

abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.' The inheritance is kept for us, and we for it. We can never want matter to bless God; if we have nothing in hand, yet we have much in hope.

2. Let us wait with more confidence; we have no cause to doubt; we have God's word and pawn; as sure as Christ is in heaven, we shall be there.

3. Let us be there in affection, in earnest groans and desires, in frequent thoughts: Rom. viii. 30, 'Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.'

4. Let us not fear changes; all changes will end in that which is best for us.

SERMON XXXIX.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.—JOHN XVII. 23.

CHRIST'S request for union is again repeated, with the advantage of another expression, to declare the nature of it. So that in this verse we have—

1. The nature of the mystical union.

2. The end of it; with respect to believers and the world; their conviction of Christ's mission, and the Father's love to the disciples.

First, The nature of this union further declared, 'I in them, and thou in me.'

Here first observe, that one union is the ground of another. Christ and the Father are one, and then Christ and we are one, and then we are one, one with another. The assumed nature is united to the divine essence in Christ's person; and so he, as mediator, is one with the Father; and then we by the communion of the Spirit are not only united to the head, but to our fellow-members.

There are two unions spoken of in this verse.

1. With God, that is implied; the Father is a believer's as well as Christ: John xiv. 23, 'My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him.' Why then doth Christ say, 'I in them'? Not to exclude the Father; for he presently addeth, 'Thou in me.' Christ speaketh as mediator, to show that he is the cause, way, and means. He is the Jacob's ladder: John i. 51 'Verily I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.'

2. There is a union with Christ immediately; that is formally expressed, 'I in them.' And then between us and others of the same body, 'That they may be made perfect in one;' all drawn up into

unity with God in Christ. First, God descendeth in the person of Christ, and then we all ascend by Christ, and come up to God again. Thus the personal union maketh way for the mystical, and the mystical for our joint communion with God in the same body. This is the great mystery that hath been driving on from all eternity, the Father is the beginning and ending, and Christ the means. All influence cometh from God through Christ, and our tendency is to him through Christ: 1 Cor. viii. 6, 'To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' All mercies come to us, and our services and respects go to God, through Christ. The reason is, we are departed from God by sin; so that God is removed from us, and God is against us, at a distance, and at an enmity; and we are fugitives and exiles, as Adam ran away from God before he was banished out of his presence. Therefore Christ is not only a meritorious cause of the union that is between us and God, but also the bond and tie of it. To satisfy God offended, this he might do as a Saviour without us; but to be a means of influence on God's part, and respect and service on ours, to convey grace, and return service, he must be in us: 'I in them.' As exiles, we are taken into grace and favour by the merit of Christ; and as fugitives, we are brought into unity again by his Spirit working in us. Therefore it is said: Eph. i. 10, 'That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.' There God descendeth, and we ascend. All the scattered elect are brought into a body, to receive influences of grace from God as a fountain, through Christ as a conveyance. So Eph. ii. 18, 'For through him we have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.' All believers are united into a body by the communion of Christ's Spirit, that by Christ they may perform service to God, and receive grace from him.

Use. Is to prize Christ as mediator, and to make use of him in your addresses to God. Heathens had many ultimate objects of worship, and many mediators; we have but one.

1. If you perform anything to God, do it in and through Christ, 'in whom he is well pleased,' Mat. iii. 17. A holy God will accept nothing, but as tendered in Christ's name. We cannot endure the majesty of his presence: Col. iii. 17, 'And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him;' by the assistance of his grace and dependence upon his merit, that is to do all in Christ's name. We are made amiable to God in Christ; out of Christ we are odious to God: Ps. xiv. 2, 3, 'The Lord looketh down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.' Once God looked on the creatures all good, but that was in innocency; after the fall he looked on the creatures, and all are become filthy; it is not meant of any particular sort of men, but all in their natural condition. The apostle bringeth that place to prove the universal corruption of nature, Rom. iii. 10, that is, out of Christ. But as he looketh on us in Christ, so we are amiable; he is well-pleased

in him : it is proclaimed from heaven, that we might not be afraid to go to God.

2. If you expect anything from him, you must expect it in Christ. Christ is not only the meritorious cause, but the means. All we look for is not only from him, but in him. As God first loveth Christ, then loveth us ; he is the *primum amabile*, the first beloved of all ; so he is first in Christ, and then in us ; he is *primum recipiens*, the first object of blessing and grace : 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23, 'All are yours, for you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' We have it at second-hand, Christ cometh between God and us, to convey the influences and bounty of heaven to us. Therefore it is said : 2 Cor. i. 20, 'All the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen.' God doth whatever we desire him, in him. God doth not bless us as persons distinct from Christ, but as members of his body. There is as much need of the union of our persons to the person of Christ, as there was of the union of the human nature to the divine nature. Christ must be in us, as well as God in Christ ; we must be Christ's as well as Christ is God's. The mediator hath an interest in God, and you must have an interest in the mediator. Look, as by the personal union, Christ merited all for us ; so, by the union of persons, he conveyeth all to us. Christ could not suffer till he had united our flesh to his godhead ; and we cannot receive the virtue of his sufferings till he unites our person to his person.

Secondly, Observe, Christ is in us, as God is in Christ. The two unions are often compared in this chapter ; and here it is said, 'I in them, and thou in me.' How is God in Christ ? By unity of essence, and by constant influence ; and so is Christ in us. (1.) God is in Christ by unity of essence, or co-essential existency ; Christ and He communicates in the same nature : 'The fulness of the godhead dwelt in him bodily,' Col. ii. 9. Now there is something which answereth to this in the mystical union ; there is a communion of spirit between us and Christ, though not the same nature. The same Spirit dwelleth in Christ *σωματικῶς*, bodily, that is, essentially ; in us *πνευματικῶς*, spiritually ; we partake of the divine nature in some gifts and qualities. (2.) By constant influence. God is in Christ by a communication of life, virtue, and operation.

1. The Father is the perpetual beginning, foundation, and root of life to Christ as mediator : John vi. 57, 'As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father ; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.' So is Christ to us : Gal. ii. 20, 'Nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life that I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

2. The divine essence sustained the person of Christ as mediator. The humanity could not subsist of itself, but by constant influence from the godhead : Isa. xlii. 1, 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold.' Christ had constant sustentation from the Father ; he upheld him, and carried him through the work. So are we 'preserved in Jesus Christ,' Jude 1. We have not only the beginning and principle of life from Christ, but constant support. We can no more keep ourselves than make ourselves ; all things depend upon their first cause.

3. The Father concurreth to all the operations and actions of Christ, and so the Father is in Christ as he worketh in him: Johu xiv. 10, 'Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.' The divine power was interested in Christ's works as mediator, especially in the miracles that he wrought to confirm the truth of his person. So is Christ in believers, as he worketh in them all their works for them: John xv. 5, 'I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.' He doth not say, *nihil magnum*, no great thing; but, *nihil*, nothing at all. Thinking is the most sudden and transient act; sure the new nature there may get the start of corruption. But, 2 Cor. iii. 5, 'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.' Actions are more deliberate, there is more scope for the interposition of corrupt nature; but of ourselves we cannot think a good thought.

What use shall we make of this?

Use 1. If Christ be in us, as God was in Christ, let us manifest it as Christ did. Christ manifested the Father to be in him by his works: John x. 37, 38, 'If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.' Works and miracles exceeding the power and force of nature showed that Christ was a divine person; sure the Father is in him, or else he could not do these works. So St James puts hypocrites upon the trial, 'Show me thy faith by thy works,' James ii. 18. Do we do any works exceeding the power of corrupt nature? That would be a proof of Christ's working in you. When Jacob counterfeited Esau, Isaac felt his hands. So what are your works? If you walk as men, do no more than an ordinary man, that hath not the Spirit of God, where is the proof of Christ's working in you? Many boast of Christ in them; if Christ were in them, he would be there, as the Father was in Christ; they would bewray it by their operations. You may know what is within by what cometh out; if Christ be within thee, there will come out prayer, sighs, and groans for heaven, fruitful discourses, heavenly walking, a mortified conversation; all this cometh out, because Christ is within. But now, when ye belch out filthy discourses, rotten communication, there is nothing cometh out but vanity and sin, how dwelleth Christ in you? are these the fruits of his presence?

Use 2. Learn dependence upon Christ. All the power we have to work is from Christ. Whence hath the body the vigour it hath to work, and to move from place to place, but from the soul? And whence hath a christian his power but from Christ? We derive all our strength from Christ. We are as glasses without a bottom; they cannot stand of themselves, but they are broken in pieces. Christ can do all things without us, but we can do nothing without him, as the soul can subsist apart from the body; Christ hath no need of us, but we cannot live and act without him. *Sine te nihil, in te totum possumus*. Phil. iv. 13, 'I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.' The apostle doth not speak it to boast of his power, but to pro-

fess his dependence. It was never seen that a father would cast away the child that hangeth on him.

Thirdly, I shall now speak of Christ's being in believers apart, that I may a little enforce this argument. How is Christ in believers? We must not go too high, nor too low. It is not to be understood essentially, so he is everywhere, and cannot be more peculiarly in one than in another: 'Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?' Ps. cxxxix. 7. He is here, and there, and everywhere, in heaven, in earth, in hell. Personally he is not in us; that cannot be without a personal union; if the Spirit were personally in us, that would make us to become one person with the Holy Ghost, as the divine and human nature make but one person; but mystically, with respect to some peculiar operations which he worketh in us, and not in others. Christ is in us as the head is in the members, by influence of life and motion; not such influence as tendeth to life natural—so natural men live in him, move in him, and have their being in him; there is a union of dependence between God and all his creatures;—but influence with respect to life spiritual. In short, Christ is not only in us as in a temple or house—that is one way of his being in us, therefore he is said 'to dwell in our hearts by faith,' Eph. iii. 17,—but he is in us as the head in the members, and as the vine in the branches, John xv. 1, where there is not only a presence, but an influence. Once more, he is not only in us in a moral way, in affections; his heart is with us, and our heart is with him, and his love and his joy is in and towards us: Prov. viii. 31, 'Rejoicing always in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men;' but he is in us in a mystical and gracious way: John xvii. 26, 'That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.' He is in us as the soul is in the body, to give us life, sense, vigour, and operation.

Use 1. To press us to labour after an interest in this privilege, that Christ may be in us. It is the saddest mark if Christ be not in us: 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 'Know ye not that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?' reprobates disallowed of God.

Let me press it:—

1. If Christ be not in us, the devil is: Eph. ii. 2, 'Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' Man's heart is not a waste; it is occupied by Christ or Satan. The children of disobedience are acted by the devil and governed by the devil. Those that are cast out of the church, which is a figure of cutting off from communion with Christ, were given up to Satan, to show that he reigneth there where Christ doth not take possession; the devil entereth into them, and sendeth them headlong to their own destruction.

2. Where Christ is, there all the Trinity are: John xiv. 23, 'We will come unto him, and make our abode with him;' there is Father, Son, and Spirit. Such an one is a consecrated temple, wherein God taketh up his residence. They do not only come as guests, to tarry with us for a night, as the angels came to Abraham, Gen. xviii. 2; or as friends come to visit, and away, and so leave more sorrow on their

departure than joy in their presence ; but they will abide with us for ever. Heaven is where God is ; this heaven we have upon earth, that all the persons take up their abode in our hearts. God knocketh at the door of a wicked man's heart, but doth not enter, much less have his abode and residence there. Here is the Father as a fountain of grace, Christ as mediator, and the Spirit as Christ's deputy, to work all in us. This is his second heaven, one above the clouds, and another in our hearts. Oh ! what a condescension is it, that God should not only pardon us, and admit us into his presence hereafter, be familiar with us, when we have put on our robes of glory, but dwell in us here ! When Christ was about to go to heaven, and his disciples were troubled at it, then he leaveth us this promise. We cannot go to God, but God will come to us, not only give us a visit, but take up his abode in us.

3. Wherever the Trinity are, there is a blessing left behind. The presence of earthly princes is costly and burdensome, because of their train and the charges of entertainment ; but the Trinity are blessed guests ; they never come but bring their welcome with them, and a blessing in their hands. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost do not come empty-handed. The Son of God came to Abraham with two angels, but he came not without a gift, a promise of a child, though their bodies were dry and dead, Gen. xviii. Wheresoever Christ came in the days of his flesh, he left some mercy behind. While in the womb of the virgin, he came into the house of Zacharias, and Zacharias and Elizabeth his wife were both filled with the Holy Ghost, Luke i. 41. He came into Peter's house, and brought deliverance for Peter's wife's mother from a fever, Mat. viii. 15. He came to Capernaum, and brought with him to the man sick of the palsy health for his body and a pardon for his soul, Mat. ix. 2. He came to the house of Jairus, and raised his daughter, ver. 23. He came to the house of Zaccheus, and brought salvation with him, Luke xix. 9. Everywhere wherever he went, trace him, you will find he left a blessing behind him. Laban thrived better for Jacob, the house of Obed-Edom for the ark. In these short visits Christ left a blessing, but in a gracious soul they have a perpetual residence ; it is fit these blessed guests should have good entertainment.

4. It is a pledge that we shall have more : ' Christ in us the hope of glory,' Col. i. 29. He dwelleth in us to fit us for heaven. It is heaven begun ; it makes our exile a paradise. It is still growing, till it cometh to a complete presence in heaven. Where he is once in truth, there he is for ever. Temples built may stand forsaken, but God never forsaketh his spiritual temples.

Use 2. Direction. What must we do that Christ may be in us ?

1. Make way for him. Empty the heart of all self-confidence. When the heart is full of self, there is no room for Christ : Phil. iii. 8, 9, ' Yea doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' First, there must be a cutting off from

the wild olive-tree by a sound conviction ; we must know what strangers we are to the life of God. Was there a time when we were convinced of this? Eph. iv. 18, 'Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.' How can a man that was never convinced of the sadness of his estate say, Not I, but Christ?

2. Wait for him in the ordinances. Where should a man meet with Christ, but in his ordinances, in the shepherds' tents? All the ordinances have an aspect upon our union with Christ, either to begin or continue it. God offereth him to us in the word : 1 Cor. i. 9, 'God is faithful, by whom ye are called to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.' We are entreated to take him. As long as they see nothing but man in it, it cometh to nothing ; but many times, in hearing, they see God in the offer : the matter is of the Lord, as Rebekah yielded out of an overruling instinct. So for the religious use of the seals. We are 'baptized into Christ,' Gal. iii. 27. It is the pledge of our admission into that body whereof Christ is the head. God is aforehand with us ; we were engaged to make a profession of this union, before we had liberty to choose our own way. Let us not retract our vows, and make baptism only a memorial of our hypocrisy, to profess union when there is no such matter : I profess to be planted into Christ by baptism, but I feel no such matter. Oh ! you should groan for this ! Then for the supper of the Lord : 1 Cor. x. 16, 'The cup of blessing which we bless, *οὐκὶ κοινωνία*, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' Under the law the people could not eat of the sin-offering, but only the priest ; for the same reason they were forbidden to eat sacrifice and drink blood : Lev. xvii. 11, 12, 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood ; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls ; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood ;' compared with Mat. xxvi. 26, 'This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' The priest was to become one with the sacrifice, to figure Christ's person ; but now atonement being made, another union is necessary, of sinners with the sacrifice. Nothing is so one with us as that we eat and drink ; it becometh a part of our substance ; it resembleth that strait and near conjunction between us and Christ. This is a means appointed to engage us to look after this union ; here we come to profess it, to promote it ; it is a means *under* a blessing.

3. Receive him thankfully. Oh ! what am I, and 'whence is it to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?' Luke i. 43 ; that Christ should come to me, and dwell in my heart !

4. Entertain him kindly ; be careful to preserve the motions, quickenings, comforts of his Spirit. This is the respect we should show, to be sensible of accesses and recesses, and accordingly suit our carriage. Rejoice in his presence ; such a precious guest must be observed. Grieve when you do not feel the comforts of it : Cant. v. 4, 'My beloved put in his hand at the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.'

Use 3. Examine whether Christ be in you or no. You may know it:—

1. By his manner of entrance. Christ is not wont to come into the heart without opposition. The devil is loath to be dispossessed: Luke xi. 21, 'When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.' Christ came into the temple with a whip to drive out the money-changers. He cometh to rule alone.

2. By the fruits of his abode—life, fruitfulness, tendency.

(1.) Life. It will stir and quicken you to good duties: Gal. iii. 20, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' He is a living fountain of vital union.

(2.) Fruitfulness of soul: John xv. 2, 'Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit;' and ver. 4, 'Abide in me, and I in you: as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can you, except you abide in me.'

(3.) Tendency—(1.) To heaven. Heaven is the place of our full enjoyment of him. They do not admire worldly excellences: Luke xix. 8, 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.' The woman left her pitcher, John iv. 28; Matthew followed Christ. (2.) To God's glory as our last aim; their aim is according to their principle.

Secondly, I come to the end of this union.

1. With respect to believers, 'That they may be made perfect,' &c.

2. With respect to the world, and their conviction, 'That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.'

First, With respect to believers, 'That they may be made perfect in one,' *τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἓν*. This oneness is either with God or with one another. Both are included in the mystical union; we cannot be united to the head, but we must also be united to the members. The golden cherubims did so look to the ark and mercy-seat, that they did also look one towards another, Exod. xxv. 20. So in this union, as we respect God and Christ, so we must also look to our fellow-members: 'Let them be perfect in one; let them all centre in God, which is the creature's perfection.

Observe, our perfect happiness lieth in oneness, in being one with God through Christ. I shall evidence it to you in a few particulars.

1. Since the fall man's affections and thoughts are scattered: Eccles. vii. 29, 'God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.' When man lost his happiness, he sought out many inventions. A sinner is full of wanderings, as a wayfaring man that hath lost his direction turneth up and down, and knows not where to pitch; or the needle in the compass, when it is jogged, shaketh and wavereth, and knoweth not where to rest, till it turneth to the pole again. There is a restlessness in our desires; still we have new projects, and know not where to pitch; are not content with what we do possess; this is not the pole where we rest. *Querunt in vanitate creaturarum quod amiserunt in unitate Creatoris*. A river, the further it runneth from the fountain, the more it is dispersed into several

streams. Blindness maketh us grope and feel about for happiness, as the Sodomites did for Lot's door. We change objects, striving to meet with that in one thing which we cannot find in another, as bees fly and go from flower to flower; we seek to patch up things as well as we can.

2. In all this chase and distraction of thoughts there is no contentment in the vast world, nothing that can satiate the heart of man. Transitory things may divert the soul, but they cannot content it. After Solomon's survey, Eccles. i. 2, 'Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; vanity of vanities, all is vanity.' He had made many experiments, but still found himself disappointed, and disappointment is the worst vexation.

3. This distraction continueth till we return to God again: 1 Peter ii. 25, 'Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls.' There is no safety but in the fold. God, who is the principle of our being, is the only object of our contentment. We began in a monad or unity, and there we end. God is the boundary of all things: Rom. xi. 36, 'For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever, Amen.' In him, or nowhere, the soul findeth content. He is our first cause and our last end. There are some scriptures and rays of goodness in the creature, but they cannot satisfy, because there we have happiness by parcels; it is dispersed. Nothing is dispersed in the creature but what is re-collected in the creator; there is all in him, because all came out from him.

4. The great work of grace is to return us to God again, that we may pitch upon him as the chief object and centre of our rest: Jer. xxxii. 39, 'I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever.' It is the great blessing of the covenant; this one heart is to pitch upon God as the chief object and centre of our rest, otherwise we are troubled with divers cares, fears, and desires. Thus grace worketh upon us. But the distance lieth not only on our part, but God's. Before God and the creature can be brought together, justice must be satisfied. Christ came to restore us to our primitive condition: 2 Cor. v. 19, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.' The merit of Christ bringeth God to us, and the Spirit of Christ bringeth us to God. It is as necessary Christ should be united to us, as we to God.

5. Our happiness in God is completed by degrees. In this life, the foundation is laid: we are reconciled to him upon earth; but the complete fruition we have in heaven; there we are fully made perfect in one. Here there is weakness in our reconciliation: we do not cleave to him without distraction; there are many goings a-whoring and wandering from God after our return to him. And here, on God's part, our punishment is continued in part. God helpeth us by means, at second and third hand. We need many creatures, and cannot be happy without them; we need light, meat, clothes, house. Our life is patched up by supplies from the creature. But there 'God is all, and in all,' 1 Cor. xv. 28. We find in God whatever is necessary for us without means and outward helps. There 'God is all, and in all;' he is our house, clothes, meat, ordinances. We have all immedi-

ately from God, and 'in all;' all are made perfect in one. We cannot possess any thing in the world except we encroach upon one another's happiness. Worldly things cannot be divided without lessening; and we take that from others which we possess ourselves. Envy showeth the narrowness of our comforts. But there the happiness of one is no hindrance to another, all are gratified, and none miserable; as the sun is a common privilege, none have less because others have more. All possess God as their happiness without want and jealousy.

Use. If to be drawn into unity and oneness with God be our happiness and perfection, then take heed of two things — (1.) Of sin, which divides God from you; (2.) Of doting upon the creatures, which withdraweth you from God.

1. Of sin, which maketh God stand at a distance from you: Isa. lix. 2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.' As long as sin remaineth in full power, there cannot be any union at all. 'What communion hath light with darkness?' And the more it is allowed, the more it hindereth the perfection of the union. What is the reason we do not fully grow up to be one with God in this life, that our communion with him is so small? Sin is in the way; the less holy you are, the less you have of this happiness, such unspeakable joys, lively influences of grace, and immediate supplies from heaven. In bitter afflictions, we have most communion with God many times; that is nothing so evil as sin; as afflictions abound, so do our comforts.

2. Of doting upon the creatures, which withdraweth your heart from God. The more the heart is withdrawn from God, the more miserable. Let the object be never so pleasing, it is an act of spiritual whoredom. Sin is poison, creatures are not bread: Isa. lv. 2, 'Why do you spend your money upon that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?' It cannot yield any solid contentment to the soul. These things are short uncertain things, beneath the dignity of the soul. There is a restlessness within ourselves, and envy towards others; they are not enough for us and them too. Not for us; if enough for the heart, not for the conscience. If God do but arm our own thoughts against us, as usually he doth when the affections are satisfied with the world, he will show you that the whole soul is not satisfied; therefore he awakeneth conscience; as children catch at butterflies, the gawdy wings melt away in their fingers, and there remaineth nothing but an ugly worm. Desertion is occasioned by nothing so much as carnal complacency. Many times the object of our desires is blasted; but if not, God awakeneth conscience, and all the world will not allay one pang.

You may understand this oneness with respect to our fellow-members; and so you may understand it jointly of the completeness of the whole mystical body, or singly of the strength of that brotherly affection each member hath to another. There is a double imperfection for the present in the church; every member is not gathered, and those that are gathered are not come to their perfect growth. So that 'let them be perfect in one,' is that the whole body may attain to the integrity of parts and degrees.

First, Let us take it collectively ; that they may all be gathered into a perfect body, and no joints lacking.

Observe, that all the saints of all places and all ages make but one perfect body. In this sense the glorified saints are not perfect without us : Heb. xi. 40, 'God having promised some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.' It is no derogation, for Christ is not perfect without us. The church is called 'The fulness of him that filleth all in all,' Eph. i. 23. They are, as to their persons, perfect, free from sin and misery, made perfect in holiness and glory ; but not as to their church relation. So Eph. iv. 13, 'Till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' All the body must be made up that Christ mystical may be complete. Now there are some joints lacking ; all the elect are not gathered.

Use 1. See the honour that is put upon the saints ; the saints on earth, and the saints in heaven make but one family : Eph. iii. 15, 'Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.' In a great house there are many rooms and lodgings, some above, some below, but they make but one house ; so of saints, some are militant, some triumphant, and yet all make but one assembly and congregation : Heb. xii. 23, 'We are come to the general assembly, and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven ;' we upon earth are come to them. Our Christ is the same, we are acted by the same Spirit, governed by the same head, and shall be conducted to the same glory. As in the state of grace some are before us in Christ, so some are in heaven before us, their faces once as black as yours. We have the same ground to expect heaven, only they are already entered.

Use 2. It is a ground of hope, we shall all meet together in one assembly : Ps. i. 5, 'The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' Now the saints are scattered up and down, where they may be most useful ; then all shall be gathered together ; then shall be that great rendezvous, when the four winds shall give up their dead ; then the wicked shall be herded, they shall be bound up in bundles, as straws and sticks bound up together in a bundle serve to set one another on fire, Mat. xiii. 40-42 ; adulterers together, and drunkards together, and thieves together, and so increase one another's torment. So all the godly shall meet in a congregation, and never be separated more. You do not only groan and wait for it, but the departed saints also : Rev. vi. 9, 10, 'I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?' As in a wreck, those that get first to shore are longing for and looking for their companions. This is the communion between us and saints departed ; they long for our company, as we for theirs ; we praise God for them, they groan for us ; we long and wait, by joint desires, for that happy day.

Use 3. It is an engagement to the churches of all parts to maintain a common intercourse one with another. All maketh but one body. We should pray for them whom we have not seen in the flesh, Col. ii.

2, and send relief to them, as the church at Antioch to Jerusalem when the famine was foretold, Acts xi., latter end; and, as God giveth opportunities, meet and consult for one another's welfare. But the world is not ripe for this yet.

Use 4. It giveth you assurance of the continuance of the ministry as long as the world continueth. As long as the world continueth there are elect to be gathered: 2 Peter iii. 9, 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' The ship tarrieth till all the passengers be taken in, and then they launch out into the deep. The great aim of Christ in keeping up the world is to make his body complete; and as long as the elect are to be gathered, the ministry is to continue: Eph. iv. 11, 12, 'He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.' The workmen are not dismissed till the house be built.

Secondly, Understand it singly and severally, 'That they may be made perfect in one;' that is, that there may be a perfect oneness between member and member of Christ's body, or a brotherly affection which one member hath to another.

Observe, no less union will content Christ but what is perfect. This was the aim of his prayers; then strive for it, wait for it.

1. Strive for it: 1 Cor. i. 10, 'Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.' We should all strive together, as if we had but one scope, one interest, one heart. We should grow up to this perfection more and more. Oh! what conscience should we make of keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace! If we are not one in opinion, yet we should have one aim and scope. Let us concur in one object and rule, and as far as we have attained to the knowledge of it, let us walk together.

2. Wait for it. The perfection of our communion is in life eternal. Here it is begun, we are growing to the perfect day: Prov. iv. 18, 'The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' *Ibi Lutherus et Zuinglius optime conveniunt.* We are going thither where Hooper and Ridley, Luther and Zuinglius, shall be of a mind. In heaven they are all of one mind, one heart, one employment; there is neither pride, nor ignorance, nor factions to divide us, but all agree in one concert.

Secondly, The end as to the world, their conviction, 'That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.' When is the world convinced, and how? I shall answer both together—In part here, and fully hereafter.

1. In part here, by Christ's being and working in them, by the life of Christ appearing in their conversations.

2. Fully and finally at the last judgment, by the glory put upon them. The reprobate world shall know, to their cost, when they shall see them invested with such glory, that they were the darlings of God.

But of what shall the world be convinced? Of Christ's mission and the saints' privileges, that Christ was authorised by God as the doctor of the church, and the saints are dearly beloved of God.

Observe, there are two things God is tender of, and two things the world is ignorant of—his truth, and his saints.

1. God prizeth these above all things.

[1.] His gospel; and therefore would have the world convinced that Christ was sent as a messenger from the bosom of God.

[2.] His saints; and therefore he would have them convinced of his love to them, and that he hath taken them into his protection, as he did the person of Christ. What should people regard but these two, especially since God hath put his little ones to nurse, and bid them be wise to learn his truths?

2. The world is most ignorant of these two; of the divine authority of the gospel, and therefore they slight it, and refuse it as much as they do; and of the dearness of his saints, therefore they persecute and molest them, and use them hardly. The world may be well called 'darkness,' Eph. v. 8, because they are ignorant of two things which do most concern them.

But let us speak more particularly of that wonderful and mysterious expression, 'That thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.'

Observe three things—(1.) That God loveth Christ; (2.) That God loveth the saints as he loved Christ; (3.) That Christ would have the world know so much, and be convinced of it.

Observe, first, that God loveth Christ as the first object of his love: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' Mat. iii. 17. He is his dear Son: Col. i. 13, 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.' God saw all the works of his hands that they were good. He delighteth in the creatures, much more in his Son. He loveth Christ as God, and as mediator, as God-man.

1. As God; so he is *primum amabile*, the first object of his love, as his own express image, that represents his attributes exactly. He is the first Son, the natural Son; as we are adopted ones; and so his soul taketh an infinite contentment in Christ, before hill or mountain were brought forth: Prov. viii. 30, 31, 'Then was I with him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing alway before him, rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth,' &c. As two that are bred up together take delight in one another.

2. As mediator; he loveth the human nature of Christ freely. The first object of election was the flesh of Christ assumed into the divine person: Col. i. 19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;' it deserved not to be united to the divine person. When it was united, the dignity and holiness of his person deserved love. There was the fulness of the godhead in him bodily, the Spirit without measure, all that is lovely. And then, besides the excellency of his person, there was the merit of his obedience; he deserved to be loved by the Father for doing his work: John x. 17, 'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again;' that was a new ground of love. Christ's love to us was a further cause of God's love to him. Thus you see how God loveth Christ.

Use 1. It giveth us confidence in both parts of Christ's priestly office—his oblation and intercession. His oblation: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' God hath proclaimed it from heaven that he is well pleased with Christ standing in our room, though so highly offended with us, and with him for our sake: Eph. i. 6, 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.' All that come under his shadow will be accepted with God. He is beloved, and will be accepted in all that he doeth; his being beloved answereth our being unworthy of love. Surely he will love us for his sake, who hath purchased love for us. His intercession: if the Father loveth Christ, we may be confident of those petitions we put up in his name: John xvi. 23, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.' Our advocate is beloved of God. When we pray in the name of Christ, according to the will of God, our prayer is in effect Christ's prayer. If you send a child or servant to a friend for anything in your name, the request is yours; and he that denieth the child or servant denieth you. When we come in a sense of our own unworthiness, on the score and account of being Christ's disciples, and with a high estimation of Christ's worth and credit with the Father, and that he will own us, that prayer will get a good answer.

Use 2. It is a pledge of the Father's love to us; and if God gave Christ, that was so dear to him, what can he withhold? Rom. viii. 32, 'He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up to the death for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all things?' He spared him not; the Son of his love was forsaken and under wrath; and will he then stick at anything? God's love is like himself, infinite; it is not to be measured by the affection of a carnal parent. Yet he gave up Christ. Love goeth to the utmost; had he a greater gift, he would have given it. How could he show us love more than in giving such a gift as Christ? John xvi. 22, 'The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from God.' God hath a respect for those that believe in Christ, and receive him as the Son of God.

Use 3. It is an engagement to us to love the Lord Jesus: 1 Cor. xvi. 22, 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema maranatha.' Shall we undervalue Christ, who is so dear and precious with God? Let us love him as God loved him.

1. God loved him so as to put all things into his hands: John iii. 35, 'The Father loveth the Son, and hath put all things into his hand.' Let us own him in his person and office, and trust him with our souls. He is intrusted with a charge concerning the elect, in whose hands are your souls: 2 Tim. i. 12, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.'

2. God hath loved him, so as to make him the great mediator to end all differences between God and man. God hath owned him from heaven: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Do you love him so as to make use of him in your communion with God? Heb. vii. 25, 'Wherefore is he able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him, seeing he

ever liveth to make intercession for us.' That is the sum of all religion.

3. God loveth him so as to glorify him in the eyes of the world: John v. 22, 23, 'The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that hath sent him.' Do you honour him? Phil. i. 21, *ἐμοὶ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς*, 'To me to live is Christ,' should be every christian's motto. This is love, and not an empty profession. Christ will take notice of it, and report it in heaven; it is an endearing argument when the Father's ends are complied with: John xvii. 10, 'And all thine are mine, and mine are thine, and I am glorified in them.'

SERMON XL.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.—JOHN XVII. 23.

I COME now to the second observation, that God loveth the saints as he loved Christ.

The expression is stupendous; therefore divers interpreters have sought to mitigate it, and to bring it down to a commodious interpretation.

First, *Καθὼς, as*, is a note of causality as well as similitude. He loveth us because he loved Christ. Therefore it is said: Eph. i. 6, 'He hath made us accepted in the beloved.' The elect are made lovely, and fit to be accepted by God, only by Jesus Christ; accepted both in our state and actions as we are reconciled to him; and all that we do is taken in good part for Christ's sake, who was sent and intrusted by the Father to procure this favour for us, and did all which was necessary to obtain it. The ground of all that love God beareth to us is for Christ's sake. There is indeed an antecedent love showed in giving us to Christ, and Christ to us: John iii. 16, 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son—That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' The first cause of Christ's love to us was obedience to the Father; the Son loved us, because the Father required it; though afterwards God loved us because Christ merited it. All consequent benefits are procured by the merit of Christ. The Father; that is first in order of persons, is first in order of working, and can have no higher cause than his own will and purpose. And besides, there is an obligation established to every person. Absolute elective love is the Father's property and personal operation; but then his eternal purpose is brought to pass in and through Jesus Christ. In the carriage of our salvation, Christ interposeth; so we are chosen in him as head of the elect, Eph. i. 4, pardoned, justified, sanctified, glorified in and through him. All these benefits and fruits of God's love are procured by Christ's

merit; not only as it is the more for the freedom of grace that the reasons why man should be loved should be without himself, and so the obligation is increased; and not merely neither for the greater fullness of our comfort; for if God should love us in ourselves, it would be a very imperfect love, our graces being so weak, and our services so stained. But whence should we have this grace at first, which is the object of his love? He could never find in us any cause why he should love us. God could not love us with honour to himself, if his wisdom had not found out this way of loving us in Christ. There was a double prejudice against us—our nature was loathed by God's holiness, and then God's justice had a quarrel against us.

1. For God's holiness. What communion could there be between light and darkness? God is holy by nature, and we are sinners by nature. Nature being corrupted, God cannot love it, unless he see it in such a person as Christ is: Ps. v. 4, 5, 'For thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest all workers of iniquity;' not only the work, but the person. Therefore we are hidden in him, found in him; as when a man loathes a pill, we lap it up in something which he affects. God abhorred the sight of man till found in Christ.

2. God's justice had a quarrel against us. God dealt with man by way of covenant, and so hated man not only out of the purity of his nature, but out of justice; his righteous anger was kindled because of the breach of the covenant. When subjects are fallen into displeasure with their prince, such an one as the king loveth must mediate for them. So 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,' 2 Cor. v. 19. How cometh God, who seemed to be bound in point of honour to avenge himself on sinners, to be reconciled? In Christ he received satisfaction. God was resolved to manifest an infinite love to man, but he would still manifest an infinite hatred against sin; which could not be more fully manifested than by making Christ the ground of our reconciliation. Thus the wisdom of God hath taken up the difference between us and his holiness, and between us and his justice, that so divine love may be like itself, not blind, but rational. This was the great prejudice—how could the holy God, the just God, who is not overcome with any passion, love such vile and unworthy creatures as we are? The question is answered—he loveth us in Christ, and for Christ's sake.

Secondly, Take the particle *καθὼς*, *as*, in the ordinary acceptation. So it signifieth similitude and likeness; but then it signifieth not an exact equality, but some kind of resemblance: 'Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect,' Mat. v. 48; 'One as we are one.' So here—(1.) There is a disparity; (2.) A likeness.

1. A disparity; for in all things Christ hath the pre-eminence, both as God and as mediator.

[1.] As God; he is most perfect, in whom God hath found all complacency and delight: Prov. viii. 30, 'Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.' He was God, we are creatures; he the natural Son: Ps. ii. 7, 'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.' We the

adopted children : John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' God's love to Christ was necessary, ours is a free dispensation : John iii. 16, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

[2.] As mediator ; so he is the first beloved. God loves Christ as the first object of his love ; after Christ, he loveth those that are Christ's. The relation begins with him : John xx. 17, 'Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God.' He is loved as the head of the mystical body, we as members ; the head first, then the members. He is loved for his own sake, we for his.

2. Yet there is a likeness. God loveth us with a like love.

[1.] Upon the same grounds—nearness and likeness.

(1.) Nearness. He loveth Christ as his Son, so he loveth us as his children : 1 John iii. 1, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.' There is a threefold *ecce* in scripture. (1.) *Ecce demonstrantis*, as pointing with the finger : John i. 29, 'The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.' It referreth to a thing or person present, and it noteth the certainty of sense, as there he pointed at him as present ; or to a doctrine, and then it noteth the certainty of faith : Job v. 27, 'Lo this, we have searched, so it is ; hear it, and know thou it for thy good ;' believe it as a certain truth. (2.) There is *ecce admirantis*, as awakening our drowsy minds more attentively to consider of the matter ; as Lam. i. 12, 'Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.' So here, entertain it with wonder and reverence as an important truth. (3.) *Ecce exultantis, vel gratulantis*, as rejoicing and blessing ourselves in the privilege : Ps. cxxi. 4, 'Behold, he that keepeth Israel, he neither slumbers nor sleeps.' Now all these take place here. Behold it with faith and confidence, as a certain truth ; behold it with reverence and wonder, as a high dignity ; behold it with joy and delight, as a blessed privilege : as it is a certain truth, we should believe it more firmly ; as it is an important truth, we should consider it more seriously ; as it is a comfortable truth, we should improve it more effectually, to our great joy and satisfaction in all conditions. The wisdom of God findeth out relations between God and us, to establish a mutual love between us. He would be known, not only as our creator, but our father ; and indeed none is so much a father as God is. Earthly parents have but a drop of fatherly compassion suitable to their finite scantling ; never had any such bowels and affections as our Father which is in heaven. If we look to his fatherly bowels, none deserveth the title but he : Isa. xlix. 15, 'Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the fruit of her womb ? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee ;' Mat. vii. 11, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him ?' Ps. xxvii. 10, 'When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.' Certainly God excelleth all temporal relations ; never father had such bowels

and affections. We were never in the bosom of God, to know his heart; but the only Son of God, that came out of his bosom, he hath told us tidings of it, and hath bidden us come boldly and call him Father. 'When ye pray, say, Our Father.'

(2.) Likeness is another ground of love. God loveth Christ, not only as his Son, but as his image, he being 'the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,' Heb. i. 3. So he loveth the saints, who are by grace renewed after his image: Col. iii. 10, 'And that ye put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him;' and who are thereby made 'partakers of the divine nature,' 2 Peter i. 4. We lost by Adam the image of God and the favour of God; now, first his image is repaired in us, then his love and favour is bestowed on us; without this we could not be lovely in his eye, for we are amiable in the sight of God by reason of that comeliness he has put upon us.

[2.] There are like properties.

(1.) It is free. So was God's love to Christ's manhood; as much of his substance as was taken from the virgin was chosen out of grace. Christ for his whole person deserved love, but as to his human nature, he was himself an object of elective love as we are; and this being assumed into the unity of his person, Christ was set apart by God for the work of mediation: Isa. xlii. 1, 'Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him.' Choice supposeth the preferment or acceptance of one, and refusal of another; so was Christ chosen as man. This the virgin acknowledged: Luke i. 48, 'He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaid.' He had done her an honour, the greatest that was done to any of his servants, among which she acknowledged herself the unworthiest. So much of the substance of the virgin as went to the person of Christ, and his human soul, was chosen out of mere grace. Nay, in his divine person there was a choice which is to be referred to the wisdom and pleasure of the Father: Col. i. 19, 'It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.' The same account as is given of our salvation: Mat. xi. 25, 26, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' So is God's love to us free and undeserved; his love is the reason of itself; he loved us because he loved us: Deut. vii. 7, 8, 'The Lord did not set his love on you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; but because the Lord loved you.' There is the last cause, God's act is its own law and reason, we can give no other account.

(2.) It is tender and affectionate. There is a full complacency and delight in Christ: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.' His heart was taken up with him, he was full of contentment in him; as a husband is called 'the covering of the eyes,' because a woman should look no further. So Prov. viii. 31, 'I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.' So tenderly affectioned is God to the saints: Isa. lxii. 5, 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee;' then affections are in their reign and height. So tender is God of his people: Zech. ii.

8, 'He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.' The eye is the most tender part, and so is the apple of the eye. Can there be a more endearing expression ?

(3.) It is eternal. Christ as mediator was loved before the foundation of the world in God's purpose : John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory that thou hast given me ; for thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world.' And in loving Christ he loved us ; and in choosing Christ as head of the church, the members were included in that election, for head and body cannot be severed. This grace was given us in Christ before the world began : 2 Tim. i. 9, 'Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling ; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.' Some are not called as soon as others, but all are loved as soon as others, even from eternity. God's love is as ancient as himself, there was no time when God did not think of us, and love us. We are wont to prize an ancient friend ; the ancientest friend we have is God, who loved us not only before we were lovely, but before we were at all. He thought of us before ever we could have a thought of him ; after we had a being in infancy, we could not so much as know that he loved us ; and when we came to years of discretion, we knew how to offend before we knew how to love and serve him ; we cared not for his love, but prostituted our hearts to other things. Let us measure the short scantling of our lives with eternity, wherein God showed love to us. As to our beings, we are but of yesterday ; as to the constitution of our souls, we are sinners from the womb ; and when we are convinced of it, we adjourn and put off the love of God to old decrepit age, when we have spent our strength in the world, and wasted ourselves in deceitful and flesh-pleasing vanities. Now it should shame us when we remember God's love is as ancient as his being. Some look after God sooner than others ; but if you look after God never so soon, God was at work before us ; those that began earliest, as Josiah, John Baptist, find God more early providing for their eternal welfare.

(4.) It is unchangeable ; as to Christ, so to us ; from eternity it began, to eternity it continueth : it began before the world was, and will continue when the world shall be no more : Ps. ciii. 17, 'The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.' It is man's weakness to change purposes ; we have good purposes, but they are suddenly blasted ; but God's eternal purpose, that shall stand. We are mutable, and frequently change, out of the levity of our nature or the ignorance of futurity ; therefore upon new events we easily change our minds ; but God, that seeth all things at once, cannot be deceived ; the first reasons of God's love to man are without man, and so eternal. Among the persons of the Godhead, the Son loveth because the Father required it ; the Father, because the Son merited it ; and the Holy Ghost, because of the purpose of the Father ; and the purchase of the Son abideth in our hearts, to preserve us unto God's use, and to keep afoot his interest in us.

Thirdly, There are the like fruits and effects of it. I shall instance in some which are like his love to Christ.

1. Communication of secrets. All things are in common amongst those that love one another. Said Delilah to Sampson, Judges xvi. 15, 'How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth.' Now Jesus Christ knoweth all the secrets of God: John i. 18, 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' Christ, lying in the Father's bosom, knoweth his nature and his will. So it is with the saints: John xiv. 21, 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.' As God manifested himself to Christ, so Christ will to us. Christ hath treated us as friends: John xv. 15, 'Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.' The knowledge of God's ways is a special fruit of his love.

2. Spiritual gifts. God's love to Christ was a bounteous love: John iii. 34, 35, 'God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him: the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.' God's love was showed to Christ in qualifying the human nature with such excellent gifts of grace. As to us, God's love is not barren; as a fruit of God's love, Christ received all things needful for us. You will perhaps say, as they replied to God when he said, 'I have loved you, Wherein hast thou loved us?' Mal. i. 2, because he hath not made you great, rich, and honourable. If he hath given us such a proof of his love as he gave to Christ, namely, such a measure of his Spirit as is fit for us, we have no reason to murmur or complain. The Spirit of illumination is better than all the glory of the world: Prov. iii. 32, 'The froward is an abomination to the Lord; but his secret is with the righteous.' The Spirit of regeneration, to convert the heart to God and heaven: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God.' The Spirit of consolation, to evidence God's love to us, and our right to glory: 2 Cor. i. 22, 'Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts;' 2 Cor. v. 5, 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.' As the end of his love to Christ's human nature was to bring it to heaven, so the end of God's love to us is to sanctify us, and so to make way for glory.

3. Sustentation, and gracious protection during our work and service. This was his love to Christ: Isa. xlii. 1, 'Behold my servant whom I uphold;' 'I am not alone, my Father is with me,' John viii. 16. His enemies could not touch him till his time came: John xi. 9, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.' As long as the time of exercising his function here lasted, there was such a providence about him as did secure him from all danger; and till that time was past, and the providence withdrawn, he was safe; and when that

was out, and he seemed to be delivered to the will of his enemies, all the creatures were in a rout, the sun was struck blind with astonishment, the earth staggered and reeled. So God will carry us through our work, and keep us blameless to his heavenly kingdom; but if we are cut off by the violence of men, all the affairs of mankind are put in confusion, and carried headlong, besides the confederacies of nature disturbed, and divers judgments (as in Egypt, and the land of the Philistines) ensue; *odium in religionis professores*; the world shall know how dear and precious they are to God.

4. Acceptance of what we do. God accepted all that Christ did; it was very pleasing to God: Eph. v. 2, 'Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.' In every solemn sacrifice for the congregation, the blood of it was brought unto the mercy-seat with a perfume; but Christ's sacrifice received value from his person, he being one so dear to God, so excellent in himself. This kind of love God showeth to us, the persons of the upright are God's delight; and then their prayers: Cant. v. 1, 'I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice, I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey.' Though our services are mingled with weaknesses and imperfection, they shall be accepted: 'But the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, much more when he bringeth it with an evil mind,' Prov. xv. 8.

5. Reward. Christ was gloriously exalted; after his sufferings he entered into glory, and was conducted to heaven by angels, and welcomed by the Father, who, as it were, took him by the hand: Ps. ii. 7, 8, 'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' So if we do what he did, we shall fare as he fared: 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.' When we die, we shall be conveyed to heaven by angels: Luke xvi. 22, 'The beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom;' our souls first, then our bodies: Phil. iii. 21, 'Who shall change our vile bodies, that they may be like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.' And at last we shall have a solemn welcome into heaven: Mat. xxv. 21, '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.' Christ is not only purchaser, but first possessor, and is gone into heaven to prepare a place for us, to which he will at last bring us: John xiv. 2, 3, 'In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.'

Use 1. Information, to show what ground we have of patience, comfort, and confidence.

1. Of patience in afflictions from God. Would we be loved otherwise than Christ was loved? We see in the person of Christ that love may stand with fatherly correction. Christ was beloved by God,

yet under poverty, disgrace, persecution, hunger, thirst, &c. When Christ was hungry, the devil came unto him: Mat. iv. 3, 'If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.' So he taketh advantage of our troubles and afflictions to make us question our adoption; but we may retort the argument: Heb. xii. 7, 8, 'If ye endure chastisement, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.' Brambles are not pruned, but vines. God loved Christ in the lowest degree of his abasement, as much as at other times. Shall I desire to be otherwise beloved of God than Christ was? Nay; God's love may stand with sad suspensions of soul-comforts: Mat. xxvii. 46, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' The natural Son was in the love of God when at the worst; God loved him still, though he appeared to him with another face; as the sun is the same when it shineth through red glass, only it casts a more bloody reflection. God had one Son without sin, but none without suffering.

2. Comfort when we meet with ill-usage in the world. Our Lord Jesus prayeth that the world may be convinced that God loved them as he loved Christ. When the world entreated Christ ill, how was the world convinced that God loved him? There was an eclipse at his death, which was a monument of God's displeasure: Mat. xxvii. 54, 'When the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things which were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.' So when Christ's members are evil-entreated, there are public monuments of God's displeasure, the courses of nature are altered, droughts, inundations, pestilences, famines, unseasonable weather, confusions, &c. If this be not, when God smileth, though the world frowneth, you will convince them by bearing up with courage and confidence. The more the world is set against us, the more do the fruits of his love appear before men.

3. Confidence in the midst of dangers and temptations. When once we are assured of God's love, what shall separate us from it? Rom. viii. 38, 39, 'For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Can anything alienate God's love in Christ? If it were God's love in us, that were an uncertain ground of hope; but it is God's love in Christ. Get but an assurance of his love, and you will never be ashamed. What can alienate the heart of God from you, while you are faithful to him, and have the sure pledge of his love, his Spirit in your heart? Love or hatred is not known by anything that is before us. But if you have a heart to seek him, fear him, obey his laws; this is the favour of his people, and this was his love to Christ.

Use 2. Direction.

1. Whereby chiefly to measure God's love; by his spiritual bounty: John iii. 34, 35, 'God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.' So the gifts and graces of the Spirit are the special effects of his love;

for he loved us as he loved Christ, and thus he manifested his love to Christ: Ps. cvi. 4, 'Remember me, Lord, with the love that thou bearest to thy people.' When one gave Luther gold, he said, *Valde protestatus sum, me nolle sic a Deo satiari.* Be not satisfied till God love you with such a love as he loved Christ. Inward excellences, though with outward crosses, these are the best fruits of his love; a heart to seek him, to fear his name, to obey his laws, an understanding to know his will. God's love is best known by the stamp of his Spirit, that is his mark set upon us. Let us leave outward things to God's wisdom. Love or hatred is not known by all that is before us. Let us labour for a share in his peculiar love: Ps. cxix. 132, 'Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.' Lord, I do not ask riches, nor glory, nor preferment in the world; I ask thy love, thy grace, thy Spirit. Doth our Saviour care for outward things? Other things are given promiscuously, these to his favourites. God's love is conveyed through Christ: Rev. i. 5, 'To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' He loved us, and sanctified us: Eph. v. 25, 26, 'Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.' Nothing more worthy, nothing more suitable to Christ's love.

2. It directeth us what to do when we are dejected through our own unworthiness. Look upon God's love in Christ. If God did take arguments and grounds of love from the creature, where would he have found objects of love? God hath proclaimed it from heaven: Mat. iii. 17, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;' and 'We are accepted in the beloved,' Eph. i. 6. Jesus Christ is worthy; desire 'to be found in him, not having thine own righteousness.' Lord, for the merits of thy blessed Son, accept of me. Christ, being beloved of the Father, is the storehouse and conduit to convey that love to his people.

Use 3. Exhortation, to endeavour after the sense and apprehension of this love in our own hearts. Surely this is our duty; for Christ afterward saith, ver. 26, 'That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.' There is a love of God towards us, and a love of God in us; so Zanchy, citing the text. His love, *ergo nos*, towards us, is carried on from all eternity; but *nondum in nobis*, it is not in us, but in time. He loved us before the foundation of the world, though we know it not, feel it not; but now this love beginneth to be in us when we receive the effects, and God is actually become our reconciled Father in Christ. God's love from everlasting was in purpose and decree, not in act. God's love in us is to be interpreted two ways—both in the effects and the sense. In the effects, at conversion: Eph. ii. 4, 5, 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.' In the sense, when we get assurance, and an intimate feeling of it in our own souls. Both are wrought in us by the Spirit: Rom. v. 5, 'And hope maketh us not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, that is given to us.' A man may have the effects,

but not the sense. God may love a man, and he not know it, nor feel it. But we are to look after both. Therefore I shall do two things—(1.) Press you to get the sense; (2.) Speak to the comfort of them that have indeed the effects but not the sense.

First, I shall press you all to get the sense and comfortable apprehension of this love, that God loved you as he loved Christ.

1. Motives. The benefits are exceeding great.

[1.] Nothing quickeneth the heart more to love God. Certainly we are to love God again, who loved us first, 1 John iv. 19. Now though it be true that *radius reflexus languet*, that God loveth us first, best, and most, yet the more direct the beam, the stronger the reflection; the more we know that God loveth us in Christ, the more are we urged and quickened to love God again: 2 Cor. v. 14, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us.' And this consideration is the more binding; if you expect those privileges which Christ had, you must express your love by suitable obedience: John vi. 38, 'I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;' John iv. 34, 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;' John viii. 29, 'And he that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him.' You must love him as Christ loved him. Will you sin against God, that are so beloved of him? Thus we must kindle our hearts at God's fire, for love must be paid in kind.

[2.] It maketh us contented, patient, and joyful in tribulations and afflictions: Rom. v. 3, 'And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also;' and 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.'

[3.] Nothing more emboldeneth the soul against the day of death and judgment than to know that God loveth us as he loved Christ, and therefore will give us the glory that Christ is possessed of: 1 John iv. 17, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is so are we in the world;' the greater apprehension we have of the love of God in Christ, the more perfect our love is.

2. Means that this may be increased in us.

[1.] Meditate more on, and believe the gospel. It is good to bathe and steep our thoughts in the remembrance of God's wonderful love to sinners in Christ: John xvii. 26, 'I have declared to them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.' Fervency of affection followeth strength of persuasion, and strength of persuasion is increased by serious thoughts.

[2.] Live in obedience to the Spirit's sanctifying motions; for this love is applied by the Spirit: Rom. viii. 14, 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;' compared with 16th verse, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God.' The Spirit obeyed as a sanctifier will soon become a comforter, and fill our hearts with a sense of the love of God.

[3.] Take heed of all sin, especially heinous and wilful sins: Isa.

lxix. 2, 'Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear;' Eph. iv. 30, 'And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption.' Otherwise you may lose the sense of God's love once evidenced. Men that have been lifted up to heaven in comfort, have fallen almost as low as hell in sorrow, trouble, and perplexity of spirit. One frown of God, or withdrawing the light of his countenance, will quickly turn our day into night; and the poor forsaken soul, formerly feasted with the sense of God's love, knoweth not whence to fetch any comfort and support.

Secondly, I shall seek to comfort them that have but the effects, not the sense. For many serious christians will say, Blessed are they who are in Christ, whom God loveth as he loved Christ; but what is this to me, that know not whether I have any part in him or no? To these I will speak two things—(1.) What comfort yet remaineth; (2.) Whether these be not enough to evidence they have some part in Christ.

1. What may yet stay their hearts.

[1.] The foundation of God still standeth sure: 'The Lord knoweth those that are his,' 2 Tim. ii. 19. He knoweth his own, when some of them know not they are his own; he seeth his mark upon his sheep, when they see it not themselves. God doubteth not of his interest in thee, though thou doubttest of thy interest in him; and you are held faster in the arms of his love than by the power of your own faith; as the child is surer in the mother's arms than by its holding the mother.

[2.] Is not God in Christ willing to show mercy to penitent believers? or to manifest himself to them as their God and reconciled Father? Did not his love and grace find out the remedy before we were born? And when we had lived without God in the world, he sought after us when we went astray; he thought on us when we did not think on him, and tendered grace to us when we had no mind and heart to it: Isa. lxxv. 1, 'I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not.'

[3.] Hast thou not visibly entered into the bond of the holy oath, and consented to the covenant, seriously at least, if thou canst not say sincerely? Or dost thou resolve to continue in sin rather than accept of the happiness offered or the terms required? Then thou hast no part in Christ indeed. But if thou darest not refuse his covenant, but cheerfully submittest to it, then God is thy God: Zech. xiii. 9, 'I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.' If thou consentest that Christ shall be thy Lord and Saviour, thou art a part of the renewed estate whereof Christ is the head.

[4.] If thou wantest a sense of his love, because of thy manifold failings, it is unreasonable to think that all will end in wrath, which was begun in so much love. If he expressed love to thee in thy unconverted estate, and hath brought thee into God's family, will he destroy thee, and turn thee out again upon every actual unkindness? The Lord doth gently question with Jonah in his fret: 'Dost thou well to be angry?' Jonah iv. 9. When the disciples fell asleep in the night of Christ's agony, he doth not say, Ye are none of mine, because

ye could not watch with me one hour ; but rather excuseth it : Mat. xxvi. 41, ' The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' This great love of God overcometh all the unkindness of his children.

2. What may evidence they are concerned in this love.

[1.] There is some change wrought in you ; thou art now no despiser of God and his holy ways ; the heart of thy sensuality, pride, and worldliness is broken, though too much of it still remaineth in thee. Now it is good to be in the way to a further progress ; and we begin with mortification : 2 Cor. v. 17, ' If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.' Every change for the better is either the new creature or a preparation to it.

[2.] The gift of the sanctifying Spirit is more prized by thee than all the riches and honours in the world. Now without holiness we cannot esteem holiness, and practically prefer it about other things. God loveth Christ as he bore his image ; so he loveth us as we are sealed by the mark of the Spirit : Ps. cvi. 4, ' Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people : O visit me with thy salvation ;' and Ps. cxix. 132, ' Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.'

[3.] Thou lovest and preferrest Christ's people, and that for their holiness, and therefore seekest to discountenance all sorts of wickedness : Ps. xv. 4, ' In whose eyes a vile person is contemned ; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.' He laboureth to discountenance all sorts of wickedness, and desireth to bring goodness and godliness into a creditable esteem and reputation, and payeth a hearty honour and respect to those that excel therein : so Ps. xvi. 3, ' But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.' He doth value them, and esteem them, above the greatest men in the world, because they are so loved, prized, and set apart by God.

[4.] You labour more and more to be such, whom God loveth as he loved Christ. Jesus Christ was the express image of his person ; we strive to be such in the world as Christ was, 1 John iv. 17, hating what God hateth, and loving what God loveth ; then we make it our business to walk as he walked, 1 John ii. 6, doing his will, seeking his glory. God loved Christ for that spirit of obedience that was in him, who shrunk not in the hardest duties, but, whatever it cost him, was faithful in his work.

Observe, thirdly, that God would have the world know so much, and be convinced of this great love which he beareth to the saints : ' That the world may know that thou hast loved them,' &c.

1. The necessity of the world's knowledge.

[1.] Because the world is blinded with ignorance and prejudice against the children of God ; they cannot, or rather will not see : 1 Cor. ii. 14, ' But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' They will not see, because they have a mind to hate.

[2.] The life that floweth from this union is a hidden thing : Col. iii. 3, ' For our life is hid with Christ in God.' It is hidden, because maintained by an invisible power ; the spiritual life is hidden under

the veil of the natural life : Gal. ii. 20, 'The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' It is obscured by infirmities. The best show forth too much of Adam, and too little of Jesus. It is hidden under afflictions : Heb. xi. 37, 38, 'They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword : they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins ; being destitute, afflicted, tormented ; of whom the world was not worthy,' &c. ; and the world's reproaches : 2 Cor. vi. 8, 'By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report ; as deceivers, and yet true.'

2. The means whereby the world is convinced.

[1.] The promises of the word show God's great love to the saints, and hereby he hath engaged himself to do great things for them : 2 Peter i. 4, 'Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.' He hath engaged to pardon their sins, accept their persons, sanctify their natures, keep them blameless to his heavenly kingdom, and finally, to translate them to glory : Deut. xxxiii. 29, 'Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, and who is the shield of thy excellency ! thy enemies shall be found liars unto thee ; and thou shalt tread upon their high places ;' Ps. cxliv. 15, 'Happy is that people that is in such a case ; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.'

[2.] By the visible fruits of the mystical union. The gift of the Spirit cannot be hidden, they have a power and presence with them which others have not : 1 Peter iv. 14, 'The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.' They live contrary to the course of this world, so as to become the world's wonder : 1 Peter iv. 4, 'Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot.' And reproof : Heb. xi. 7, 'By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear prepared an ark for the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world.'

[3.] By the wonderful blessings of God's providence ; they are hidden in the secret of his presence, strangely preserved : Ps. iv. 3, 'But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself ;' not only as instruments of his glory, but as objects of his special favour and grace.

[4.] This is more fully seen for the utter confusion of the wicked at the last day : 2 Thes. i. 10, 'When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.' Now it is for their conviction or conversion, then for their confusion ; these are those whose lives we judged madness, and ways folly !

3. Why Christ was so earnest that the world should know this.

[1.] To restrain their malice : 1 Cor. ii. 5, 'Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.' If God loveth believers, it should stop the violence and malice of the world against them ; they are the beloved ones of God whom they malign, and against whom their heart riseth.

[2.] It stirreth them up to come out of their wicked condition, that is, out of a state of nature : Ps. vii. 11, 'God is angry with the wicked every day.'

[3.] To put in for a share in this blessed estate, that they may be some of those whom he loveth as he loved Christ.

Use 1. Caution to the carnal world. Do not hate those whom God thus loveth. To you they are accursed, but God counteth them precious: Isa. xliii. 4, 'Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee.' To you they are the scurf and offscouring: 1 Cor. iv. 13, 'We are made as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things to this day.' But to God they are jewels: Mal. iii. 17, 'They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day when I make up my jewels.'

Use 2. Advice to the children of God, to promote the conviction and conversion of the carnal: 1 Peter ii. 12, 'Having your conversation honest amongst the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.' Herein you imitate your master, and your own safety lieth in it.

SERMON XLI.

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: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

—JOHN XVII. 24.

WE have hitherto seen Christ's prayers for the happiness of his church in the present world; now he prayeth for their happiness in the world to come. His love looketh beyond the grave, and outlasteth the life that now is; he cannot be contented with anything on this side a blessed eternity. Glory as well as grace is the fruit of his purchase, and therefore it is the matter of his prayers. Every verse is sweet, but this should not be read without some ravishment and leaping of heart. One saith he would not for all the world that this scripture should have been left out of the Bible. Certainly we should have wanted a great evidence and demonstration of Christ's affection. Every word is emphatical. Let us view it a little.

Here is a compellation, a request, and the reason of that request. The compellation, 'Father.' In the request there is the manner, how it is made, 'I will.' The persons for whom it is made, 'That they whom thou hast given me.' The matter of the request, in presence and vision, 'Be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.' Or the matter is everlasting happiness, which is described by the place of enjoyment, and our work when we come thither. Now the reason of all is, the Father's eternal love to Christ, and in Christ to us, 'For thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world.'

First, The compellation, 'Father.' The titles of God are usually suited to the matter in hand. Christ is now suing for a child's portion for all his members, and therefore he saith, 'Father.' God is Christ's father by eternal generation, and ours by gracious adoption, whence our title to heaven ariseth. And therefore it is called an inheritance: