect, he putteth them upon the greatest trials. Abraham had never been represented as the father of the faithful if he had not been exercised so much, with so many hazards and temptations.

[3.] To convince the world by their example, their strictness, patience, fortitude. They are in the world, but not of the world. If a christian were not a member of the world, he would never be the wonder of the world. They have flesh and blood as others have, and have not divested themselves of the affections and interests of nature; the same bodies, the same interests; yet they can deny all, and upon the convenient reasons of religion abhor the pleasures and dear contentments of this life, and become weaned, mortified, strict, holy; and this raiseth the world's wonder: 1 Peter iv. 4, 'They think it strange that you run not with them to all excess of riot, speaking evil of you.' They are so bewitched with these things that they wonder how any can resist the temptation. Godly men are to walk up and down the world as God's witnesses: 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord,' Isa. xliii. 11. 'They testify that there is a reality in religion, and how it worketh, by the strictness and mortification of their lives. They are to be examples to the world: 2 Cor. iii. 3, 'Ye are the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.' By your lives God writeth his mind to the world; you are a living rule, a walking Bible.

[4.] To fit them for glory. We do not commence *per saltum*. Vessels of honour must be seasoned: Col. i. 12, 'Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.' What should an unmortified man do in heaven? Heaven would be a prison to him, the company of God and the communion of saints a burden. We do not come into God's presence hot and reeking from our lusts; we are first set in the garden of the church before we are transplanted to the upper paradise; they grow a while in the land of grace, that they may take kindly with the soil.

(1.) Partly to weaken our desires to the world. The stones were to be hewed and squared before they were to be set in the temple; there was no noise of axe or hammer heard there. So during our worldly state we are humbled with many afflictions, that we may be weaned by degrees from the world and worldly objects: Gal. vi. 14, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.' The world doth not suit with the saints, as children are weaned from the teat by wormwood: when men are pleased in the world they forget their country. We stir liquors and syrups that are over the fire, that they may not stick and burn to. As Esther, when she was chosen for Ahasuerus's bride, was 'to accomplish the months of her purification' before she was presented to him, Esther ii. 12; so some days are to be spent in our purifying and sanctifying before we are presented to God.

(2.) Partly to make us long for glory. Our worldly estate is cumbersome; here are sins and afflictions, that we may long for a better estate: Ps. cxx. 5, 'Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!' As the Israelites' task was doubled, that they might long for Canaan and cry out for the land of rest. The inconveniences of our pilgrimage make the everlasting estate more sweet; troubles without us, diseases upon us, and sins within us, and all to make us long for home. Notwithstanding all the hard usage and entertainment in the world, how difficultly are we weaned!

3. Christ's apprehensiveness of this danger. You shall see it is a circumstance often mentioned: a little before his death, at his death, now in heaven.

[1.] A little before his death. We have two instances—one when he was about to wash his disciples' feet and institute the supper: John xiii. 1, 'Jesus having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end.' Christ was then thinking that he should shortly depart; his thoughts were not on his own glory so much as our danger. If Christ would have thought of his own, he might have thought of the angels and glorified saints. Cyril and Chrysostom observe that he did not think of angels and glorified saints, but of his own in the world, those that were left to the miseries and temptations of an evil and unquiet world. No question it was sweet to Christ to think of the glorified saints and angels; but they were safe, and now was a time to show pity rather than delight. The other instance we have in his prayers in this place, from the 11th to the 17th verse. I might mention many passages in his sermons. Christ, when he was about to leave us, he had the affection of a father to his children, or of a dying husband to his wife; he was careful of our estate after his departure.

[2.] So at his death. A great thing that was in the eye of Christ was victory over the world: Gal. i. 4, 'He gave himself for us, to redeem us from the present evil world.' Certainly Christ is willing to help you, when he suffered so much that he might help you. When you love the world, you cross the end of Christ's death; his whole life was but a renouncing the world. The poverty of Christ upbraideth our aspiring projects and pursuits of worldly greatness. We seek to join house to house and field to field, and 'he had not a place whereon to lay his head.' But in his death he would make all sure. One thing that he purchased of the Father is grace to subdue the world. When he was to die, he said, Lo I give myself, upon condition thou wilt give them grace; let them be freed from the bondage of carnal fears and carnal desires. There is not a thing more answerable to the design and aim of his death than this is.

[3.] After his death and ascension into heaven, he is tenderly affected toward believers in the world; he still retaineth his human nature and his human affections, the same heart and the same pity: Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' Christ, though he be exalted, is tenderly affected towards those that are left behind; he is still tenderly affected towards you in all your straits and troubles and infirmities. Christ's exaltation hath made no change in his bowels; he carried his love with him, not only into the grave, but into heaven; he is our Lord, but still our brother: as God, he knoweth our infirmities; and as man, he feelth them; his love is most at work when you are in danger. Oh! what a comfort is this in all your temptations! There is one in heaven that seeth and feelth all this; let us bear it the better, and ride out the storm. If a man were persuaded that his friends on shore knew what tempests he endured at sea, and were praying for him, it would be a great comfort to him in his distress. Christ's heart worketh towards thee; he who is always heard is now praying for thee in heaven; he

is touched with a feeling of thy infirmities. How should this comfort us! They have many snares and many enemies; Lord, help them!

The reasons of this apprehensiveness and tender feeling are his interest, love, charge, and experience: they are his own: John xiii. 1, 'Having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them to the end.'

(1.) His interest. Christ hath a share going in every believer. As when there are ships at sea in which you have a share, you pray for their safe return, and are tenderly affected when you hear they are in danger. Christ is loath to lose his share; he had but now pleaded his interest with the Father: ver. 10, 'All thine are mine, and mine are thine.' We are a part of his goods; the world would weaken the estate of Christ. Believers are his treasure, and they are in danger of rocks and pirates; and therefore he prayeth to the Father. Now Christ hath an interest in them, not only by the Father's grant, but their own dedication; they are his, and all that they suffer is for his sake: ver. 14, 'I have given them thy word, and therefore the world hateth them.' Let a man go on in a wicked, carnal, ungodly way, and the world will not vex him. Let a man once be zealous for Christ, and then he must expect trouble enough. They endure all this for me, and shall I not be sensible? If a child should inadvertently break his leg or arm, you would pity him; but if he should break his leg or arm in your service or defence, to rescue his father, you would pity him more.

(2.) His love: John xiii. 1, 'Jesus having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.' Those whom we love, we are troubled about their welfare. A careless father may die, and never be troubled what shall become of his children; but love is very solicitous. Alas! poor orphans, they are without a guide and guardian, left to snares and temptations, and shall it not pity them? Hugo crieth out, *O charitas, quam magnum est vinculum tuum! Deum in terram traxisti, cruci affixisti, sepulchro clausisti!* &c.—O love, how great is thy power! it was love that brought Christ from heaven, that nailed him to the cross, that laid him in the grave, that carried him again to do our business with God. Had it not been for love he had never come from heaven, and left the bosom of the Father for the lap of the virgin, the form of God for the veil of flesh, the glory of heaven for the darkness of the grave. Had it not been for love, he had never died to deliver us from this present evil world, he had never been sensible of our state and condition. Love is jealous and sensible of all the dangers of the party beloved; the same love of Christ that exposeth us to troubles and hazards for Christ's sake, the same love maketh Christ compassionate of our miseries and sorrows. We are jealous of his honour, and he is jealous of our safety.

(3.) His charge. Christ hath taken an office upon him, to defend, pity, and guide the elect through all temptations to salvation. Now Christ cannot be unfaithful in his office: Heb. iv. 15, 'We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' He that is passed into the heavens is still our high priest. Give me leave to admire that expression, Heb. viii. 2, *Λειτουργός τῶν ἁγίων*, 'a minister of the sanctuary.' When he was upon earth he

came in the form of a servant, and now he is in heaven he is still a servant. We may speak what Christ hath spoken for us, he is our officer and minister even in heaven, not only in the state of his abasement, but in the state of his exaltation. Our Lord would be ours, not only in love but duty, that so we might have the greater assurance. Till all the saints come to heaven, Christ looks upon himself as bound in point of office, they are his charge; he cannot be loving to the church, nor faithful to the Father, if he should do otherwise.

(4.) His experience: Heb. iv. 15, 'He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.' Pray mark, 'in all points.' Christ hath had experience of all trials whereinto any of his servants can fall, poverty, forsaking of friends, exile, imprisonment, hunger, nakedness, watching, weariness, pain of body, heaviness of heart, desertion as to sense, wrath and curse of God. Christ hath carried his feeling with him into heaven; he knew what poverty meaneth, what trouble of conscience, what heaviness of spirit meaneth. Christ could not so experimentally pity us, so feelingly pity us, if he were not like us in all things; his heart was entended by experience, as a man that hath felt the gout and felt the stone. Israel knew the heart of a stranger; Christ knew the heart of a man that is left to the world's frowns and snares. He took a communion of our nature and miseries, as a pawn and pledge that he will pity us and help us: Heb. ii. 10, 'The captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings.' Christ, though he was perfect, he received the Spirit without measure, yet he lacked one thing which his office required, to be a perfect mediator, till he had an experimental feeling. So Heb. ii. 18, 'In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.' Christ was able as soon as he came from heaven. As God, what could he not do? But there is an ability of sufficiency, and of idoneity, an experimental ability. Christ had experience, though not of sin, yet of temptation to sin; he is not only able, but willing; he knoweth what it is. Christ would borrow our nature to make experiments.

Use 1. To teach us to walk with caution, and in a continual dependence upon God. We are continually assaulted, and live in the midst of snares. A man that cometh into the world, saith Luther, is like a traveller that cometh into an inn where there dwell none but thieves. Now he that carrieth jewels about him had need to take heed; the diversity, the frequency, the continuation of temptations should make us wary. The diversity; there are baits for every temper, honours for the ambitious, wealth for the covetous, and pleasures for the sensual. The devil hath a diet to feed every distemper; some are sullen, not bent to pleasures, but Satan is not at a loss to fit them with a temptation, there are profits for them; others are facile and more easy, they have pleasures; others would be great, they have honours; and when Satan knoweth the lust, he suiteth the bait; he is an old sophister, well skilled in the tempers of men. Therefore, seeing that in every business, in every bit of meat, in every recreation, there are snares, we we had need feed with fear and trade with fear. When there is an enemy in the country, we keep constant watch and ward. Then, for the frequency and continuance of temptations, they are always about us.

Long suits prevail at last. From the first use of reason till the hour of death, as long as God continueth our abode in the world, we are in danger. There are many baits; Satan is crafty, and the world is spiteful, and our hearts are naught. We are now upon our trial, the great work of religion is to walk in a constant watchfulness and dependence. Alas! many are as if they were in the haven already; so negligent, so careless, as if they were in the midst of paradise, out of temptations.

Use 2. To press us to grow weary of the world; it is a place full of snares; here we have many snares and many enemies. If we have a mind to sin no longer, why should we desire to live in the world? The world is a step-mother to the saints; why should we desire to hang upon the dug? He that would always live here is like a scullion that loveth to lie among the pots. In heaven we have pure company, and are out of the reach and danger of temptations. The devil, when he was not fit for heaven, was cast out into the world, a fit place for misery, sin, and torment; it is Satan's walk and circuit. Here is antichrist, the devil's eldest son; here are *terriculamenta et irritamenta*, fears and snares. It is a dirty odd corner of the universe; we can hardly walk up and down but we shall defile our garments. Here are briars to hitch us, snares and baits to entice us. There is a more excellent country above, where we shall have the company of God and the fellowship of the saints, saints without corruption, other manner of saints than here. There is no tempter there, there should be your country. In a pet we long for heaven, but it should be out of a resolved judgment. Men fight in the world as long as they are able, and then make heaven their refuge. It should not be a melancholy wish; we should desire heaven, not as weary of work and service, but as weary of temptation.

Use 3. Examination. What kind of temper have we? There are 'children of this world,' Luke xvi. 8. The world is their own mother, they love to lie hanging on the dugs and teats. And there is a spirit called 'the spirit of the world,' 1 Cor. ii. 12, a genius that suiteth with present conveniences; there is 'their portion,' Ps. xvii. 14; 'Their names are written in the earth,' Jer. xvii. 13; that is their happiness. The nature of the world's sons is all for the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life; to go fine, to feed high, to shine in worldly pomp, affect honours and great places. Too many christians are baptized into this spirit. There is a use of the things of this world, but we should use them with fear; they cannot smell the rose of the field, Christ hath no scent or savour. Oh! it is a sad character to be a child of this world; one that hath the nature of the mother in them, one of the world's breed. A child of God is a pilgrim and stranger: Ps. cxix. 19, 'I am a stranger in the earth.' Abraham purchased but a sepulchre; that is all the faithful can lay claim to on earth. He looketh on himself as born and bred in another land; his mother is a princess, the bride, the Lamb's wife; and his Father is in heaven; he is in the world, but not of the world.

Use 4. Comfort. Christ is apprehensive of your danger. All trials you meet with do either better your hearts or hasten your glory. Christians must expect danger, but need not fear it. *Formido sublata est, non pugna.* You are not absolutely freed from molestations of the world, but you have a sanctified use of them: John xvi. 33, 'These

things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.' The victory consisteth not in not suffering and not fighting, but keeping what we fight for: 2 Tim. iv. 18, 'The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work;' not from the lion, but sin.

Use 5. The example of Christ. When we die, let us be mindful of the danger of our relations that we leave behind us, our families, church, ministry; commend them to God. Dying christians should be best at the last; dying Moses left a song. Do not leave the world without a testimony of your love and zeal: 2 Peter i. 14, 15, 'Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.'

SERMON XVI.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.—JOHN XVII. 11.

SECONDLY, I come to the compellation of the party to whom the prayer is made, 'Holy Father.' This compellation is to be observed. Titles of God in scripture are suited to the requests made to him; as 2 Thes. iii. 16, 'The God of peace give you peace always by all means.' So Rom. xv. 5, 'The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another.' He prays for brotherly forbearance and sweetness.

In the several paragraphs of this chapter, Christ speaketh to his Father in a different style, according to the nature of the address. Ver. 1, 5, it is 'Father' only; in ver. 28, it is 'righteous Father,' because of the truth and equity which he observeth in his gracious dispensations; and here it is 'holy Father.' When he beggeth things suitable to his commutative justice, then it is 'righteous Father;' but when he asketh things suitable to his holiness, it is 'holy Father.' Certainly it is a great relief to faith in prayer to pitch upon such a name and title in God as suiteth with the nature of the request; it begetteth a confidence that he both can and will do us good. When we call a man by his name, he will look about upon us; and when we ask things according to his nature, he will pity us.

But why doth Christ use this title at this time?

I answer—Some take *holiness* more largely, for the general goodness and perfection of the divine essence; a branch of which is his veracity or truth in keeping promises; and conceive the argument thus: the holy God cannot break his word, nor be stained with any unfaithfulness; therefore unless God should deny himself, he will 'keep them through his own name.' But I rather think it is specially put for his purity. Christ goeth to his Father as a pure fountain of grace, for sanctification for his disciples. Holiness, it is the object of God's

approbation, the effect of his operation ; he worketh holiness, and he delighteth in it. ‘Holy Father,’ that art holy in thy essence, holy in thy influences, holy in thy dispensations, ‘sanctify them by the truth ;’ thou that abhorrest all that is evil, workest all that is good, ‘keep them from the evil.’ God hateth sin as much as we do, and infinitely more ; and therefore it is some hope that he will help us against it.

Doct. When we deal with God in prayer, especially for grace and sanctification, we must look upon him as a holy Father.

1. I will open the holiness of God. Holiness implieth a freedom from sin and defilement ; *ἄγιος*, from the privative particle *ἀ* and *γιή*, *terra* in whom there is no earth, no pollution, but all heavenly purity. When God speaketh to us he crieth out, Jer. xxii. 29, ‘O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.’ We are earth in our understandings, in our affections, in our practices. But when the seraphims speak to God, they cry, ‘Holy, holy, holy ;’ as if it were said, ‘Without earth, without earth, without earth.’ Briefly, God’s holiness is an attribute by which we understand his essence to be most perfectly just and pure ; at the utmost distance from sin and weakness ; loving and liking himself above all, and the creatures, as they do more or less partake of his glory. Now God is called, ‘The holy one ;’ not *an* holy one, but *the* holy one : 1 Sam. ii. 2, ‘There is none holy as the Lord.’ He doth not say, ‘There is none holy but the Lord,’ but there is none holy *as* the Lord. Therefore let us see the difference between the holiness of God and the holiness of the creatures. This is an argument fit for a seraphim ; it becometh an angel’s mouth rather than man’s ; the angels, that come nearer to God in essence, can best proclaim his holiness. But our ear hath received a little thereof. ‘None is holy as the Lord ;’ because God is essentially holy, infinitely holy, and originally holy.

[1.] He is essentially holy. God is not only holy, but holiness itself, goodness itself ; it is his very essence. The creatures, when they are holy, they are holy according to the law ; the holiness of angels or men is a conformity to the law of their creation ; as we say he is holy whose heart and life doth exactly agree with God’s law. But God’s will is his rule, his essence is his law, and therefore all his actions are necessarily holy. The divine *esse* and being, as it is the beginning of all beings, so it is the rule of all moral perfections. All created holiness is but a resemblance of God’s, either a conformity to God’s nature, or a conformity to God’s will. Habitual holiness is a conformity to God’s nature, actual holiness is a conformity to God’s will ; his will is the rule, his nature is the pattern. But now God is a rule to himself ; there are no eternal reasons of good and evil beyond God. Things are not first holy, and then God doeth them ; but God doeth them, and therefore they are holy ; he himself is his own rule. Any one may err that hath not the rule of righteousness in himself ; God’s act is his rule, therefore he cannot sin. The hand of the artificer faileth often in cutting, because his hand is not the rule by which he worketh ; there is a rule or line without him ; sometimes he striketh right, sometimes wrong. If the hand of a man were the rule, it were impossible he should work amiss. There is a rule prescribed to angels and men ; their will is one thing, their rule another, for no creature is holy by its

own essence. This notion is of practical use ; there is holiness in all that cometh from God ; when he afflicteth us, and our friends, or suffereth us to be unjustly afflicted by men ; when he spareth our enemies, multiplieth our sorrows, his act is his rule ; God's will is the supreme reason of all things. Again, holiness in us is an accessory quality, a snperadded gift ; our essence may remain when holiness is gone. Now holiness in God is not a quality, but his essence. The angelical essence continueth when holiness is lost, as in the devils. So the man remaineth when the saint is fled ; but in God, his essence and his holiness are the same. This is of practical use to humble the creature. Sin is contrary to the very nature of God ; it is not only contrary to our interests, but to God's nature. A man hateth that exceedingly which is contrary to his nature. Now in our corrupt natures there is a direct contrariety to the nature of God. Actual sins are but a blow and away. Original sin is a standing contrariety ; there is a settled enmity between God and us. Similitude is the ground of likeness ;¹ the aversion of a man from a trade, and other antipathies are but a faint resemblance of this.

[2.] God is infinitely holy, *super-purissimus*. The faithful in this life are holy, but imperfectly ; but ' God is light, and in him is no darkness at all,' 1 John i. 5. Of all creatures, light is the most pure and defecate ; therefore it is put to resemble God's holiness. Our life is a chequerwork of light and darkness. Adam, in his innocency, though he had no corruption, yet was mutably holy ; he might commit evil ; though he were not *peccator*, a sinner, yet he was *peccabilis*, one that might sin. But God is at the greatest distance and elongation from sin and weakness : James i. 13, ' God cannot be tempted with evil, ἀπειραστος κακῶ, neither tempteth he any one.' Once more, the blessed spirits and angels, though they are perfectly holy in their kind, yet finitely and derivatively ; they do not love God as much as he might be loved. God loveth himself as much as he can be loved ; there is as much purity in his love as there is perfection in his essence. The creatures' holiness is limited ; we cannot love God so much as he is to be loved. God loveth the lowest saint with a higher love than the highest angel can love God. The good angels, though they have been God's constant menial servants, without the least spot or taint of sin in nature or life ; and though they be confirmed in their happy estate, either by the merit of Christ, or their many years' experience and communion with God, yet there is folly in them in comparison of God, because of that essential mutability that is in any creature : Job iv. 18, ' He chargeth his angels with folly.' It is spoken of good angels, who are opposed to dwellers in houses of clay. It were too easy a charge for the apostate spirits, to charge them with folly ; the angelical nature, though it be pure, yet because it is mutable, hath some kind of folly in it, it was once liable to rash attempts against the dignity and empire of God. Briefly, the holiness of God cannot be lessened nor increased, being always infinitely perfect. The regenerate creature must still be increasing to further degrees, till it come to the measure of the stature in Christ ; the blessed spirits, though separated from all defilement, yet infinitely come short of that glorious holiness which agreeth to the nature of God, and God is still raising it higher

¹ Qu. 'liking?'—Ed.

and higher in the saints on earth. Their holiness riseth and groweth like Ezekiel's waters; but God is always equal in holiness, because in infiniteness there are no degrees.

[3.] God is originally holy. God is the fountain, the overflowing, the overflowing fountain of holiness. Ours is but a stream, a derivation, a ray of the father of lights; as little children, we can defile ourselves; but we should still lie in our filth if God did not cleanse us. The creature can no more make itself holy than it can make itself to be. God is the original both of natural and moral perfection: Lev. xx. 8, 'I am the Lord which sanctify you.' He is *summum bonum*, the chiefest good, as well as the first cause. *Quod vivamus, deorum munus est; quod bene vivamus, nostrum*; a wicked speech of Seneca! It is by the influence of God that we are holy. Grace is called 'a participation of the divine nature,' 2 Peter i. 4. It is a weak ray of the father of lights, who is in Christ the fountain cause. The saints that have communion with God have some faint lustre, which should make us careful to maintain holiness; it is a work of God.

2. Why must we thus look upon him in prayer?

[1.] It is the way to beget humility and godly fear. 'Holy Father,' there is a word to beget confidence, and a word to beget reverence. This mixed affection is the fittest temper of soul in our addresses to God, confidence and reverence; he is a father, but a holy father. Nothing driveth the creature to such self-aborrancy as the consideration of God's holiness; we have to do with him who hath an infinite displeasure against sin and sinners. The more good any one is, the more he hateth evil; since therefore God is infinitely good, he doth infinitely hate sin. The angels, that have lively and fresh thoughts of God's holiness, they are abashed in his presence: Isa. vi. 2, 3, 'Each one of the seraphims had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.' And the prophet having a sight of it in vision, he crieth out, ver. 5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips.' A thorough sight of God's holiness would drive us to our wits' ends. So when God had testified his displeasure for the violation of one circumstance in religion, looking into the ark, fifty thousand threescore and ten men were smote, 1 Sam. vi. 20. The men of Bethshemesh said, 'Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?' Certainly we that are made up of imperfections should tremble more than we do, when we have to do with the holy God. So Peter, when Christ had discovered his glory in a miracle: Luke v. 8, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' God, that doth infinitely love his own holiness, doth as infinitely hate sin. Did we consider this hatred, we would more loathe and abhor ourselves, we would be more ashamed than we are in our confessions. To speak thus much of ourselves to a man would make us blush; and yet man hath but a drop of indignation against sin. God hath an ocean. God's children have a daunting power in their appearance. Guilty consciences, when they come into the presence of one that walketh closely with God, are terrified. Herod feared John Baptist, 'knowing that he was a just man and an holy,' Mark vi. 20.

[2.] To make us prize Christ. Our best works would stink in the

nostrils of the most holy God if they were not accepted in and for Christ. Nothing can be acceptable to infinite purity but what is pure: Hab. i. 13, 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.' We should not have one good look from God were it not for Christ. To salve this attribute was Jesus Christ sent into the world. We think that Christ was only sent to satisfy justice; God hateth sin out of holiness, punisheth it out of justice, and executeth that punishment by his majesty and power; so that we dread God for his wrath, power, and justice; but all these are awakened by his holiness, there is the root of all. So that the consideration of God's holiness maketh us to prize Christ. Alas! what should vile creatures do before a holy God out of Christ!

[3.] It is God's principal glory: Exod. xv. 11, 'Thou art glorious in holiness.' God is mighty in power, rich in grace, glorious in holiness. It is good to mark the distinctness of expression in all the attributes. God, that he might show us how much we should prize grace, would be glorious in nothing so much as in holiness. This is seraphical divinity; the angels would teach us no other divinity and notions of God but 'Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts,' Isa. vi. 3. This is most pleasing to God, profitable to men. Christ taught us to pray first of all, 'Hallowed be thy name.' This should be the chiefest thing that we should think of in our addresses to God. So when the Angel Gabriel came to give notice of Christ: Luke i. 35, 'That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' *Prius sanctum quam Dei filium nominavit*, saith one of the fathers. You cannot call God nor Christ by a better title, it is his darling attribute. So the saints in heaven, Rev. iv. 8, 'They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.' It is nine times in Plautius's edition, as if they were delighted with the mention of it; they take a sweet content in the work, holy Father, holy Son, holy Spirit. In heaven they bless and praise God; praise him for his excellences, bless him for his benefits. We praise him for his holiness, we bless him for his mercy in Christ; this will be our employment in heaven: Ps. xcix. 5, 'Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.' God counteth it his chiefest glory, that he might teach the creature that moral perfections are to be preferred before natural; it is better to be wise than strong, to be holy than wise.

3. Why especially must we thus look upon him when we deal with him for grace and sanctification?

[1.] Because it is a relief to faith when we represent God to ourselves as the fountain of holiness. He is 'the holy one of Israel,' and Christ calls him 'Holy Father;' Jude 1, 'To them that are sanctified by God the Father.' There is enough in God: when we come for pardon, he is rich in mercy; when we come for holiness, he is glorious in holiness; he is the God of grace; you may have enough, if you be not wanting to yourselves. Men are willing to spare out of their fulness; the holy God is as able as willing to sanctify you, it is a work that he delighteth in. Joab interceded for Absalom, 'when he perceived the king's heart was towards Absalom,' 2 Sam. xiv. 1.

[2.] It may be a means to enlarge your spiritual desires. You are to be 'holy as he is holy,' 1 Peter i. 15. The children, if they be of

the right stock, they should have some resemblance of their father. Now you ask holiness of God that you may be as God in some degree of conformity, though not in exact equality. *Assequi non possumus, saltem nunquam sequi desinamus.* We cannot overtake God, but we should never cease to follow him. We have a high pattern, that we might not be content with any low measures of grace. When you are asking, it is good to be thinking of your pattern, that you may enlarge your spiritual desires. Lord, wash me thoroughly; Lord, make me holy, as thou art holy; I forget the things that are behind; it is nothing that I have already.

Use 1. Information. It informeth us:—

1. How greatly they sin that deride men for their holiness, which is the express image of the glorious God. God is glorious in holiness; therefore they that despise holiness, they despise God himself. ‘Holy brethren’ should no more be a disgrace than ‘holy Father;’ ‘That is your scorn which is the divine glory, one of the chiefest excellences in the Godhead. You hate God more than you do the saints; holiness in them shineth with a faint lustre.

2. How much we should prize holiness. It is the glory of God and the glory of holy angels (the devils also excel in strength), and the glory of the saints: Eph. v. 27, ‘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.’ This is the glory of the church; the church, that are a distinct people from all the world, should have a distinct excellency. Other societies are made glorious by their policy, their pomp, their trade; the church is a society for holiness, and therefore it is called ‘The fairest among women,’ the best of all societies, though it hath little of worldly pomp and splendour: Ps. xciii. 5, ‘Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, for ever.’ Some ordinances became God’s house for a time; ceremonies, and sprinklings, and the veil, and the covering of badgers’ skins, &c.; but holiness is a standing ordinance. So private christians ‘are changed from glory to glory;’ 2 Cor. iii. 18, it is from grace to grace, for the apostle speaketh of our being changed into the likeness of Christ. The world counteth purity and strictness a base thing, *religio ignobilem facit*; but the word is quit with the world, and calls a wicked man ‘a vile person,’ Ps. xv. 4, and ‘the basest of men,’ Dan. iv. 17.

Use 2. It presseth us to draw nigh to God as unto a holy Father. Worship must always be proportioned to the object of it. Conformity maketh way for communion: John iv. 24, ‘God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.’ As he is a God of peace, he will not be worshipped with wrathful affections: 1 Tim. ii. 8, ‘I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.’ A living God must have a lively service; so a holy God should have a holy worship; this doth make us fit to enjoy God in the way of a sweet and gracious communion.

1. We must be in a holy state. If we be accepted by God, we must be like him, ‘holy as he is holy, partakers of a divine nature.’ The majesty and glory of God we are not capable of. God would not have us to imitate his power and majesty, but his holiness. We enjoy him most when we are like him: Heb. xii. 14, ‘Follow peace with all men,

and holiness, without which no man can see God; *χαρὶς οὖν*, the masculine article, referreth to *ἀγίασμος*; though they have not peace with men, whatever entertainment they meet with in the world, they are sure to have the favour of God, peace with God. That 'seeing God' referreth to the enjoyments of the other world; the degrees of vision are according to the degrees of sanctification: 1 John iii. 2, 'We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;' but it holdeth good also in the present world. A dusky glass cannot represent the image so distinctly; we cannot have such a sight of God, we cannot expect any communion and intimacy with him, till we be holy. It is said, Ps. v. 4, 'Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee.' The idols of the heathen are stained with filthy practices; God is not such a one. Likeness is the ground of delight; God loveth himself for his own holiness, and they are best loved and liked that are most holy. For others, God professeth he will have no intimacy with them; he will have nothing to do with sinners, nor be of their fellowship and communion; and they shall have nothing to do with him: Ps. l. 16, 'What hast thou to do to declare my statutes? or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?' Nay, God will not afford sinners one good look: Hab. i. 13, 'Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and canst not look upon evil.' As the prophet, to profess his detestation of that profane prince, said, 2 Kings iii. 14, 'Were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look towards thee, nor see thee.' God would not look towards a congregation were it not for his people in it.

But what shall we do? and who can say, 'My heart is clean'? and 'who is able to stand before this holy God?' I answer—God hath provided a remedy in the gospel; in the gospel sense he only is pure who is purged and washed from the guilt of his sins in the blood of Christ. In a child of God there are many failings, but God in Christ giveth him an acquittance. But this is not all; there must be a habitual disposition of purity, and a man must enter into a true course of sanctification, if he would be accepted in God's eyes: 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.' The work of the Spirit and the merit of Christ are inseparable. There is a relative and a real change, not only a judicial abolition of sin, but a real. If you would come to God as your holy one, you must be his holy ones; as David was called God's holy one, Ps. xvi. 10. Somewhat answerable there must be to God's nature before he can take pleasure in you, You will find it—

[1.] By a hatred of sin. Where God doth change a soul, he breedeth a disposition in it in some sort like himself. Those sympathies and antipathies that God hath, the soul hath. Now God is a holy God, he cannot endure sin; so it is with a holy heart. What have I to do with sinners? saith God; and, What have I to do with sin? saith the soul. The displacency is keen and strong; they have a nature put into them like God's, and therefore hate what he hateth. It is said, Ps. xvii. 10, 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.' In what measure we love God, we hate what is contrary to God. In grace there is a love to the chiefest good, and a hatred of the chiefest evil;

the one, as well as the other, is natural to the saints. Let us never talk of love to God, except there be a zeal to reform what he hateth. It is true we have a mixed nature, there is the divine nature and the carnal nature; a believer is partaker of both flesh and spirit; there will be slips and failings, but the prevailing part of the soul abhorreth sin. It is the evil which we hate, and though a child of God falleth into sin, yet he cannot rest in it. A fountain may be troubled, but it will work itself clean again. The needle in the compass may be joggled, but it rests not till it turns to the pole. A neat man may be dirtied, but he cannot endure any filthiness should lie on his clothes. Impure men are in their own element; if they abstain from sin, their unholy nature likes it, they forbear it, but do not abhor it; as Phaltiel forsook Michal only for fear of David's displeasure. Sinful affections continue in their full force and strength when the act is suspended.

[2.] By an act of duty and conformity to God's will and nature: Eph. iv. 24, 'That ye put on the new man, which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness,' *ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀλεθείας*. There is a counterfeit holiness and true holiness; the true holiness is such a holiness as God's is, answerable in quality, though not in equality. Now what is God's holiness? Such an attribute by which he loveth himself above all things, and all other things as they do more or less partake of his nature. So when we are holy in truth, we love God out of a principle of the new nature. God is lovely, not only for his benefits, but for his essence, as he is *diligibilis natura*; it is eminently in him what is in us in a weaker degree. So there will be a delight in the saints, because of the resemblance they bear to God: Ps. xvi. 3, 'To the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.' Certainly they have cause to question their holiness to whom good company is a prison and a burden; they have not such dispositions as God hath. So they delight in duties as they exhibit much of God, and they delight in the practice and growth of holiness, as it maketh them more like God. Thus, christians, should you strive to come up to the divine pattern more and more. You will think a child incapable of learning, when the longer he hath been at the writing-school the more he swerveth from the copy; and certainly that holiness that doth not grow up into a greater likeness and resemblance of God is to be suspected. Thus must you look to come in a holy state.

2. With holy and prepared affections. You should remember you have to do with the holy God: Josh. xxiv. 19, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God.' Do you know what it is to worship him? Rash entering upon the worship of God is not without sin; and to come reeking from your sins into God's presence, it is but as Cain's approach from blood to sacrifice. Before worship there must be a special purging. When Joseph came before Pharaoh, he changed his garments and shaved himself. When the children of Israel came to hear the law, they were sanctified, and washed their clothes, Exod. xix. 14. Under the law, there was a laver stood near the altar, and they were to wash before sacrifice; therefore David saith, Ps. xxvi. 6, 'I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.' So James iv. 8, 'Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh

to you ; cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.' These washings were frequent among the heathens before they went to worship ; so there must be a special purgation and exoneration, and disburdening of the soul of those sins which we have committed.

3. We must converse with him in a holy manner : Lev. x. 3, 'I will be sanctified in all that draw nigh unto me.' God will be sanctified upon us, or by us ; here we are to sanctify him in our hearts, with special reverence and holiness of mind. Those that served before the heathen gods were clothed in white, an emblem of purity and innocency ; and our communion with God in heaven is thus expressed, Rev. iii. 4, 'They shall walk with me in white.' So should we here, as much as we can, walk with God in white, with heavenly pure souls, put up holy prayers in a holy manner, and in the time of worship be at the greatest distance and elongation from sin. Many men, out of a natural conscience, will be devout in time of duty. You would be ashamed if a holy man should know what thoughts you have in time of worship, and darest thou conceive them in the presence of a holy God ? What odious creatures should we be if our thoughts were as audible, and as liable to public notice, as our words ! Alas ! God knoweth thoughts as well as words ; all your carnal, unclean, vain thoughts are known to him ; therefore take heed, how will your holy Father brook this ?

4. We should go away the more holy from worship. You have been with a holy God ; what of his holiness do you carry away in your hearts ? They that have looked on the sun go away with a glaring in their eyes, and they seem to see the sun in all that they look upon. You should carry away the enlightenings of worship along with you. When Moses came from God, his face shone ; he had been conversing with the God of glory, and he went away with some rays of glory in his face. We should not be as the beasts in Noah's ark, to go in unclean and come out unclean. God's people are most full of indignation against sin when they come from God : Exod. xxxii. 19, when Moses had talked with God in the mount, at his return, seeing them sacrifice to the calf, he brake the tables. The more communion we have with God, the more shall we hate what is contrary to God. When Isaiah saw God in his glory, he began to loathe himself : Isa. vi. 5, 'Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips, and mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts.' And those who have effectually conversed with God in meditation and prayer, they come away from him with a perfect hatred of sin ; for a sight of God worketh an abomination of what is contrary to him. In a shop of perfumes you carry away the scent in your clothes. You wonder that a man should come away cold from the fire ; and it is as great a wonder to come away from the holy God with vile affections. Here you come to make experiments whether God be a holy one, yea or no, whether he be originally, effectually holy. The Syrians, that were strangers to God's dispensations, could speak of him only by hearsay : 'We have heard that the God of Israel is a merciful God ;' but the Israelites, that were acquainted with him, could speak of him by experience ; we know it. As a man that hath

never been acquainted with the use of fire may say, I have heard that the fire will warm; but he that hath been at the fire, he knows and feels it; so others can only discourse notionally of God's holiness. In duty we come to him for real experiences: Lord, we know that thou art a holy God.

SERMON XVII.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.—
JOHN XVII. 11.

THIRDLY, The matter of the prayer, for perseverance in grace.

'Keep through thine own name.'—*Ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου τήρησον αὐτούς*; it may be rendered 'in thy name,' or 'by thy name,' or 'for thy name's sake;' *ἐν*, as \aleph among the Hebrews, may be thus rendered, 'by thy name,' Heb. xi. 2. *Ἐν ταύτῃ*, 'by which the elders obtained a good report.' 'For thy name,' Eph. iv. 32, 'As God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you;' *Θεὸς ἐν Χριστῷ*. So Rom. xvi. 2, 'Receive her in the Lord,' *ἐν κυρίῳ*; that is, for the Lord's sake. (1.) If it be 'in thy name,' then the meaning is, in the knowledge of thy truth; for by the name of God is meant anything by which he is made known. The doctrine of the gospel in this chapter is called, 'his name,' ver. 6; 'I have manifested thy name to them;' meaning the whole doctrine of godliness. So Christ prayeth, 'Keep them in thy name;' that is, in the constant profession of the truth; let them not be cheated out of it by Satan, nor affrighted out of it by persecutions; but let them constantly hold it forth, defend and propagate it to the world. (2.) 'By thy name;' so God's name is himself, and himself is his name. So Exod. xxiii. 21, 'My name is in him;' that is, he is of the same essence and glory with me. So 'by thy name,' is by thy self, thy power, mercy, goodness, truth, *διὰ τῆς σῆς βοηθείας*—Chrysostom; by thy gracious assistance. (3.) 'For thy name's sake,' to show forth thy mercy, truth, faithfulness. These expositions may be compounded—Keep them in thy truth, or the worship and profession of thy name, by thy power, for thy name's sake, to discover thy mercy and truth; thy mercy, in taking them into a state of grace; thy truth, in preserving them in the state of grace. The points are two:—

1. That the perseverance of the saints, or their conservation in the state of grace, is sure and certain.

2. That we are kept in the state of grace by God's name, by his power, for his glory.

Doct. 1. That the perseverance of the saints, or their conservation in a state of grace, is sure and certain.

1. I shall show how I build the certainty of perseverance on this place.

2. I shall handle the doctrine, confirming it by other grounds.

First, How this doctrine of the certainty of the saints' perseverance is built on this place. Christ hath begged it, and he beggeth it for

all the saints. Christ hath begged it, and the prayers of Christ, who is God's beloved Son, cannot possibly return in vain, there being such an absolute conformity and consent between the will of God the Father and the Son: John xi. 42, 'I know that thou hearest me always.' Christ cannot be denied audience and acceptance in the court of heaven, especially in a request upon which his heart is set. His people are so wonderfully dear to him, that he would not lose one of them; and then Christ is so wonderfully dear to God, that he must needs speed in all his requests. Therefore if Christ hath mediated for the conservation of the saints, the Father will grant what he asketh. Yea, the Father himself loveth the saints; the thing is pleasing to him. It is notable that when Christ had spoken of the perseverance of the saints, he adds, John x. 30, 'I and my Father are one;' as noting not only the unity of essence, but the consent of will, that was between them in this work. Well, then, look, as Christ redeemeth us because the Father required it, the Father will love us and preserve us because the Son asketh it. If Christ bear any respect to the Father's command, or the Father to Christ's prayers, the elect are sure to be saved. Christ hath engaged God's name to keep us. What can be objected against this? They say that Christ prayed conditionally, Keep them if they will. But here is no condition expressed. Christ absolutely prayeth, Keep them; and such a condition would make the gift of God to depend upon man's will; and so to persevere would rather be man's act than God's gift, the determination being on man's part. Nay, the main thing which is to be kept is our will, and so the condition would destroy the very nature of the request. They say, Christ prayeth only for the apostles. I answer—It cannot be restrained to the apostles; it is the common privilege of all the saints: 'Those which thou hast given me.' Christ explaineth himself, and extendeth it to believers of all ages: ver. 20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for those which shall believe in me through their word.' Christ's prayer is every way as good as a promise.

Secondly, Let me handle the doctrine itself. The doctrine of perseverance is much impugned, but the earth is never the more unsettled because to giddy brains it seemeth to run round. Let me state, and then confirm it.

First, State it.

1. Seeming grace may be lost: Mat. xxv. 29, 'From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath;' compared with Luke xviii. 18, 'Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.' Blazing comets and meteors are soon spent, and may fall from heaven like lightning, while stars keep their orb and station; sandy building will totter. The hypocrites 'shall be discovered before the congregation,' Prov. xxvi. 26.

2. Initial or preparative grace may fail: Heb. vi. 4, 5, 'They who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, may fall away;' such as illumination, external reformation, temporary faith, some good beginnings. Some die in the pangs of the new birth, and are still-born. Plenty of blossoms doth not always foretell store of fruit.

3. True grace may suffer a shrewd decay, but not an utter loss. In temptations it may be sorely shaken; the heel may be bruised as Christ's was, but 'his seed remaineth in him,' 1 John iii. 9; as Peter denied Christ, though he did not fall from grace: Luke xxii. 32, 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.' The leaves may fade when the root liveth. Chrysostom saith concerning Christ's prayer for Peter, *οὐκ ἔρει ἐνὰ μὴ ἀρνήσῃ, ἀλλὰ ὥστε μὴ ἐκλείπειν τὴν πίστιν*—He doth not say, that he might not deny him, but that his faith might not fail and altogether vanish.

4. Such grace as serves to our well-being in Christ may be taken away, joy, peace, cheerfulness. A man may be living though he be not lively; a man may have a being when his well-being is lost; he is a man, though a bankrupt. So a christian, the operations of grace may be obstructed for a great while; a fit of swooning is not a state of death; there may be no acts, and yet the seed may remain, this may last; for a long time David did not recover himself, it was near a year after his sin: 1 Sam. xii. 14, 'The child that is born of thee shall surely die;' compared with Ps. li., title, 'A psalm of David when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.'

5. Grace indeed, if left to us, would be soon lost; we showed that in innocency. But it is our advantage that our security lieth in God's promises, not our own strength, that we are not our own keepers. God would not trust this jewel but in safe hands. Perseverance is God's gift, not man's act; he is engaged in Christ to maintain it: John x. 28, 29, 'I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands. My Father that gave them me, is greater than I; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands;' they neither shall nor can be taken out of God's hands. God and Christ is engaged in the keeping of them; Christ by God's command, as mediator, God by Christ's merit; and therefore he that separateth us from God must tug with Jesus Christ himself, and be too hard for him also, or else he can never pluck them out of his hands. If they should question Christ's power, because of the ignominy of the cross, the Father's hands are also engaged for our greater assurance: 'None is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands.' God never made a creature that should be too hard for himself.

6. We do not plead for any wild assurance and certainty of perseverance. We do not say that he that neglects means, and grieves the Spirit, do what he will, yet he is sure he shall not miscarry; that is against the nature of God's dispensation, and the nature of this assurance, and therefore but a vain cavil.

[1.] It is against the nature of God's dispensation; for whom he maketh to persevere, he maketh them persevere in the use of means. Hezekiah had assurance of life for fifteen years, yet he takes a lump of figs, and applies it as a plaster to the boil, Isa. xxxviii. 5, compared with ver. 21. Or more clearly, Acts xxvii. 22, 'There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but only of the ship.' But yet, ver. 31, 'Except the shipmen abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' We are bound to get food and raiment, if we would live. It is the devil's divinity, Thou art sure not to fall, therefore neglect means; it was Satan's cavil against God's protection over Christ: Mat. iv. 6, 'If thou be the Son of God, cast

thyself down ; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.' Thou learnest this doctrine from the devil—Thou mayest do what thou wilt, thou art sure to be saved.

[2.] It is against the nature of assurance ; he that hath tasted God's love in God's way cannot reason so. He that hath a good father, that will not see him perish, shall he waste and embezzle his estate, he cares not how? A wicked child may presume thus of his father, though it be very disingenuous, because of his natural interest and relation to his father ; the kindness which he expecteth is not built on moral choice, but nature. But a child of God cannot, because he cannot grow up to this certainty but in the exercise of grace ; this certainty is begotten and nourished by godly exercises. And the thing itself implieth a contradiction ; this were to fall away, because we cannot fall away ; you may as soon say that the fire should make a man freeze with cold, as that certainty of perseverance in grace should make a man do actions contrary to grace.

7. Again, we do not say a believer is so sure of his conservation in a state of grace as that he needeth not be wary and jealous of himself : 1 Cor. x. 12, ' Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.' There is a fear of caution that is warrantable. There is a difference between the weakening of the security of the flesh, and of our confidence in Christ. None more apt to suspect themselves than they that are most sure in God, lest by improvidence and unwatchfulness they should yield to corruption. Christ had prayed that Peter's faith might not fail ; yet, together with the other apostles, he biddeth him watch, Luke xxii. 40, 46. The fear of God is a preserving grace, and taken into the covenant : Jer. xxxii. 40, ' I will never depart from them to do them good,' and ' I will put my fear into their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.' God's love will not let him depart from us, and fear will not let us depart from God. This is a fear that will stand with faith and certainty ; it is a fruit of the same Spirit, and doth not hinder assurance, but guard it ; this is a fear that maketh us watchful against all occasions to sin and spiritual distempers, that we may not give offence to God ; as an ingenuous man, that hath an inheritance passed over to him by his friend in court, is careful not to offend him ; there is a cautelous and distrustful fear.

8. Again, this certainty of our standing in grace doth not exclude prayer : Luke xxii. 46, ' Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' Perseverance is God's gift, and it must be sought out in God's way, by Christ's intercession, to preserve the majesty of God, and by our prayer, that we constantly profess our dependence upon God, and renew our acquaintance with him. Besides, by asking blessings in prayer we are the more warned of our duty ; it is a means to keep us gracious and holy. As those that speak often to kings had need be decently clad, and go neat in their apparel, so he that speaketh often to God is bound to be more holy, that he may be acceptable to him.

9. Once more, and I have done with the state of the question. It is not a discontinued, but a constant perseverance that we plead for. Not as if a child of God could be quite driven out of the state of grace ;

though he be saved at length, he cannot fall *totus, a toto, in totum*, from all grace and godliness, in the whole man, with full consent; he may sin, but not fall totally, no more than finally. There is something remaineth; a seed: 1 John iii. 9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him;' an unction: 1 John ii. 27, 'But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you.' There is a root in a dry ground, that will bud and scent again.

Well, then, this we hold, that true grace shall never utterly be lost, though it be much weakened, but by the use of means shall constantly be preserved to eternal life.

Secondly, Having stated the point, let me now confirm it. The grounds of perseverance are these:—

1. On the Father's part, there is an everlasting love and all-sufficient power. His everlasting love; God doth not love for a fit, but for ever: Ps. ciii. 17, 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him;' before the world was, and when the world is no more. There can be no change in God's counsels, because they are accompanied with infinite wisdom and power. God never repented in time of what he purposed to do before time: Rom. xi. 29, 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.' By *gifts* are meant gifts proper to the elect, remission of sins, grace and glory, and by *calling* is meant effectual calling, such as is *κατὰ πρόθεσιν*, 'according to his purpose,' Rom. viii. 28. God never repented of it; he is never ashamed of nor sorry for his choice; though men be unworthy, it is the reason why he brought them under the grace of the covenant. His all-sufficient power and almightiness is engaged in the preservation of grace: John x. 29, 'My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands.' As long as God hath power we are safe; and this power is engaged by his love and will.

2. Then on Christ's part there is his everlasting merit and constant intercession.

[1.] For his merit: Heb. ix. 12, 'By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.' Legal expiations did but last from year to year, but Christ's is for ever and ever. The Levitical priest, once every year entered into the holy place, but Christ is once gotten into heaven, his redemption is eternal; not only as it is of use for all ages of the church, but in respect of every particular saint. Those who are once redeemed by Christ, they are eternally redeemed; not for a time, to fall away again, but to be saved for ever. So Heb. x. 14, 'By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' He hath not only purchased a possibility of salvation, but hath perfected them, hath made purchase of all that we need to our full perfection; it is not for a certain time, as if afterwards they could be taken out of his hands, and so perish, but for ever; and this for all those that are sanctified, separated by God's purpose and decree, and afterwards renewed and sanctified in time, set apart to be vessels of honour to God.

[2.] Then for his constant intercession, a copy of which we have in this place. It is said, Heb. vii. 25, 'Wherefore he is able to save unto

the uttermost all that come unto God through him, seeing he liveth for ever to make intercession for us.' He is interceding with God, that the merit of his death may be applied to us, and that is salvation to the uttermost. The heirs of salvation need not to fear miscarrying; Jesus Christ, who is the testator, who by will and testament made over the heritage to them, he liveth for ever to see his own will executed. Though he died once to make the testament, yet he liveth for ever to see it made good. Christ is risen from the dead, and dieth no more, and therefore a believer cannot miscarry.

3. On the Spirit's part, there is a continued influence, so as to maintain the essence and seed of grace. The Father's love is continued by the merit of Christ, that he will not depart from us, and we are preserved by the Spirit of Christ, that we may not depart from him. He doth not only put into our hearts faith and fear, and other graces at first, but he maintaineth and keepeth them, that the fire may never go out. Our hearts are his temples, and he will not leave his dwelling-place. There is a continued influence. Now this he doth to preserve the honour of Christ and the comfort of believers; he glorifieth Christ, and is our comforter. It is to preserve the glory of Christ. Christ hath received a charge from the Father: John vi. 39, '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;' nothing, neither body nor soul. In point of honour, and that he may be true to his trust, he sendeth his Spirit as his deputy or executor, that his merit may be fully applied; therefore, for the honour of Christ, wherever the work is begun it is continued. Christ is called, Heb. xii. 2, 'The author and finisher of our faith.' Wherever the Spirit is an author he is also a finisher; when the good work is begun, he will also perfect it, and continue his grace to the end. It was said of the foolish builder, 'He began, and was not able to make an end.' This dishonour cannot be cast upon Christ, because of the power and faithfulness of the Spirit; he doth *κατεργάζεσθαι*, go through with the work which he hath begun: Phil. i. 6, 'Being confident of this, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Christ.' The Spirit is to fit vessels for glory; he doth not use to leave them half carved, but finish them for the honour of Christ. The Spirit is faithful to Christ, as Christ is to the Father. The Father chooseth the vessels, Christ buyeth them, and the Spirit carveth and fitteth them, that they may be vessels of praise and honour. He is our comforter; working grace, he puts us into an expectation of comfort and glory; and therefore, to make it good, he carrieth on the work without failing: Rom. viii. 23, 'And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body;' 2 Cor. i. 22, 'Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.' We have the taste and the pledge of it; it is good, it is sure. The first degree of grace is conferred as a pledge of eternal life; he giveth it as an earnest or pledge, assuring us of a more perfect enjoyment of him. It is a pledge of the whole crop; as an earnest, hereby God assureth us that he will pay the whole sum. An earnest is a pledge whereby we confirm a bargain; it is a piece of money

whereby we are assured he will pay the whole. Grace, it is the livery and seisin of glory; as soon as a real change is wrought in us, we have a right that is indefeasible; it is engaged by promise. Therefore, that the Spirit may be faithful, when he hath given us the first-fruits, the earnest, shall he not give us the inheritance?

Use 1. It exhorteth us to persevere with the more care: 1 John ii. 26–28, ‘These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, you shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear, ye may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.’ Since we have so many advantages of standing, let us not fall from him. Oh! how great will your sin be if you should fall and dishonour God! We pity a child that falleth when it is not looked after; but when a froward child wresteth and forceth itself out of the arms of the nurse, we are angry with it. You have more ground to stand than others, being brought into an unchangeable estate of grace, being held in the arms of Christ; so that God will be very angry with your slips and fallings. Mercy holdeth you fast, and you seek to wrest yourselves out of mercy’s arms. Never any can sin as you do; there is much frowardness in your sins. You disparage the Spirit’s custody, the merit of Christ, and the mercy of the Father: Heb. iv. 1, ‘Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.’ Some seem to stand, and do not; and some seem to fall utterly, and do not. A child of God indeed cannot come short, but he should not seem, nor give any appearance of coming short. Our course in religion is often interrupted, though it be not broken off; this is a seeming to come short of it. Hereby you bring a scandal upon the love of Christ, as if it were changeable; upon the merit of Christ, as if it were not a perfect merit. Though we do not fall so as to break our necks, yet we may fall so as to break our bones.

Use 2. If you fall, be not utterly discouraged. As the spinster leaveth a lock of wool to draw on the next thread, there is somewhat left when you are departed from God; you have more holdfast in him than an unregenerate sinner. A child, though a prodigal, will go to him, and say, Father: Ps. cxix. 176, ‘I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments.’ Through natural weakness I have gone astray like a sheep, but I seek thy commandments; there is some grace left yet: Isa. lxiv. 8, ‘But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou art the potter; we are all the work of thine hand.’ The church pleadeth thus: nay, God is angry when we do not plead so: Jer. iii. 4, ‘Wilt thou not from this time cry, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?’ You have an interest in God yet. Thus do, and your fall will be like them that go back to fetch their leap more commodiously.

Use 3. When you stand, let it incite you to love and thankfulness. Nothing maketh the saints more love God than his unchangeableness. His mercy made you come to him, and his truth will not suffer you to depart from him. Mercy and truth are like Jachin and Boaz: Micah

vii. 20, 'Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers, from the days of old.' The covenant was made with Abraham, and made good to Jacob. You may rejoice notwithstanding your weakness and Satan's daily assaults; as Daniel in the lions' den, to see the lions ramping and roaring about him, yet their mouths muzzled: 2 Sam. ii. 9, 'By strength shall no man prevail;' that is, by his own. That any of us have stood hitherto, let us ascribe it wholly to God: we might have been vile and scandalous, even as others. Many of better gifts may fall away, and thou keepest thy standing. What is the reason? We have done enough a thousand times to cause God to depart from us: Deut. xxiii. 14, 'If he see any unclean thing among thee, he will turn away from thee.' And is it not strange that the Spirit of grace should yet abide with us hitherto, when there is so much uncleanness in every one of us? The great argument of the saints why they love and praise him is the constancy and unchangeableness of his love: Ps. cxxxvi., 'For his mercy endureth for ever;' and Ps. cvi. 1, 'Praise the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.' No form more frequent in the mouths of his saints.

Use 4. If any fall often, constantly, frequently, and easily, they have no interest in grace: 1 John iii. 9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;' *οὐ ποιεῖ ἁμαρτίαν*, he maketh not a trade of sin, that is the force of that phrase. God's children slip often, but not with such a frequent constant readiness, into the same sin. Therefore he that liveth in a course of profaneness, worldliness, drunkenness, 'his spot is not the spot of God's children,' Deut. xxxii. 5. You are tried by your constant course: Rom. viii. 1, 'That walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' What is your road and walk? I except only those sins which are of usual incidence, and sudden surreption, as anger, vanity of thoughts; and yet for them a man should be more humble. If it be not felt, nor striven against, nor mourned for, it is a bad sign. What is your course and walk? There is a uniformity in a christian's course. It is nothing to have some fits and good moods and motions.

Use 5. It provoketh us to get an interest in such a sure condition. Be not contented with outward happiness; things are worthy according to their duration. Nature hath such a sense of God's eternity that the more lasting things are, it accounteth them the better. The immortal soul must have an eternal good. Now all things in the world are frail and passing away, therefore they are called 'uncertain riches,' 1 Tim. vi. 17, compared with Prov. viii. 18, 'Riches and honour are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness.' The flower of these things perisheth, their grace passeth away; in the midst of their pride and beauty, like Herod in his royalty, they vanish and are blasted. The better part is not taken away: Luke x. 42, 'Mary hath chosen the better part, which cannot be taken away from her.' A man may outlive his happiness, be stripped of the flower of all. Worldly glory is sure to end with life, that is transitory; and still they are uncertain riches, uncertain whether we shall get them, uncertain whether we shall keep them. By a care of the better part, we may have these things with a blessing: Mat. vi. 33, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of

God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to you.' Gifts, they are for the body, rather than the person that hath them. Men may be carnal, and yet come behind in no gifts. Judas could cast out devils, and yet afterwards was cast out among devils: 1 Cor. xii. 31, the apostle had discoursed largely of gifts, but saith he, 'Yet I show you a more excellent way,' and that is grace, that abideth. Many that have great abilities to pray, preach, discourse, yet fall away; according to the place which they sustain in the body, so they have great gifts of knowledge, utterance, to comfort, direct, instruct others, to answer their doubts, to reason in holy discourse, and yet may fall foully: Heb. vi. 4, 5, 'They may be once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.' They may have a great share of church gifts. Nay, gifts themselves wither and vanish when the bodily vigour is spent: 1 Peter i. 24, 'All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.' Whatever excellency we have by nature, wit, knowledge, strength of natural parts, nothing but what the Spirit of God worketh in us will last for ever. So for seeming, unsound grace, as false faith, such as beginneth in joy, will end in trouble; it easeth you for the present, but you shall lie down in sorrow. General probabilities, loose hopes, uncertain conjectures, vanishing apprehensions of comfort, all fail. The planting of true faith is troublesome at first, but it leadeth to true joy; you may look upon the gospel with some kind of delectation. Thorns may blaze under the pot, though they cannot keep in the fire. Do not rest in 'tasting the good word of God,' Heb. vi. 5, in some slight and transitory comfort. Hymeneus and Alexander are said to 'make shipwreck of faith,' 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; that is, of a false faith. So for a formal profession, men may begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh: Gal. iii. 3, 'Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?' A man may seem to himself, and to the church of God, to have true grace; nay, he may be enlightened, find some comfort in the word, escape the pollutions of the world, foul gross sins; yea, these good things may be the works and the effects of the Spirit of God, not of nature only, not professed out of a carnal aim; but there is no settled root, and therefore it is but of short continuance. But certainly that form that is taken up out of private aims will surely fail. God delighteth to take off the mask and disguise of hypocrites, by letting them fall into some scandalous sins. Paint is soon washed off. Therefore rest not in these things, till solid and substantial grace be wrought in your hearts.

Use 6. Is comfort to God's children. Grace is sure, and the privileges of it sure. Grace is sure; through your folly it may be nigh unto death, but it cannot die. This is the advantage of spiritual comforts, that they do not only satisfy our desires, but secure us against our fears: Isa. xxxv. 10, 'The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.' Once in Christ, and you shall be for ever preserved. The leaven and the dough can never be severed when kneaded together, so neither can

you from Christ. Grace would be little better than temporal things if it did yield but temporary refreshment. You are sure that nothing shall cut you off from enjoying God, for nothing shall altogether cause you to cease to love God. The children of God would be troubled, though their grace should not fail, if their privileges should be cut off; but you are sure of both. God will maintain a spark, and the seed remaineth, and the privileges of grace are sure too. This was figured under the law. An Israelite could never wholly alienate his title to the land: Lev. xxv. 23, 'The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine, for ye were strangers and sojourners with me.' His title to the land shall not be quite cut off, 'it shall not be sold for ever;' which was a type of our spiritual inheritance in Christ, which cannot be alienated from us. He might for a while alienate and pass away his inheritance, yet the property remained; he knew it would return again. So here, God's children are never disinherited. By regeneration we are made co-heirs with Christ; we have an interest in the whole patrimony of the gospel. Now God will not cut off the entail, nor take the advantage of every offence which his children commit. To insure us, he hath not only put the entail into our hands, by giving us his promise, but he hath given us earnest and seisin in part, and he hath chosen a feoffee in trust to keep the estate for us; our heavenly patrimony is kept safe in his hands. It is true we forfeit it by the merit of our actions, but the trust standeth still enrolled in the court of heaven, and is not cancelled. Christ is to look to that, and it being conveyed in and by him as the first heir, he is to interpose his merit; as under the law, if the person were not able to redeem the inheritance, the kinsman was to redeem it. Christ is our kinsman after the flesh, he is our *Goel*, and maketh all firm and sure between God and us. It is true we lose the evidences that are in our keeping, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost; but the estate is indefeasible, and cannot be made away from us. Well, then, you see that grace is kept, and the privileges of grace are kept. Oh, what a sweet comfort is this!

But now, because comforts are never prized but in their season, men that have not been exercised in spiritual comforts nauseate these sweet truths; they know not what it is to be left to uncertainty, when troubles come like waves, one upon the neck of another. Let us see when these truths will be sweet and seasonable.

1. In great troubles, when God seemeth to hide his face, oh! how sweet it is to hear God say, Gen. xxviii. 15, 'Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.' All this shall better thy heart or hasten thy glory. We are apt to think that God will cast us off, and will never look after us any more, though formerly we have had real experience of his grace. What a foolish creature is man, to weaken his assurance when he should come to use it, to unravel all his hopes and experiences! Times of trouble are a fit season to make use of this comfort.

2. In the hour of temptation, and hard conflicts with doubts and corruptions, when you find their power growing upon you, you are

ready to say, as David did after all his experiences, 'I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul,' 1 Sam. xxvii. 1; and many times out of distrust ye give over the combat; then say, 'Who shall separate us from the love of God?' One came to a pious woman, when she had been exercised with a long and tedious conflict, and read to her the latter part of the 8th of the Romans; she broke forth in triumph, 'Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.' Sin or death cannot divide you from Christ; Christ will treat Satan under your feet, and weaken the malignant influence of the world.

3. In times of great danger and defection, through terror and persecution; as Sanders trembled to think of the fire; especially when others fall fearfully that were before us in privileges and profession of zeal and piety, when the first become last, when eminent luminaries are eclipsed, and leave their orb and station; as the martyrs were troubled to hear of the revolt of some great scholars that had appeared for the gospel. When Hymeneus and Philetus, two eminent professors, fell, it was a great shaking: 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19, 'Who concerning the truth have erred, saying, That the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless, the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.'

4. In times of disheartening, because of the difficulties of religion, and the use of means groweth troublesome. To quicken us in our christian course, think of the unchangeableness of God's love. All grace riseth according to the proportion and measure of faith; loose hopes weaken endeavours: 1 Cor. ix. 26, 'I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.' As those that run at all give over when one hath overreached them, they are discouraged; when hope is broken, the edge of endeavours is blunted. Go on with confidence, ye are assured of the issue; by these endeavours God will bless you and keep you; there is a sure recompense.

5. In the hour of death, when all things fail you, God will not fail you; this is the last branch: Do but wait, I will not forsake you; notwithstanding all that I have done, all that I have promised, there is more behind than ever you have enjoyed; death shall not separate. Olevian comforted himself with that, Isa. liv. 10, 'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.' In the pains of death, sight is gone, speech and hearing is departing, feeling almost gone, but the loving-kindness of God will never depart. Oh! the Lord give us such a confidence in that day, that we may fix this comfort in our thoughts.

Doct. 2. That we are kept in the state of grace by God's name, by his power, for his glory.

God's attributes are called his name, because by them he is known, as a man by his name. I shall inquire—

1. What of the name of God is engaged in the preservation of the saints.

[1.] His truth, in opposition to our fickleness and falseness: 1 Cor.

x. 13, 'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able to bear, but will with every temptation make a way for you to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' God cannot deny himself; his faithfulness is laid at pledge with the creatures. When difficulties and troubles are too hard for you, call him by his name: Lord, thou art faithful. When Judah was about to pass a hard sentence upon Tamar, she showed him his token, his bracelets, ring, and staff, 'Whose are these?' So may God's promises be showed to him.

[2.] His mercy, in opposition to our unworthiness; mercy to pardon and pity and help us. Poor creatures! they will surely miscarry if I do not go down and help them: Heb. iv. 16, 'Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain grace, and find mercy to help us in time of need.' God is not upon his tribunal of justice, but his throne of grace. When you are in spiritual straits, be not discouraged; the time of need is a time for God to show himself. God hath mercy to pardon, and grace to pity and help; mercy for the recovery of every sinner, grace as a remedy for every misery. Do but observe thy heart, what thou wouldst have, and tell God every day.

[3.] His power, against our weakness: 2 Peter i. 5, 'We are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.' This is our garrison; we cannot stand a moment longer than God upholdeth us by his power; as a staff in the hand of a man, take away the hand, and the staff falleth to the ground; or rather, as a little infant in the nurse's hand, which is God's own comparison: Hosea xi. 3, 'I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms.' If God should but let loose his hand, as he doth sometimes to make us sensible of our weakness, we should soon miscarry; as if God should let loose his hand of providence, all the creatures would fall into nothing.

[4.] I might mention his holiness, against our sinfulness. He is not only 'the Holy One,' but 'the Holy One of Israel,' the church's sanctifier; as the pipe would be dry if the fountain cease to run. But this is enough. *Deus, quantus est!* His whole name is engaged by Christ to do his people good.

2. Why we are only kept by God.

[1.] Nothing else could keep us but God's name. We should surely miscarry if our standing did depend upon the frailty of our will. We are weak, and the enemies and difficulties of our salvation are very great, corruptions within, and temptations without us; created grace could never hold out. One of the fathers bringeth in the flesh saying, *Ego deficiam*; the world, *Ego decipiam*; and Satan, *Ego eripiam*. But God saith, *Ego custodiam*, I will keep them, never fail them, nor forsake them; and there lieth our security. The world is a slippery place; it is strange that any hold their footing. We are carnal, and carnal persons are about us. It were strange for a man to keep his health in a town where every person, every house, and the air itself is infected with the plague; this is our condition. Then for the malice of Satan, he is a restless enemy, watcheth all advantages, as a dog that standeth waving his tail: it is Chrysostom's comparison. His envy and malice are bent against them that have most grace. There were two Adams, and both were tempted. In our hearts there is great deal of

variableness; in the best of God's saints many ups and downs in points of grace. Our hearts are rebellious: Jer. v. 23, 'This people have a revolting and rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone;' Jer. xiv. 10, 'My people have loved to wander.' It is natural to the creature to be fickle and inconstant, especially in point of grace. It is a miracle that we, having such naughty hearts, where there is so much pride, love of pleasures, worldly cares, brutish lusts, any of us should hold out to the end. Would not we wonder to see a herb that we prize grow in the midst of weeds, a candle to burn in the water.

[2.] It is meet none else should. God will have this honour from all saints, and he will put this honour upon the saints, that he will be their guardian and keeper; not only angels, who are 'ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are the heirs of salvation,' Heb. i. 14; they have a great deal of employment about God's children; but God himself will keep them: 1 Peter i. 5, 'Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' If your protection were visible, all the princes of the world would come short of your guard and attendance. God will be your watchman, your keeper, to foresee the danger and defend you from it: this honour he will have. He that is the maker of the world is the preserver of it; the keeping of the world could be trusted in no other hands but his that made it. So he is the preserver of the saints, as well as their maker: 1 Sam. ii. 9, 'By strength shall no man prevail;' he keepeth the feet of his saints; you rob God of the honour of your salvation by other confidences.

Use. It exhorteth us—

1. To a continual dependence on the name of God. All creatures have their refuges, the heirs of salvation are described to be those 'that fly for refuge to lay hold upon the hope that is set before them,' Heb. vi. 18. Now what is their refuge? Prov. xviii. 10, 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.' At Babel, to secure themselves, they would 'build a high and strong tower,' Gen. xi. 3, 4. We have a strong tower built to our hands. We that are at continual war should have a place of retreat; here is a sure one, you have it without cost; you need in the hour of temptation to make speed to it. What is this running, but pleading his faithfulness, looking up to his power, magnifying his grace in your dependence? Those that go forth in the strength of their own resolutions are sure to miscarry, as Peter was a sad instance.

2. To confidence. We may boast of his name: Ps. cxviii. 10–12, 'All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them. They compassed me about, yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.' Thrice it is, 'in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.' When we have such a keeper as is omnipotent, why should we fear? Though thou hast so many infirmities, allurements, discouragements, corrupt inclinations, thou standest not by thine own strength. Christ hath engaged God's name to keep thee: Ps. xvi. 8, 'I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.' It is well that we have so good a second: a christian is a soldier that may triumph

before the victory. It was a proverb, 'Let not him that putteth on his armour boast as he that putteth it off.'

3. To thankfulness. Did we believe the power of corruption, we should be more thankful: 2 Cor. i. 21, 'Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.' He doth all, and being engaged with Christ, by virtue of your interest in him you shall stand. None should be proud of their standing in the state of grace; God must have all the glory: 1 Peter iv. 11, 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'

SERMON XVIII.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.—
JOHN XVII. 11.

FOURTHLY, We are now come to the fourth circumstance, the persons for whom he prayeth, 'Those which thou hast given me.' Some ancient copies read, *ὁ δέδικτας μοί*, 'thy name which thou hast given me;' but I will not trouble you with that. Most read as we do, *ὅυς*, 'those which thou hast given me.' But who are they? and what is meant by God's giving us to Christ? and why is it mentioned here? The phrase is often repeated, and used in many verses of this chapter.

I shall now explain it once for all.

1. Who are the persons that were given to Christ?

I answer—Generally the elect, particularly the apostles. The elect are and may be comprised within the expression; for, ver. 9, it is put in contradistinction to the reprobate world, for whom Christ will not pray: 'I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me, for they are thine.' But in the principal scope of this verse, the disciples of that age are intended, and among them chiefly the apostles, who are *ἐκλεκτων ἐκλεκτότεροι*, the elect of the elect; for he doth principally pray for others afterward: ver. 20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for those which shall believe on me through their word.' But after that again, both the disciples and all others that belong to the purposes of God's grace are folded or bound together up in this one expression: ver. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.' All which showeth that this expression, 'those which are given to Christ,' is a character proper and peculiar to the elect, and so Christ meaneth it in this place. Nothing can be objected against this, but that in the verse next my text, ver. 12, 'Those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition.' So that either we must take this giving in a larger sense, or allow that some of those given to Christ may be lost. I answer—

I might take the word in a larger sense indeed, as it is sometimes used in scripture, for those given to Christ only by way of reward, though not by way of charge, as I shall distinguish by and by. Hypocrites, because of their external vocation, are said to be given to Christ by way of ministry and service, but not by way of special charge. And it is notable what Christ saith of Judas, John xiii. 18, 'I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture might be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lift up his heel against me;' where he showeth plainly that one of them was not of the number of the elect, and should not receive the privileges of his special charge; though he was chosen to the calling of an apostle, yet not to eternal life, but only given by way of ministry and service. But this would seem to cross the constant use of the phrase in this chapter. I answer therefore by interpreting the phrase, *εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπολείας*, 'but the son of perdition;' the words are not exceptive, but adversative, and must be thus construed, 'None of them which thou hast given me is lost, but the son of perdition is lost.' And mark it, we do not render it *except* the son of perdition, but *but* the son of perdition; it is not *nisi*, but *sed*; there is no exception made of Judas, as if he had been given to Christ, and afterward had fallen away; but when he had mentioned their keeping, he would adversatively put the losing of Judas. This phrase or manner of speech is often used in scripture. So Rev. xxi. 27, 'There shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life,' *εἰ μὴ*; where the words are not exceptive, for then it would follow that some that work abomination were in the Lamb's book; but adversative—They shall not enter, but others shall enter. So Mat. xii. 4, 'David entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests,' *εἰ μὴ*; it is not exceptive, as if they were of David's company, but adversative—It was not lawful for them to eat, but it was lawful for the priests.

2. How are they said to be given to Christ? Persons are given to Christ two ways—by way of reward, or by way of charge.

[1.] By way of reward, and so more largely all nations are given to him: Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;' and John xvii. 2, 'As thou hast given him power over all flesh.' This donation taketh in elect and reprobate. Nations are his heritage, as well as the church; only in this giving by way of reward, there is a difference; some are given to Christ at large, to be disposed of according to his pleasure; others are given to him for some special ministry and service, as hypocrites in the church; and thus Judas, amongst the rest, was given to Christ, though 'a son of perdition.' And again, others are given to him by way of special and peculiar interest, to be members of his body, subjects of his kingdom, children of his family. So only the elect are given to him: John xvii. 6, 'Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.' The great bargain that Christ made for his Father was only¹ an interest in souls.

[2.] By way of charge. This again is only proper and peculiar to

¹ Qu. 'with his Father was only for'?—ED.

the elect; they were given to Christ by way of charge, to be redeemed, justified, sanctified, glorified; given, not by way of alienation, but oppignoration, laid at pledge in his hands, so that none of them can miscarry. I shall name some places to prove this way of giving: John vi. 37-39, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me,' &c.; where you see they shall surely and infallibly be brought to grace, and as infallibly be conducted to glory; and when they come, they cannot miscarry: 'This is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing.' Christ hath received a charge, he is to look to all God's flock, not to lose a leg, or a piece of an ear. So John x. 28, 29, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man shall pluck them out of my Father's hands.' Where see Christ's power and faithfulness is engaged by the Father's gift for the preservation of the saints. So that we see what it is to be given to Christ, to become his reward, his charge.

3. A third question yet remaineth. Why is it mentioned here? The phrase, as I said, is often used in many verses of this chapter; but the repetition is not needless: it is not an empty tautology, but repeated for the more ample consolation and instruction of the apostles, that in the midst of their troubles they might look upon themselves as given to Christ, and so the more interested in a sure preservation; for God is bound to make good his grant, and Christ his trust. Christ pleadeth his own faithfulness: ver. 12, 'While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those which thou gavest me I have kept.' He made good his trust, and therefore now pleadeth with the Father that he would make good his grant: 'I am no more in the world, do thou keep them;' and he useth the same argument, 'Those which thou hast given me;' that swayed with him to keep them, and he knew the Father would take care of them for the same reason.

Well, now, having laid this foundation, let me—

Observe that this is a ground of solid consolation and establishment to the elect, that they are by the grant of God the Father given and committed to God the Son as his purchase and charge. The point is genuine, for this giving is by way of gift and charge; and this giving is proper to the elect, as we have proved; and it is here urged as a ground of establishment and consolation. Christ expresseth the elect by such a character, 'Those which thou hast given me,' not only to specify the persons, but to declare the ground of audience—Keep them, because they are those which thou hast given me.

Therefore, in following of it, I shall use this method:—

1. I shall more largely explain the manner of God's grant and donation to Christ.

2. I shall show you how it is a ground of establishment and consolation.

3. I shall enforce all by application.

First, To open the nature of the grant, let us again resume the distinction of giving by way of reward and charge. These two answer to one another, as work and wages. Christ taketh upon himself a charge of souls, and all his reward is that he may have an interest in them. Let us begin with the charge, the work first, and then the wages.

1. They are given to him by way of charge. What his charge was will be opened by considering what the Father proposed concerning the elect, and how the Son undertook it.

[1.] What the Father proposed. The words of heaven are *ἄρρητα ῥήματα*, 2 Cor. xii. 4, 'Words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' Those secret ways of discourse and communication between the Father and the Son are to be adored with reverence and deep silence, were it not that the Spirit of God hath put them into such forms as are suitable to the transactions and intercourse which pass between man and man. It is usual in scripture to put the passages which concern God and Christ into speeches: Ps. xl. 6-8, 'Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then I said, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart;' Ps. ii. 8, 'Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;' Ps. cx. 1, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' The Father came to Christ, and did, as it were, say to him, Son, I am loath that all mankind should be lost, and left under condemnation; there are some whom I have chosen to be vessels and receptacles of my mercy and goodness; and because I am resolved that my justice shall be no loser, you must take a body and die for them; and afterwards you must see that they be converted to grace, justified, sanctified, guided to glory, and that not one of them doth miscarry; for I will take an account from you of them. It were easy to prove all these things out of scripture, to wit, that there are a certain definite number whom God chooseth to be vessels of mercy: 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth those that are his.' There is no lottery nor uncertainty in the divine decrees; the number is stated and sealed, none can add to it, nor detract or take away any one person. And that Christ received a command to lay down his life for them, and for them only: John x. 15, 'I lay down my life for my sheep;' and ver. 18, 'This commandment have I received of my Father.' The description is a limitation; it is for his sheep. God would have none of Christ's blood to run waste. That he is to do this, that the honour of justice may be saved, and so mercy have the freer course: Rom. iii. 25, 26, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, his righteousness; that he may be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.' The Son was not only to use entreaty, but to make satisfaction; not that God by any necessity of nature required it; the exercise of justice is free, and falleth under no laws; but it was most convenient to preserve a due sense and apprehension of the Godhead. That Christ was to see them converted, it was the express will of God: John vi. 38, 39, '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 that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise them up again at the last day;' and by conversion, to be possessed of all the privileges of the

gospel; and without miscarrying to be guided unto glory: John x. 28, 29, 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father that gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.' They are one, and act by joint power and joint consent. And after all this, he is to give an account of bodies and souls: John vi. 39, 'That of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise them up again at the last day.' Which accordingly he doth when he presents the kingdom to the Father, and appeareth before him with all his little ones, as a prey snatched out of the teeth of lions: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.'

[2.] What Christ undertook; the whole proposal of the Father was accepted: Ps. xl. 7, 8, 'Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' Christ consented to all the articles of the treaty and eternal covenant, not only to take a body to die, but to take a particular charge of all the elect. As Judah interposed for Benjamin, so doth Christ for all the souls committed to him: Gen. xliii. 9, 'I will be surety for him, of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not to thee, and set him safe in thy presence, let me bear the blame for ever.' So doth Christ say concerning all the persons that fall under his charge. If I do not see them converted, justified, sanctified, saved, count me an unfaithful undertaker, and let me bear the blame for ever.

2. By way of reward. As in a covenant there is not only a duty incumbent, but a benefit accruing to the party that contracteth; so Christ in this eternal treaty dealt with God by way of bargain and purchase; his aim was to get a special interest in, and relation to believers, as mediator. This was all the gain he reckoned of: 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 hand.' And therefore by virtue of this purchase he hath many relations to them; they are given to him as subjects of his kingdom, as scholars of his school, as children of his family, as the spouse of his bosom, as the members of his body. All these relations I shall insist upon; for this was the honour granted to Christ upon his obedience; I mean, he counted it an honour, and bought it at a dear rate, and yet was contented with the purchase. Alas! nothing could be added to the greatness of his person, who was equal with the Father in glory and power; the privileges of the incarnation were but as so many milder humiliations; but he was so tender of souls that he was pleased to take it as a gift from his Father, and a reward of all his services. Mark it, nothing else could bring Christ out of heaven into the manger, the wilderness, the cross, the grave, but to get an interest in your souls: Isa. liii. 11, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.' What did he gain by all his expense of blood and sweat, his temptations, agonies, taking our nature, bearing our burden, but to see you safe in the arms of mercy, that he might be your king, your prophet, your priest, your head? Next to the title of the Son of God, Christ valueth that of being head of the church. And see how

the relations are diversified, that he might come nearer and closer to us: a king is a more large relation, a master hath a more particular inspection; a master may be faithful and careful, but he hath not the bowels of a father; a father is very tender, but the greatest intimacy is between husband and wife, we are the wife of his bosom; if husband be a relation too remote, because the union is civil, he comes nearer to us yet, he will be our head, we his members, where the union is natural. Let us go over these severally.

[1.] We are given to him to be subjects of his kingdom. Christ is lord of all the world, but he prizeth no title like that of king of saints, Rev. xv. 3. No throne to him like the conscience of a humble sinner; the heart is his best presence-chamber, there is his throne of state set. He had an eternal right, together with the Father and Holy Ghost, but he would come and suffer, and be crowned with a crown of thorns, that he might have a new right as mediator, and have the crown of glory put upon his head in the church. Therefore it is said, Acts v. 31, that upon his resurrection, 'God hath exalted him to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' The grant was made long before, when he first contracted with Christ about the salvation of the world; but when the price was paid, then it was made good. There is never a subject Christ hath, but he is bought, and with the dearest price, his sovereign's own blood: Mat. xx. 28, 'The Son of man gave his life a ransom for many,' *λυτρών ἀντὶ πολλῶν*. In other kingdoms many subjects die, that the prince may be seated in the throne; but here the prince dieth for the subjects' sakes, that he may govern his spiritual realm with peace and quietness. And as the price was great, so the Father hath made him a large grant. Christ's empire is universal; properly he is the catholic king, there are no bounds and limits of his kingdom; first or last, in all the habitable parts of the earth there are or shall be some that acknowledge his sceptre: Isa. xlix. 12, 'Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.' From the east, west, north, south, Jews, Gentiles; the Jews that are now his enemies shall acknowledge his sovereignty: Hosea i. 11, 'Then shall the children of Judah, and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land.' As the tribes flocked to Hebron to crown David, so shall these to crown Christ; and this royal garland shall Christ wear to all eternity. It is true it is said, 1 Cor. xv. 29, 'He shall resign up the kingdom to the Father.' I answer—In kingly dignity there are two things—*regia cura* and *regius honor*—kingly care, by which he ordereth and defendeth his subjects against enemies, that shall cease; but the kingly honour which he receiveth from his subjects shall be for ever and ever; he shall always be honoured as king and mediator of the church. He shall resign the kingdom; that is, that way of administration by which he now governeth; for when the elect are fully converted and sanctified, and enemies destroyed, there will be no need of this care. Now after he hath bought us out of his Father's hands by his merit and purchase, he is forced to recover us from the devil by his power and conquest. The word is the rod of his strength, the sacraments are our oath of allegiance; in prayer we

perform our homages, by alms and acts of charity we pay him tribute, and praise and obedience are the constant revenues of his crown. This is the first grant.

[2.] We are given to Christ as scholars of his school. He is the great prophet and doctor of his church; certainly Christ loveth the honour of this chair. He hath also obtained this title, Acts iii. 22, 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you from among your brethren; him shall ye hear.' Christ came out from the bosom of God to show us his heart and mind. So he is called, Heb. iii. 1, 'The apostle of our profession.' Christ doth so love a relation to his church, that you see he taketh the titles of own officers; though he is Lord of the church, yet he is 'the apostle of our profession;' he counteth it an honour to be a preacher of the gospel. The Son of God is first in the roll of gospel preachers; he is God's legate *à latere*, an apostle: he laid the foundation of the gospel when he was upon the earth, and he teacheth us now he is in heaven: he doth not teach the ear, but the heart; he doth not only set us our lesson, but giveth us a heart to learn it; the scripture is our book, and Christ our great master; and when he openeth our eyes, we shall see wondrous things in his law. Other teachers teach for hire, but he bought this liberty of God, that he might open his school, and become a light to Jew and Gentile.

[3.] We are given to him to be children of his family. The only thing propounded to allure Christ to the work of redemption was, Isa. liii. 10, 'He shall see his seed,' that he might have a numerous issue and progeny. He delighteth in us, though we are all Benonis, sons of sorrow. Though he died in the birth, yet he is wonderfully pleased with the fruitfulness of his death; as a woman delivered after sharp and sore sorrow, forgetteth all her past sorrow for joy of the birth. At the last day this will be Christ's rejoicing and crown, to see the multitude of his little ones all brought together: Heb. ii. 13, 'Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me.' It is a goodly sight, when Christ shall rejoice in the midst of them, and go with them, as a glorious train, to the throne of God the Father. Jesus Christ is our brother and our father; by regeneration and the merit of the cross he is our father; but in the possession of heaven he is our brother, for we are co-heirs with him.

[4.] We are given to him as the spouse of his bosom. This is another of Christ's honours, to be the church's bridegroom. The epithalamium is in Canticles and Ps. xlv. There the nuptials are celebrated. Ministers, they are, as John Baptist was called, 'Friends of the bridegroom.' Look, as a father giveth her whom he hath begotten to another for a spouse and wife, so doth God give his elect to Christ. Indeed Christ hath bought the church at his Father's hands; other wives bring a dowry, but Christ was to buy. As Saul gave his daughter to David, but first he was to kill Goliath, and to bring the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, 1 Sam. xvii. 25, and xviii. 25; so God gave Christ the church for a spouse, but Christ was to redeem her with his blood, the infernal Goliath was to be slain. Yea, ere Christ did obtain this honour, he gaineth our consent by the power of his Spirit, working with the entreaties of the word: Hosea ii. 14, 'I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak

comfortably unto her;’ and ver. 19, 20, ‘I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.’ First I will allure, then betroth; as David, after he had bought Michal with the danger of his life, yet was fain to take her away from Phaltiel, 2 Sam. iii. 13. The devil hath gotten Christ’s spouse in his own arms; he is fain to rescue her, and oblige her to loyalty by the entreaties of his Spirit. Hereafter is the day of espousals; now the church is called the bride, then the Lamb’s wife. Christ’s honour, as well as our consent, is incomplete; then he cometh to fetch her, and present her to God, Eph. v. 27, and bring her into his Father’s house. Christ is decking her against that time; we are to accomplish the months of our purification, and to have odours and garments out of the king’s wardrobe, Esther i. 12.

[5.] We are given to him to be members of his body. Here is the nearest relation, and that which Christ most prizeth, next to the title of the Son of God, to be head of the church. Oh! what an honour is this to poor creatures, that Christ will take us into his own mystical body, to quicken us and enliven us, and guide us by his grace! To angels he is a head in point of sovereignty and power: Col. ii. 10, ‘And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.’ But to the church he is a head by virtue of mystical union. Angels are his ministering spirits, but we his spouse; they are not called his bride, nor the spouse of his bosom, nor the members of his body. In the Ephesians, the church is called ‘his body,’ the ‘fulness of him that filleth all in all,’ Eph. i. 23. Poor creatures are *πλήρωμα Χριστοῦ*; he doth not count himself perfect without us, as if he were a maimed, imperfect Christ till all the church be where he is. He treateth his mystical body with the same respect that he doth his natural; it is raised, ascended, glorified, so shall we. For the present there is some communion between us; he is grieved in our miseries, and we are exalted in his glory. As there is a mutual passage of spirits between the head and the body, so there is a communion between Christ and us by donatives and duties.

Secondly, How this is a ground of establishment and consolation.

1. By this gift we have an interest both in God and Christ: 1 John i. 3, ‘That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ;’ 2 John 9, ‘He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.’ God will make good his gift, and Christ his trust. God bestowed us upon his Son, to oblige Christ to the greater respect; and Christ hath bought us of his Father, that the gift might be sure and certain. The Son loveth us, because the Father required it; the Father loveth us, because the Son merited it. If Christ be faithful to his Father, or the Father be loving and respectful to Christ, we cannot miscarry. We have an interest in the Father, who is the fountain of mercy; in the Son, who is the golden pipe and conveyance. God made the elect to be members of Christ’s body, that he might redeem them; and Christ made them children of God’s family, that he might

love them and bless them. Electing love and Christ's purchase are the two fountains of salvation. God, who is the supreme judge, offended party, first cause and fountain of blessing, he requireth the Son to die for us; and Christ hath undertaken it, and made good his word.

2. God hath put the business of our salvation into safe hands. He would not be defeated of his purpose, therefore he hath given the elect to Christ, that they may be quickened by virtue of that power and life which was given to him. He would deal with us upon sure terms, and therefore took order sufficient to attain his end; he would not trust us with any but his own eternal Son. There is a charge laid on Christ, who is a good depositary, of such care and faithfulness, that he will not neglect his Father's pledge; of such strength and ability, that nothing can wrest us out of his hands; for he that doeth it had need of a stronger arm than Christ's, John x. 28, 29. Of such love, that no work can be more pleasing to him; he loveth us far better than we do ourselves, or else he would never have come from heaven for our sakes. Of such watchfulness and care, that his eyes do always run to and fro throughout the earth. Providence is full of eyes, as well as strong of hand. As the high priest bore the names of the tribes upon his breast and shoulders, so doth Christ the memorial of every saint; he knoweth their names and their necessities; though many thousands in the world, yet every single believer falleth under the care of Christ, as if none besides him; he knoweth them by head and poll, their wants, necessities. They are written in the 'Lamb's book of life,' Rev. xiii. 8. Christ keeps a register of them. There is not only God's book of remembrance, but the Lamb's book of life. He knoweth every distinct sheep by name, and constantly giveth an account of them to God: 'I am glorified in them.' It is grievous to our advocate when he is forced to be an accuser. He taketh a distinct and implicit notice of 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?' Ps. xxxiv. 6, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles.' If it were not for this our keeper, we should surely perish; but Christ is our keeper, who is faithful, loving, able, watchful. *Qui potest et vult, facit.* Christ's own charge cannot miscarry. If the elect should not be saved, Christ would neither do his work, nor receive his wages.

Use. To press us to come under these sweet hopes. There is nothing wanting but the clearing up of our interest, that you may be of the number of those that are given to Christ. You will know it by God's act towards you, and by your act towards God.

1. By God's act towards you. If we be given to Christ, Christ is given to us. We are given to Christ before all time, and in time Christ is given to us; by converting grace he and we are brought together. God makes an offer in the gospel; are we willing to receive him for Lord and Saviour? Then you put it out of question. Are you moved by the Spirit to receive him upon God's offer. Conversion, it is as it were an actual election. By original election the heirs of salvation are distinguished from others in God's purpose; so by conversion, or actual election, they are visibly distinguished. What

excitements of grace can you speak of that urge you to come to Christ? All that are given to him come to him.

2. By your act towards Christ. All the Father's acts are ratified in time by believers; he ordaineth, we consent; he chooseth Christ for Lord and king, and 'they shall appoint themselves one head.' So God's giving of souls to Christ is ratified by the believers' act. As there is a double giving on his part, by way of charge and by way of reward, so there is a double act on our part, committing, and consecrating ourselves to Christ.

[1.] Committing ourselves to Christ. Can we wholly and absolutely resign up our souls into his hands? The Father is wiser than we; he knew well enough what he did when he commended us to his Son. Faith is often expressed by 'committing ourselves to Christ;' it answereth the trust the Father reposed in him: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep, παραθήκην μου, that which I have committed unto him against that day.' This is not an easy matter, it argueth a sense of danger, a solicitous care about the soul, and an advised confidence. What care hast thou ever taken to lay thy soul safe? What confidence hast thou of Christ's ability? Didst thou think thou couldst be safe without him? Thou wouldst be an unfaithful guardian. Knowingly canst thou venture eternity on thy present state?

[2.] Consecrating ourselves to him: Rom. xii. 1, 'I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' Then walk as his, it is dangerous to alienate things once consecrated: 1 Cor. iii. 23, 'Ye are Christ's.' Whatever you have, you must give up to him for his glory. You have nothing at your own dispose, neither tongue, nor heart, nor estate; as long as a man reserves to himself an interest, he will miscarry. Nabal called what he had, 'My bread, and my water, and my flesh,' 1 Sam. xxv. 11. Did you ever make a serious resignation of yourselves to God? Ps. cxix. 94, 'I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.'

SERMON XIX.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.
—JOHN XVII. 11.

FIFTHLY, The last circumstance, 'That they may be one, as we are, is the aim of Christ's request, which is unity and consent among the apostles. It is illustrated by the pattern or exemplar of it, 'As we are one.'

The explicatory questions are two:—

1. What kind of unity this is that is prayed for.

2. Under what respect it is prayed for in this place.

First, What this unity is? How one? One in judgment, or one

in heart, or one body knit together with the same spirit? I answer—All these; for consider for whom Christ prayeth, for the disciples of that age, and principally for the college of the apostles; now saith he, ‘Let them be one.’ There is a double unity—mystical and moral.

1. Mystical union is the union of believers with Christ the head, and with one another; with Christ the head by faith, and with one another by love; *ὅνα ὁσιν ἐν*, understand *ἐν σῶμα*; so it agreeth with the letter of this place, nay, with the meaning. This union of believers in the same body is often compared with the mystery of the Trinity; and it is elsewhere expressed by one body, as Col. ii. 19, ‘And not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God;’ a place full to this purpose, where all believers, in regard of their union with the head, and with one another, are set forth as one body, governed under one head, by one spirit, by which they increase and grow up, till they come to such a kind of unity as is among the divine persons. I cannot exclude this, because where Christ’s prayers are indefinite, it is good to interpret them in their full latitude, and according to the extent of his purchase. And yet I think this is not principally intended, because, as I said, Christ chiefly prayeth for the apostles and disciples of that age, not for the church catholic or universal.

2. There is a moral union, and that is twofold—(1.) Consent in doctrine; (2.) Mutual agreement and concord of affection. As it is said of the church, Acts iv. 32, ‘The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind.’ One heart, that noteth agreement in affection; and one mind, agreement in judgment: for both these doth Christ pray.

[1.] Let them be one in doctrine and judgment. Christ had intrusted them with the weightiest affair the sons of men are capable of, with the promulgation of the gospel; a doctrine which Christ brought out of the bosom of the Father, and gave it to the apostles, and they to the church; and Christ obtained that which he prayed for. There is such an exact consent and harmony between the doctrine of the apostles, that is a sufficient foundation for the faith and unity of the church. For the faith of the church: 1 Cor. xv. 10, 11, ‘I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me: therefore whether it were I, or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.’ We have no cause to stumble and take offence at the doctrine delivered by the apostles; though God used several instruments, of different gifts and opportunities of service, yet all were conducted by an infallible Spirit: ‘So we preached, all of us,’ &c. So for unity and concord in the church: Eph. iv. 3–5, ‘Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism,’ &c.

[2.] Let them be one in heart, and with joint consent carry on this great charge that is committed to them. So did the apostles, by unanimous consent, divide their labours for the edification of the world, and kept a fellowship among themselves: Gal. ii. 9, ‘They gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go unto

the heathen, and they to the circumcision; with such concord and agreement was this great work managed between them; for all this did Christ pray. And this suiteth with the pattern in the text, 'As we are one.' As between the Father and the Son there was a mutual agreement in the carrying on the work of redemption, so between the apostles in carrying on the doctrine of redemption.

Secondly, In what manner doth Christ pray for it? Here some take this only as a new petition, different from the former; he had prayed for preservation, now for unity. But there is a causal particle, *iva*, and therefore some connection: *iva* may be taken *specificativè*, keep them, by making them one; the safety of the church dependeth much upon the unity of it. Or *terminativè*, keep them, that they may be one.

I had intended, because of the necessity of the matter, to have spoken of the union of the church with Christ, and then with one another. But because he chiefly prayeth for the apostles (though others are not excluded), and because the union of the church, as one body, animated with the same Spirit, will fall under discussion in ver. 21 and 23, I shall adjourn it to that place.

Only now I shall observe—

1. How much Christ's heart is set upon the unity and oneness of his members. Here he prayeth for the apostles; in ver. 21 he prayeth the same for all believers. Upon this occasion let us see how much it was in the aim of Christ.

[1.] Therefore was he incarnate. He united the divine and human nature in his own person, that he might unite us to God by himself, and with one another. God and man had never been one in covenant if they had not first been one in person. The hypostatical union maketh way for the mystical. It was the main end of Christ's coming into the world, Eph. i. 10, 'That in the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ.' The angels and blessed spirits, and the saints in all nations, have communion with us in Christ under the same head. He would gather the elect rational creatures into a body, one with God in Christ, saints and angels. As all the heads of a discourse are summed up in the conclusion, so Christ would draw all into one body. He took a natural body that he might have a mystical body. Christ would not only leave us the relation of friends and brethren, but fellow-members. He would gather together all into one; not only into one family, but into one body. Brothers that have issued from the same womb, that have been nursed with the same milk, have been divided in interests and affections, and defaced all feelings of nature; Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, are sad instances. But this mischief is not found in members of the same body; there is no contestation and disagreement. Who would use one hand to cut off another? or divide those parts, which preserve the mutual correspondence and welfare of all? Again, brothers, if they do not hurt one another, they do not care for one another; each liveth to himself a distinct life apart, and studieth his own advantage. But it is not so in the body; each member liveth in the whole, and the whole in all the members; and they all exercise their several functions for the common good: 1 Cor. xii. 25, 'The members should have the

same care one of another.' We are not friends and brethren, but members.

[2.] No one thing is so much inculcated in his sermons : John xv. 17, 'These things I command you, that ye love one another.' Will you take a charge from a dying man? This was the great charge that Christ left at his death ; it was a legacy as well as a precept. Speeches of dying men are wont to be received with much veneration and reverence, especially the charge of dying friends. The brethren of Joseph, fearing lest he should remember the injuries done to him in seeking his life, selling him into Egypt, they use this plea, Gen. l. 16, 17, 'Thy father commanded us before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin ; for they did thee evil : and now we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father.' We count it a piece of natural honesty to fulfil the will of the dead. When Christ took his leave of the disciples, this was the charge that he left upon them. Therefore when thy heart beginneth to be exulcerated, consider, What love do I bear Christ, since I do not respect his last commandment? Again, as it was Christ's last commandment, so it was his new commandment : John xiii. 34, 'A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.' It was his solemn charge ; a new commandment ! How new, since it was as old as the moral law or law of nature? New because excellent, 'as a new song ;' or new because solemnly and expressly renewed by him and commended to their care ; as new things and new laws are much esteemed and prized ; Christ would have this commandment always new and fresh ; or new because enforced by a new argument : 'As I have loved you, so should ye love one another.' When we see how much Christ hath loved us, even to the death of the cross, we may learn to love with a new kind of love : *Experti amorem meum tam novum et inauditum*. This was a new kind of love indeed, to enkindle love in our souls. Christ gave us such a new kind of love as was never seen nor heard of. Christ came from heaven to propound us a pattern of charity ; as to repair and preserve the notions of the Godhead by the greatness of his sufferings, so to show us a pattern of charity, and to elevate duty between man and man : Eph. v. 2, 'Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour.' In Christ's example we see the highest pattern of love : John xv. 9, 'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.' His Father loved him with an infinite love, yet parted with him for the salvation of men ; and Christ parted with himself, and all to raise our love to God and men the higher. But I digress.

[3.] In his prayers, that which he reinforced again and again is unity and love. When he was about to die he foresaw the divisions of the church, and that Satan would by all means endeavour to sow strife ; corrupt nature putteth us on discords. He left some apostles, others believers, but all men ; wherefore he prays for the apostles, 'Let them be one ;' for believers, 'Let them be one.' Christ, that left unity as a charge in his last sermons, he would leave it as a legacy in his last prayers. But why was Christ so earnest in his prayers?

(1.) Because it is such an excellent blessing. Christ would not have been so earnest for it if it had not been so excellent. I would not digress into a commendation of concord and love: *pax ab omnibus laudatur, a paucis servatur*; all commend it, though few observe it; yet a little will not be unnecessary. This is the strength and safety of the church: Col. iii. 14, 'And above all things put on charity, which is *σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος*, the bond of perfectness,' or a perfect bond, the cement of the church. The church is but one temple, where stones squared by grace are cemented with love, and inhabited by the same Spirit; this keepeth them fast in the building. This is the beauty and safety of the church, the joining that runneth through all the squared stones. As the health of the outward body dependeth on the symmetry and proportion of the members, and the harmony and disposition of all the parts, so doth the welfare of the church upon the bond of love. Next to truth, there is not a greater blessing; and Christ prayeth for the apostles, that they might be kept in the truth for this end, that they might be one in love. And as nothing is more profitable to the church, so nothing is more acceptable to God; it pleaseth God exceedingly to see all that call him Father to love as brethren. Certainly there is not a greater grief to his spirit than to see us divided in opinion and affection, in our prayers and supplications. Certainly there is much in concord in praying, when all God's children do besiege heaven with uniform and joint supplications. Things stick in the birth, because we are not agreed what to ask. As reformation sticketh towards men, because we are not agreed what to hold forth to the world, so it sticketh as to God, because we are not agreed what to ask. When the Israelites would have God's help, it is said they came all as one man to ask his counsel: Judges xx. 1, 'Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beersheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the Lord in Mizpah.' Oh! when shall it be so amongst us? There is not only altar set up against altar, but prayer against prayer. We are first divided in practices and opinions, and then in prayers; God's dear children and servants are divided in language; we cannot in charity but judge them to be acted with the same spirit, inspired with the same breath, yet they yield a different sound. It is said of the primitive believers that 'they continued, *ὁμοθυμάδον*, with one accord, in prayer and supplication,' Acts i. 14; and 'they were with one accord in one place' when the Holy Spirit descended on them, Acts ii. 1. And yet how seldom doth any public congregation meet with one mind in the same place! as in an organ, when some pipes do make a sound, others keep silence: Mat. xviii. 19, 'If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. God looks for an agreement and harmony in our requests, if we would speed with him.

(2.) Because Christ foresaw how much the church would need this blessing. Divisions will arise, an evil most unsuitable to christianity, and yet the evil genius that hath attended it; partly through Satan's malice; he cannot else hold the empire and title to the world; he is not only prince of the power of the air, but the God of this world. God permitteth him in his righteous judgment not only to have a great

power over the elements, but to rule in the hearts of men. Now he could not keep his own, nor prevail against the church, were it not for divisions. As Cyrus in Herodotus, going to fight against Scythia, coming to a broad river, and not being able to pass over it, cut and divided it into divers arms and sluices, and so made it passable for all his army; this is the devil's policy, he laboureth to divide us, and separate us into divers sects and factions, and so easily overcometh us. Christ knew that the envious man would sow tares. Partly through weakness and imperfection of knowledge, divers men may agree in one aim, and yet not in one way. The apostle saith (which indeed is the great canon and rule of charity, when it is rightly understood and applied), Phil. iii. 15, 16, 'Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you: nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.' I observe there, that among the godly, because of difference of light, especially in times of reformation, there will be difference of judgment, though they agree in the same aim. As when divers physicians are sent for to a sick person, some think that the best way to cure the sick person is to take away all the corrupt blood at once, others think it best to take it away by little and little; here is a difference in judgment, but yet the aim is the same, all intend the good of the sick party: so it is in curing a sick church; some are for taking away all, and beginning upon a new foundation, others for a regular reformation, to try all ways and all means of recovery; this is a difference. Or rather thus: when a house is on fire, some are for pulling it down, others are for quenching it, and letting the building stand; it requireth a present remedy, and in this hurlyburly the master's voice is not always heard. So it is in reformation of inveterate errors and customs that have crept into the church; there is a difference of judgment about the cure, and God's voice in the confusion is not always heard. Partly through vile affections; man's nature is very prone to discords, out of pride, worldly interests, desire of precedency, envy of one another's reputes, irregular zeal; all these make us touchy. Some are of a salt and fiery humour, like flax and gunpowder, the least spark catcheth, and setteth them into a flame. Much experience hereof we have in these dogdays of the church, wherein every one is barking and biting at one another, whereby Christ is exceedingly dishonoured, and the cause of religion much disadvantaged. Therefore that there might be some sparks of love kept alive in the church, is Christ so earnest with the Father, 'Let them be one.'

(3.) That we might know that unity among believers is a possible blessing. It seemeth many times past hope, and that it were as good to speak to the winds to be still as to men's prejudices and boisterous affections. Ay! but there is hope; Christ hath prayed for it, and his prayers are as good as so many promises: John xi. 42, 'I know that thou hearest me always.' This is a fountain of comfort and hope.

(4.) To encourage us to pray for it. Endeavours with men are without fruit and success; but let us ply the throne of grace more, and learn of Christ to go to our heavenly Father, and wrestle with him in supplications. In one place it is said, Rom. xii. 18, 'If it be

possible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men.' *Fac quod tuum est.* We must do whatever is possible; but we are not in the place of God: 2 Thes. iii. 16, 'The God of peace give you peace always by all means.' It seems as if a small matter would set all right, but we have it not in our power; a little light, a little love; a little light to make the prejudices vanish, a little love to conquer animosities. But God alone must do the work; he can bow men's rugged and crooked spirits: Isa. xi. 6, 7, 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the suckling together, and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.' It is an allusion to the beasts in the ark, where all enmity was taken away; they were all tame. So the gospel can meek the heart. Not that so disagreeing tempers shall remain in the christian church, which (though the ravenous disposition of some did cease) would make a motley company, and (as the prophet speaks) like a speckled bird; but besides the extinction of noxious qualities, all shall be governed by the same Spirit of truth and holiness.

[4.] Christ died for this end: Eph. ii. 14-16, 'He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.' He died, not only to reconcile us to God, but to one another, to make of twain one body, and destroy the enmity in his flesh. Other sacrifices are a sign of separation, therefore he would be a sacrifice of union. The flesh of bulls and goats were a wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles; but he would destroy the enmity in his flesh, to make of twain one. So Caiaphas prophesied, John xi. 52, that Christ should die to 'gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.' Christ died to enlarge the pale, that all nations, though of different rites, customs, and interests, might become one.

[5.] This he aimed at in his ascension, and the pouring out of the Spirit. We read of the unity of the Spirit: 'Keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' Eph. iv. 3. It is called the unity of the Spirit, not because the union is spiritual and mystical, but because the Spirit is the author of it. Therefore it is said, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 'There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.' Christ would have but one spirit to run through all his members, that as they are united to one head, so they may be animated by one spirit. Christ is the head of the church, and the Spirit is the soul of the church. There is a spirit of communion. Look, as it is said, Ezek. i. 21, 'When the beasts went, the wheels went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them;' the reason is, because 'the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.' So because the same spirit is in one christian that is in another, therefore they have the like affections, to procure the good of one another as much as may be. Christ giveth us the Spirit to make us one. But of this spirit of communion more hereafter.

[6.] This is the end of his gracious dispensations, he giveth us grace and assurance of glory to this end: John xvii. 22, 'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.' Understand it of the privilege of filiation; we are made sons that we may live as brethren; or of the gift of grace, the glorious image of God is impressed on all the saints, that likeness may beget love; or of an interest in glory, that those that expect to live in the same heaven may not fall out by the way, and disagree on earth.

[7.] It is the end of his ordinances and appointments in the church. Baptism and the Lord's supper are to keep the saints together. It is sad indeed that the world maketh them apples of strife, when Christ made them bonds of love: 'We are all baptized by one Spirit into one body, and have been all made to drink into one spirit,' 1 Cor. xii. 13. It notes our union with Christ and one with another. And 1 Cor. x. 17, 'We being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.' The sacraments are banners, under which we do encamp, and profess our union and brotherhood in the army of Christ.

Use 1. How contrary are they to Christ that love strife and sow discord among brethren; they are the devil's factors, agents for the kingdom of darkness; they wholly frustrate the design and undertaking of Jesus Christ. He was incarnate, preached, prayed, died, &c., that his people may be one. Yea, they do not only what in them lieth to frustrate Christ, and make void his aim, but do also disparage him before the world; he holdeth out to all the world that his people are one body, one family, one house, and yet they are crumbled into factions. Divisions in the church beget atheism in the world. Oh! let it not seem a small thing to rend the unity of the church. But where shall this be charged? Every one will excuse himself from the guilt of the present breaches. Certainly we have all cause to reflect upon our own hearts, and not make application for others. It is usual with us to do as Judas; when Christ told his disciples somewhat that concerned him, he looked round about upon the disciples. So we look about upon others, when we should smite upon our own thigh. One of the bellows of strife is crimination and recrimination; therefore let us see a little who is guilty. The unity is twofold—one in mind, one in heart; one in judgment, one in affection. Now what hast thou done contrary to either of these unions?

1. If thou hast been a stickler in novel opinions, whereby division hath been caused in the church, thou hast dis-served the aim of Christ. Christians are bound to be of one mind: 1 Peter iii. 8, 'Finally, be ye all of one mind,' &c.; Phil. ii. 2, 'Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind;' 1 Cor. xiii. 2, 'Though I have all faith, so as I can remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.' But you will reply, Will you enforce judgment or impose belief, and make me an hypocrite and yourself a usurper? And what are novel opinions? You condemn others, and they you; you preach against them, and they against you. Yea, but yet christians should strive, as much as is possible, to be all of a mind; and it should trouble thee if forced to differ from the general judgment of the church. In doubtful matters, take not up an

opinion which will offend: 'Beware of doubtful disputations.' He that dissents had need have plain evidence, and that the truth should be brought with much demonstration to the conscience, arguments had need be express and clear, and he had need pray much, and consult and confer with others. But when singularity and diversity of opinions is affected, *homini congenitum est magis nova quam magna mirari*, and without any fear and jealousy, men let loose their hearts to novelties, this is blameworthy. When we have the consent of the church, a less light will serve the turn than for a dissent.

2. Hast thou done anything to hinder the church from being of one heart?

[1.] By professing principles of separation; certainly it is a crime. It is against love, as error is against faith; it cuts asunder the bands and sinews of Christ's mystical body. In these times, the charge of this sin is so frequent, that the sin is little regarded. Every modest dissent and unconformity is branded with the name of schism, that men think schism no such matter, or no such crime: Jude 19, 'These be they who separate themselves,' *ἀποδιόριζοντες*. Now it is dangerous to separate, and hard to discern when it is lawful. The question of separation lieth in the dark, but the enforcements of love are plain and open. Divers allow but three grounds of separation—intolerable persecution, damnable heresy, and gross idolatry. We should hold communion as long as Christ will. Scandal is a ground of mourning, but not a ground of separation, and whenever it is done, it must be with grief.

[2.] They that prosecute controversies in such a way as will not stand with love, viz., with passion, bitterness of spirit, damning all opposites, suppressing them by the power of the sword. Wrath, exultation, and bitterness of spirit, are opposite to love. Michael durst not bring a railing accusation. The worst adversaries are overcome with soft words and hard arguments. Railing and reviling makes men deaf to the tenders of reconciliation: Ps. cxx. 7, 'I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war.' So is damning all opposites, casting them out of Christ, urging things beyond the weight and consequence of the opinion, censuring others as not spiritual, 1 Cor. xiv. 37. Interest makes men passionately and irregularly zealous: 1 Cor. i. 2, 'To all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours;' not as a party impropriating Christ, 'I am of Christ.' So is domineering over men's consciences, and obtruding opinions by force; these are said 'to go in the way of Cain,' Jude 11.

Use 2. Let us be as earnest for unity as Christ; let us think of charity more than we have done, how to preserve peace, as well as truth. Certainly we that have one Father, are born of one mother, acknowledge one elder brother, even Christ, by whom we are adopted, hope for one patrimony, we should be more careful 'to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' We have a great many contentions now for one holy contention: Heb. x. 24, 'Let us consider one another, to provoke to love and to good works.' What arguments shall I use? The danger of the Papists on one hand, of sects on the other. Of Papists; if ever the beast were likely to recover of his wounds, now it is. Our divisions make us first a laughing-stock to the enemy, and then a

prey; first we are had in contempt, then they use violence. And it may be just with God to suffer it; when piety decreaseth, charity is exiled; and bitterness, partialities, strife, suspicions are only left to reign and flourish. Certainly, if once a peace were settled in the Reformed churches, the prophecies concerning antichrist would soon be accomplished; those relicts of God's election, which do as yet remain in spiritual Babylon, would soon come out from amongst them, who are now scandalised at our divisions: as when a boat is to take in passengers, when all the passengers are in the boat, they launch out, and hoist up sail. They are weary of the idolatry and superstitions of the Romish church, and would soon break the cords wherewith they are now held; truth would have a greater power: Acts iv. 32, 33, 'And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and grace was upon them all.' As to sects on the other side, libertines daily increase, by means of the divisions amongst them that fear God, and grow formidable in the variety of their combinations and endeavours: Jude 11, 'Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Baalam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.' There would be an end of this itch if all that fear God would join together as one man in the defence of the gospel. Alas! we have striven long enough, hindered the common salvation long enough; scandals enough have been given: it is high time to renounce all fruits of revenge and ambition, and think of peace and unity.

But you will say, What would you have us to do?

I answer—Something with God, something as to men. Something with God; pray and mourn, lay to heart the divisions that are among God's people. I speak for Sion's sake; we should be very earnest with God for Sion: Isa. lxii. 1, 'For Sion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.' A great house is smitten with breaches, and a little house with clefts; not only kingdoms, but particular families are destroyed, when the members of them are divided in opinions and affections: Ps. cxxii. 6, 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee.' Let this be your constant request to God; be not acted with a private factious spirit.

Something is to be done with men. I do not speak now how to keep peace; it is past that; but how to restore it now it is lost. What shall we do? The apostle telleth you, Phil. iii. 15, 16, 'Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto ye have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.' There is no remedy now left but brotherly forbearance towards those that hold the foundation. It were to be wished that we could agree, not only in fundamentals, but in all other the accessaries of christian doctrine. But this cannot be hoped for. What then? Shall the rent go further and further without any

remedy? No; let therefore all parties that, in the judgment of a regular charity, may be presumed to have owned Christ, walk together as far as they have attained. And how is that? I can only propound my wishes and desires; let them, reserving their private differences to themselves, come under some common rule, or solemn acknowledgment of the foundations of religion. What if there were a form drawn up to that purpose, to which both should stand? I think to state fundamentals is a matter of great difficulty. God would make us cautious of every truth; therefore the canon of the scripture is very large. But there are some things propounded in the scriptures as absolutely necessary, without which salvation cannot be had. If we were mutually engaged to the profession of these, patiently bearing with one another in other things undecided, mutually abstaining from magisterial decisions and enforcements, and obtruding opinions upon one another by violence, and all rash condemnations, castings out of Christ, limiting religion to our own party, saying, Here is Christ, and there is Christ; as if Christ were divided; commending one another's prosperity to God by mutual prayers, this were a healing course. Let us perform all mutual offices of love and spiritual counsel to one another, strengthening one another in solid piety, holding forth light in the lesser differences, with all modesty and candour; and in civil matters standing as one man against the common enemy, and using endeavours to promote the kingdom of Christ, without any reflections on our private honour, profit, and interests. If this were once done, I doubt not but the fog would vanish, and we should find ourselves nearer to one another than we do imagine. I am not altogether out of hope that this will be done, because of the promises. It is done already in the kingdom of Poland, between the Lutherans and the Calvinists.

Use 3. To persuade the ministers of the gospel to a greater concord and amity in the joint discharge of their work. Christ prayeth here for the apostles, 'that they may be one.' How should we agree together in pressing duty, reprehending sin! This would be an effectual and potent means, not only to the peace of the church, but success of the gospel. Schism in the church of Corinth arose from the emulation of ministers among themselves, one striving to excel the other in eloquence and favour among the people, and contemning Paul and others, that followed the simplicity of the gospel. So the apostle noteth it elsewhere: Phil. i. 15, 'Some preach Christ out of envy and strife, and some also of good-will.' It is usual that one carpeth at another's gifts, one jostling in the way of another's honour and profit; like men in a boat, jostling at one another till the boat itself be sunk. One faileth, and yieldeth to the promises and threatenings of the world, another standeth stoutly; and from their different practices there proceed different interests and opinions. We should with a combined strength promote the gospel.

2. Observe the pattern; he doth not only pray, 'Let them be one,' but shows what kind of oneness he meaneth, 'as we are one.' Some think that by *we* is meant the Father and Christ as mediator, between whom there was an agreement in the work of redemption; this is true: but unity of essence, I suppose, is here intended, there being a plain intimation in the context of the *περιχώρησις*, peculiar to the Trinity

(viz., ver. 21). But what then shall we say to the Arians? I answer—In this *κάθως* is implied, not *ισότης*, but *ὁμοιότης*; not an exact equality, but some resemblance; not the same unity, but a like.

Doct. The union of believers with Christ the head, and with one another, hath some resemblance to the unity that is between the divine persons themselves.

1. It is a spiritual union, not natural or civil, but divine and spiritual.

2. It is a close union. Between the Father and the Son there is not only consent, but unity of essence; there cannot be a greater unity. So there is a close unity between the members of the mystical body, by love, and peace, and concord, and delighting in one another. It is *unitas pluralis, et pluralitas unita*, saith Bernard.

3. It is a constant and inseparable union. The divine essence may be distinguished, but not divided. They that are united to Christ cannot be separated from him, and should not from one another. Take heed of straggling. What becomes of the member that is cut off from the body, the branch from the root? It is dangerous to run from the shepherds' tents.

4. It is a holy union. There is no unity but what standeth with purity: Mark ix. 56, 'Have salt in yourselves, and peace one with another.' The heart must be kept pure and holy. Loose zeal, it is not unity, but compliance. Peace with men is bought upon hard terms when we must go to war with God; it is better still to be a man of contention. An agreement in evil is like that of Herod and Pilate, who shook hands against Christ: Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God.' A man may see God without peace, but he cannot see God without holiness.

5. It is a unity which consisteth with order and distinction. There is in the church a subordination of callings, by which its beauty and strength is maintained; and if we would keep this unity, we must yield honour to one another's gifts and places. In the body natural, the eye meddleth not with hearing, nor the ear with seeing; the foot talketh not; the office of the hand is to dress the body, that of the foot to support the body. The soul giveth life to all the parts, there is ground of unity; but the parts have several offices, and there is ground of order and comeliness. The soul enlivens the feet, as well as the hands and breast. It is comfortable to see all conscionably in their way joining together for the common good.

Use. Let us study to imitate the Trinity; as in the case now before us, there is a little resemblance of the mystery of the Trinity. Men cry for a union, and yet make no conscience of separation. They would have an unholy mixture, a carnal compliance and consent, for carnal ends, out of worldly policy; as ice amasseth into a body iron, water, wood, sticks, and stones. We have one unity, but observe not due distinction therein. Is there not a horrible invasion of callings, and thence comes confusion and disorders? Ministers turn soldiers, and soldiers turn ministers? Oh! but remember, Christ commendeth this pattern to us, Walk as those that are one, as Christ and the Father are one, seeking one another's welfare, rejoicing in one another's graces, as if they were our own; contributing counsel, sympathy, spiri-

tual assistance, and prayers for the common good. When the finger is hurt, there is pain through the whole body. We should live as if we had but one essence and interest. It is almost in vain to hope for the public at present, but in your particular societies, faithfully yet regularly use your gifts for the common good, so as that you may neither dishonour the head nor dissolve the union between the members.

3. I observe that Christ seeketh it of God; he beggeth perseverance, 'that they may be one.'

Doct. It is God that keepeth the saints together. Nature is prone to discord; if God should leave us, we should soon discover what is in our hearts. God doth it sometimes by his providence, letting loose the common enemy, as a dog let loose makes the sheep run together; or by inflicting great distress, as two ends of wax are joined together in the fire; or he can take off contention, as a judge. Sometimes by his Spirit, and the constant influences of his grace, of light and love. God made Esau a friend to Jacob. Let spirits be never so rough, he can meeken them.

Use. Acknowledge God in this matter. He will be known as the Lord of hosts, and as the God of peace. Acknowledge him in this matter, in prayer and praise. In prayer, before division is broken out; if God did but leave men to their own sway, they would never be at peace. After divisions are broken out, prayer is the best means to settle the church. It is God's prerogative to speak peace; when men have wearied themselves in the pursuit of it, it is God must give it. Acknowledge him in praise in days of peace and tranquillity; when there is a happy union among the people of God, give thanks to his name for it, for it is God alone, who is the 'God of the spirits of all flesh,' that unites the spirits of men to one another.

SERMON XX.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.—JOHN XVII. 12.

IN this verse Christ declareth how he had performed his duty to the apostles when corporally present with them, which help was now to be removed. He had said before, 'I am no more in the world;' and he saith now, 'Whilst I was with them in the world, I kept them,' &c.

The argument is taken from the necessity of the request, and the equity of it.

1. The necessity. He could no longer keep them as he had kept them, by his visible presence, outward ministry, and familiar conversation; therefore he beggeth the Father to keep them. Christ is careful to remedy every defect; when the visible external custody was to have an end, then he beggeth the spiritual.

2. The equity. When thou commendedst them to me, I kept them;