

SERMON IV.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—Acts ii. 38.

IN the former verse we had their serious question; here is Peter's reasonable answer. They that take a right course, and seriously inquire after the way of salvation, are not likely to be disappointed. God saith, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,' Mat. vii. 7. Men that are in good earnest in the use of means shall not be refused in any needful suit. Therefore 'Stand ye in the ways, and see; ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls,' Jer. vi. 16. So do these poor wounded souls do, and so must we do. Now what was the effect? It is the part of a good physician not only to discover the disease, but also to prescribe a remedy; especially should spiritual physicians be tender of broken-hearted sinners, willing and ready to give them counsel. When Judas had a wound in his conscience, he cometh to the high priest, and said, 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.' But do they tender his case, or afford him any relief in his great straits? No; 'What is that to us? see thou to that,' Mat. xxvii. 4; they leave him to his own horrors and despairing thoughts. But Peter dealeth more compassionately with these converts: he doth not upbraid them with their past sin, and leave them in despair, but giveth them wholesome counsel and advice for the good of their souls: 'Then Peter said unto them,' &c.

In Peter's direction and counsel to them take notice—(1.) What he persuadeth them to do; (2.) The argument by which he persuadeth them; what they shall do, and what they shall receive.

In the first, two things—

1. 'Repent.'

2. 'Be baptized in the name of Christ.' What? why? and to what end? 'For the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'

First, The first thing he persuadeth them to is repentance. But this advice seemeth needless, yea, burdensome. Was it reasonable to press men that lay under deep terror and compunction to repent? Is not this to break a bruised reed, and add sorrow to sorrow?

Ans. No such matter. Therefore I shall—

1. Show the difference between the former work, and that to which they are now pressed.

2. Evidence to you that this is a proper cure.

[1.] The difference. Before it was *κατενύγησαν*; now it is *μετανοήσατε*. There is a great difference between these things. The word is more capacious, implying a change of mind and counsel. If you take repentance for godly sorrow and trouble of heart, yet still there is a difference between the former work and this. The former sorrow was legal, wrought by terror, and a fear of being damned;

this is evangelical, wrought by a sense of God's love. A malefactor ought not only to be sorry for his crime while he is in suspense, and knoweth not how his prince will deal with him, but after he is pardoned is still to be ashamed and grieved for his offence. Their former sorrow was an involuntary impression; this an active grief. They were pricked at heart whether they would or no. Now repent: he would have that work theirs. That was *dolor morbi*, the pain of the disease; this was *dolor medicine*, the trouble of physic, or the smart that comes by the cure. That sting was the effect of an accusing conscience, which may be in the wicked; this the grief of a confessing penitent, which argueth a tender heart.

[2.] It is a proper cure. They were in sorrow; therefore repent. *Ars deinde sequatur, natura monstrante viam.* Physicians will cure men of fluxes by giving a purge, and stay vomiting and a disposition to cast by a vomit, divert bleeding by letting of blood; so they were in trouble and anguish, and he presseth them to repent, in a kindly manner to come and bewail their sin to God: 'Repent, and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins.'

Doct. Repentance is one special means which God hath instituted for the cure of a wounded soul.

Not only faith, as Acts xvi. 31, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;' but repentance. Indeed those two are the two great means: Acts xx. 21, 'Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.'

I. Let us see what is repentance, or wherein it consists. There are three words by which it is expressed: *μετανοια*; that word you have in the text, and it signifieth an after-wit, or a change of mind. Secondly, The next word is *μεταμέλεια*, an after-sorrow, or a change of heart; that word you have Mat. xxi. 29, 'But afterwards he repented, and went,' *μεταμεληθείς ἀπῆλθε*; he was sorry for his refusal. Thirdly, *μεταστρεψις*, an after-turning, or a change of course. That word you have Acts iii. 19, 'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted;' *μετανοήσατε καὶ μεταστρέψατε*: Acts ix. 35, 'And turned to the Lord;' as he that hath walked in a wrong course bethinketh himself, and goeth back again, and taketh another way. In all these three consists repentance; not in one alone, not in a change of mind. Many a man knoweth better, but doeth that which is worse. *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.* There must be a change of heart as well as a change of mind, such a sorrow for sin as 'crucifieth the flesh, with the affections and lusts,' Gal. v. 24, that doth weaken the power and interest of sin in the heart; and not only a change of heart, but a change of course. Many men are troubled for sin, but still go on in the practice of sin. *Vera pœnitentia est*, saith Augustine, *pœnitenda non admittere, et admissa deflere*; such a change of heart as draweth with it a change of life; to repent for what is past, and amend what is to come: Prov. xxviii. 13, 'He that confesseth, and forsaketh his sin, shall find mercy.' Well, then, repentance consisteth not in an acknowledgment of sin, and saying, God be merciful; but it is a change of our minds, hearts, purposes, and evil course of life.

1. *Μετάνοια*, a change of mind and understanding: Rom. xii. 2,

'Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds.' A transmutation is necessary, by which a sinner beginneth to approve the law of God, which before he disliked, and to prize holy things, which before he lightly esteemed; to see the excellency and sweetness of the spiritual life, and walking in communion with God, which before he disesteemed as a heavy bondage or a foolish niceness: 1 Cor. ii. 14, 'For 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.' In short, men's eyes are opened, and they have other thoughts of sin and duty than ever they had before. They did not think sin so bad as they find it; nor that there was so much good and sweetness in a course of obedience. Now he seeth that all this while he hath gone astray, and been prejudiced against his own happiness: Titus iii. 3, 'For we ourselves were sometimes foolish and disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another;' 1 Cor. iii. 18, 'Let no man deceive himself; if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.' That sin which was his delight before, is now his burden. He was wont to marvel why men kept such a stir about sin, and that their complaints were but words of course; now he seeth it is the most hateful thing in the world, and all that was said is little enough to express the odiousness of it. He was wont to think a course of holy walking to be a dark, sad, and gloomy course; but now his judgment is altered, he seeth that nothing is so lovely and sweet as obedience, and no liberty but in God's service; that none live at large so much as they whose lusts are restrained, and whose consciences are still held under the awe of God's precepts. He was wont to call the proud happy and blessed, and that none lived so comfortable a life as they that had both ability and opportunity to please the flesh; now he seeth they are the most miserable creatures in the world, because their snares and temptations are multiplied, and that poor afflicted godliness is a far better condition; no preachers or scriptures are now too strict for him. This is a change of mind.

2. *Μεταμέλεια*, an after-care, when the soul cometh to grief, and shame, and sorrow, and hatred of sin: 2 Cor. vii. 10, 'For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.' Godly sorrow is of great use in repentance, to alienate and turn away the soul from sin. Our evil estate consisteth not so much in this, that we have sin, as that we love sin. Here lieth the root of all our mischief, that we are *φιλήδονοι μάλλον ἢ φιλόθεοι*, 'that we are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,' 2 Tim. iii. 4. Therefore, to dig at the root of sin, this breaking and rending the heart with godly sorrow is necessary, that the bitterness of grief may make it loathsome to us: Job ii. 13, 'His grief was great.' Therefore we must exercise ourselves with grief, and shame, and sorrow, because of our doings, and be touched with a deep sense of our folly and unkindness to God, that we have wronged God, and abused his grace.

3. There is *μεταστροφή*, a change of life. This ensueth upon the change of heart. By the change of heart we put off the old man, with his deceitful lusts; and then there must needs be a change in our con-

versations : Mat. ii. 2, 'Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance;' such as will evidence a thorough change wrought in us, and give us a certain proof of it : Isa. lv. 7, 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' This is always a-doing, wherein there is something privative and positive : in the privative part, the internal work is the chief, when a man maketh conscience of his thoughts ; the positive part is when a man maketh it the great business and trade of his life : Acts xxiv. 16, 'And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men.'

Reasons to prove that this is one special means which God hath instituted for the cure of a wounded soul.

1. Because it is God's prescribed course. The Lord himself must state the terms upon which his grace shall be dispensed ; now he hath appointed this way : Acts iii. 19, 'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshment shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Repentance is a means or condition, or moral qualification on our parts ; it is *conditio sine qua non*, without which we are not capable of the benefit. The first moving cause is the mercy and grace of God : Isa. xliii. 25, 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' The meritorious and procuring cause is the blood of Christ : Eph. i. 7, 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin.' That is the satisfaction given to God for our offences, to repair him in point of honour. But the causes do not exclude our duty ; there must be something done on our part by way of application to make our right and title clear, and that is faith and repentance : these two sister graces, the one respects God, and the other the Mediator Jesus Christ : 'Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,' Acts xx. 21. The offence is done to God, and he is the party to whom we return by Christ. These two graces go hand in hand, and we must not put asunder what God hath joined together. If you ask which goes first ? that is hard to say ; there is not such a distinction of time in the work of conversion that we can tell which is first or which is last ; the work is intermingled. The case in the new birth is somewhat like as it was in the travail of Tamar, Zarah putteth out the hand, but Pharez breaketh out first. We feel repentance, it is first in our sense ; but faith is the first-born, the elder sister. When a candle is brought into a room, the light showeth itself before the candle. Faith is first in order of nature, for without it no act is pleasing to God, Heb. xi. 6. Well then, repentance is God's prescribed course to get our sins blotted out ; that is, either out of the book of his remembrance, or out of the book of conscience. Out of the book of his remembrance : Col. ii. 14, 'Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us, nailing it to his cross ;' that is, crossed out by the blood of Christ. But out of the book of conscience it is blotted by the Spirit of Christ : Heb. x. 22, 'Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water ;' when he giveth us gospel peace and comfort.

2. Because the saints have found it an effectual course, and marvellously successful. God taught David by his own experience that the exercise of repentance was the right way to seek relief, after his spirits had been wasted and his flesh almost dried up: 'I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity I have not hid; I said, I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin,' Ps. xxxii. 5. When he resolved sincerely to humble his heart before God, nay, though the purpose was not yet put into act, he felt the comfort. Another instance may be that, Jer. xxxi. 18-20, 'I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon the thigh: I was ashamed; yea, confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.' There is Ephraim's bewailing his sin, and God's returning an answer full of fatherly affection: at first he was like an unruly bullock, not easily brought to the yoke, but yet at length, when he was touched with shame and sorrow, then, 'Is not Ephraim a dear son? a pleasant child?'

3. Because it is the way to remove sin, which is the ground of the trouble, and that which hath given the soul such a deadly wound. There are two things that trouble the conscience, the guilt and power of sin; and we must be eased of both, or else the plaster will not be as broad as the sore. A man that hath his leg broken, to be eased only of his smart will not suffice him, he must have it set right again: I John i. 9, 'If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Now repentance worketh on both parts of the sin, the removal of the guilt, and also the filthiness and inherent corruption; it maketh way for the pardon of sin and the removal of the guilt of it, as I said before; and the whole tenor of the gospel showeth it, as Melancthon rightly defineth it against Islebus first, and Flaccius and his followers. The gospel is nothing else but a doctrine of repentance and remission of sin: these are two great points. Look upon Christ as a lawgiver: Luke xii. 47, 'The servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.' Or as a saviour and fountain of grace: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.' He requireth and giveth repentance in order to the remission of sins. Secondly, For the other part, the power of sin; it mainly serveth for that, and is required for that. We use salt and bitter potions to kill the worms. The lusts that haunt our souls are best mortified by the bitterness and sorrows of repentance, otherwise it is sweet and dear to the soul, and we are apt to roll it under our tongue. This rending of hearts spoileth the taste of sin: Gal. v. 24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.' Sorrow assaulteth sin in its

strength, which is love of pleasure, for all sin is founded in flesh-pleasing delights; it is lust draweth him away by some pleasurable lure or bait; the flesh is all for sensitive pleasure, and the proper cure for it is godly sorrow.

Use 1. If this be God's instituted course to ease troubled consciences, then they are physicians of no value for poor wounded souls that would direct you to another course; either, first, pleasures, and sports, and plays, and play-books, and other merry books and company, and carnal diversions to get off heart-qualms. Some such mountebanks in religion there be in the world, that seek to divert men's grief rather than to put it away; this is like a man in debt, that drinketh away the thoughts of it, but his misery is never the further off. Secondly, Others seek to cure trouble for sin with further sins; as men to ease themselves of the pains of a scald will hold the flesh to the fire again. This may stupify the conscience, but God hath means enough to awaken it. There is a worm that shall never die, and you will feel it one day. Others would have altogether lenitives, and cannot endure the sour doctrine of repentance, but would have men honied and oiled with grace; decry this as not suiting with their loose apprehensions of the gospel. John said, 'Repent,' Mat. iii. 2; Jesus Christ saith, 'Repent, and believe the gospel;' Mark i. 15; and Mark vi. 12, 'And the apostles went out and preached that men should repent.' There is a fleshly laziness and wantonness in men; they cannot endure to hear of the severe and grave exercises of religion; and when we go Christ's way to do them good, they are displeased. If we did come to you in our own name, and had a liberty of giving indulgence to one another, we might huddle up the matter; nay, if we were left to our reason and discretion, we need not stand so exactly upon godly sorrow and serious self-loathing; but God hath prescribed this course. Now why should we stick at it? You should thankfully acknowledge the privilege; be glad that repentance is granted, rather than grumble because it is required that we have leave to repent; not mutter because of this command to repent. It was counted a favour heretofore: Acts xi. 18, 'Then hath God also to the gentiles granted repentance unto life.' The law doth not say, 'I will not the death of a sinner, but that he repent and live;' but, 'Do this and live, sin and die.' The law doth not say, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden;' but, 'Depart, ye cursed.' It calleth for exact obedience, or threateneth eternal ruin. It is a grace granted to man above angels. God did not propound terms of repentance to them, whereby they should recover their lost estate, when they sinned; they were left to their own obstinacy. A truly burdened soul is glad of this order and method; the guilt of sin is not only his trouble, but the power of it: they like no terms like God's terms. Fulgentius saith, It is vile unthankfulness to prefer softness and carnal ease above the comfort of godly exercises. If repentance seem a burden, the fruits of sin in the end will be much greater: if this part of religion seem distasteful, the comfort of being well settled and established upon sound terms will be much greater than all the trouble it puts us to.

Use 2. Is to persuade you to this work upon the necessity of this course. It is not only necessary *necessitate præcepti*, but *medii*. It is

an irksome duty, but necessary. Till ye are brought to repentance, ye never had, nor can have, pardon of sins, and so no true peace of conscience. Some things have only the necessity of a duty, we sin if we do it not; but this hath the necessity of a remedy, we perish if we omit it. It is not only a duty but a remedy. When a father shall command a sick child to use such a remedy to save his life, he is not only guilty of disobedience if he refuse it, but destroyeth his own life by refusing a remedy necessary to preserve it. This is absolutely necessary. If you disobey God in other things, yet you should not in the command of repentance: those that need none, and care for none, Christ will have nothing to do with them: Mat. ix. 13, 'For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Would you hope for mercy in another way than God and Christ are agreed on? But because exhortations lose their force unless they be particularly directed, I must speak to two sorts.

1. Some that never yet repented nor turned to the Lord. Oh, consider, without repentance no pardon, and without pardon no salvation; he that remaineth in his sins shall die in his sins. You may have experience of God's patience and common goodness, but never of his special mercy. A dog when he dieth will be in a better case than you: a dog when he dieth, his misery dieth with him; but the misery of an impenitent sinner then beginneth. You are condemned already, what hindereth execution? only God tarrieth, 'is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,' 2 Peter iii. 9. He is willing to take a little more pains with you, to give you a little further time; but do you know how long he will bear? Have you any certain lease of enjoying the world and the comforts you now have? After a few more refusals of his renewed offers, and slighting of his mercies and patience, who can tell but God may take the denial, and fret the slender thread of life asunder? Who knoweth but the next day he will say, 'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' Therefore it is time to set about self-loathing and grieving for your sins, and dedicating yourselves seriously to God's use and service.

2. To those that have repented already, to renew their repentance. This is a work that must always be doing, if you would maintain quiet and peace in your souls. As long as there is sin in your hearts, you ought to groan under it: Rom. vii. 24, 'Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death!' And as often as sin is committed, so often must repentance be renewed: sin and trouble are inseparable. Conscience would be no conscience if it were otherwise. Therefore I would press you—

[1.] To use this way constantly of fetching out grace. As your salvation is carried on from faith to faith, Rom. i. 17, so from repentance to repentance. By repeated acts of the first graces our privileges are continued to us. Faith is never out of season, nor repentance; it is as necessary afterwards as it was at first, whenever you sin against God. Those that have a Father in heaven must still come to him for forgiveness, Mat. vi. 13. It is a renewed act, for the continuance, sense, and the increase of the sense and feeling of pardon. If you are prejudiced against such a course, you have no reason to think your

sins are pardoned. The christian religion revealeth no other way of comfort and sound peace ; and that assurance is justly liable to suspicion which can be maintained without repentance.

But you will say, Sinners are pardoned already ; justification is one indivisible act of grace, pardoning all sins past, present, and to come.

I answer—Though there be a justification of the person, yet there is a reiterated remission. There is a great deal of difference between the merit of pardon, justification of the person, and the actual remission of sin: the merit is but once, Christ never needeth to suffer more ; the justification of the person is obtained upon our actual interest in Christ ; then there is a release from the eternal punishment and wrath due to us because of sin. A believer can no more come under the power of the second death : this sentence is never reversed.

But now, pardon of sin is another thing : Acts xiii. 38, 39, ‘ Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins ; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.’ The sinner is justified, but not the sin ; these are distinct things. Justification noteth the state of the person, that is once upon our implantation into Christ ; but upon every peccant act we need a new pardon, that is repeated as sins are committed. Before it is committed it is not remitted, for it is not sin. It is pardoned in that notion in which it is sin ; virtually pardoned, but not formally. Justification is the grant of a privilege, that we have interest in remission of sin.

Well, then, let me press you to—(1.) A daily repentance for daily sins ; (2.) A solemn repentance on the occasion of special duties.

(1.) To a daily repentance for daily sins. As we pray for daily bread, so for daily pardon ; we need one as much as the other. We daily heap up new sins, and we must daily sue out our pardon. This was the method God took with Adam when he was fallen : God came to him in the cool of the day, Gen. iii. 8. God would not let them sleep in their sins, that he might bring them suddenly to recall themselves, and consider what they had done, that they might long rest quiet in their sins. Under the law, if a man were unclean, yet when the evening came he was to wash his clothes, Lev. xi. 25 ; so we read of the evening sacrifice : Num. xxviii. 3, 4, ‘ This is the offering made by fire, which ye shall offer unto the Lord ; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt-offering : the one lamb shall be offered in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even ; ’ Eph. iv. 26, ‘ Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.’ If poison is taken, a man would get rid of it as soon as he could. While our faults are in mind, repentance is more kindly ; as fresh wounds are best cured at first, before they fester and rankle into a sore. Sin gets less ground, and we shall have rest the sooner ; and it is good to divide our work by parts, to come to an account, and make all even between God and us every day, as merchants sum up their accounts at the foot of every page ; we shall have the less to do when we come to die.

(2.) To a solemn repentance on the occasion of special duties. At the Lord’s table we come to renew our sense of the remission of sins ; for the cup of the new testament is given for that end : Mat. xxvi. 28, ‘ For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for

¹ Qu. ‘ might not ’ ?—ED.

many, for the remission of sins.' We use this duty for the obtaining of this benefit, either to get a confirmation or new extract when our discharge hath been darkened by former failings. Now as we would renew the sense of pardon, so we must renew the exercise of repentance. There are two duties required of us in order to that work—(1.) Examination ; (2.) Meditation on Christ's death.

First, examination, 'Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat.' Look into thy bill ; what owest thou ? When we come to counting and reckoning with ourselves, how many defects and failings may we discover ! If that work be done seriously, we must needs come humbly and penitently. Well, then, in this serious work consider—

1. The exact purity of the law ; it condemneth the secret motions of our souls, thoughts, lusts, imperfect desires : 'The law is spiritual, but I am carnal,' Rom. vii. 14. 'What shall we do ?' There are few that can stand before the letter of the law, but who can stand before the spiritual meaning of it ? You do not set up other gods ; ay, but your hearts are estranged by the secret idols of your hearts from the true God : Ezek. xiv. 3, 5, 'These men have set up their idols in their hearts, because they are estranged from me through their idols ;' as the Jews preferred Barabbas before Christ. Practical atheism is worse than speculative. You may reason a man out of one, but not out of the other ; that is cured by grace. You abhor idols and images, but do your hearts submit to all the ordinances of Christ, to use them to the ends appointed ? You cannot endure vain or rash swearing, but doth thy life praise God ? Is there that reverence and seriousness in all matters of God ? You hate Sabbath profanations, but do you call it your delight ? You honour parents, but do you carry yourselves well in all your relations, and live as in the fear of God, and make conscience of the duties which belong to them ? You are no murderers, but make no conscience of rash anger ; no adulterers, but yet have wanton glances and unclean motions, Mat. v. 28. No thief, but have no charity ; do not take away that which is another's, but do not give your own ; no liar, but a slanderer, whisperer, backbiter ; thy life is a lie, when thou wouldst seem better than thou art ; suppress the first motions ; but, 'Who can say his heart is clean, I am pure from my sin ?' Prov. xx. 9.

2. The holiness of God, we have not sense enough of that : Job iv. 18, 'His angels he chargeth with folly ;' 1 Sam. vi. 20, 'Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God ?' I would excite christians to have a sense of this above all things.

3. Our proneness to sin : Ps. xl. 12, 'For innumerable evils have compassed me about ; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up ; they are more than the hairs of my head ; therefore my heart faileth me.'

4. The strictness of the last day's account. A long process : 1 Cor. iv. 5, 'Who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart.' Not only the state of the person, but all our actions. Conscience will be extended to the recollecting of all our ways ; a general bill will not serve the turn : else how will the wicked be ashamed, and the righteous applauded ? Idle words will come into account at that day, Mat. xii. 36.

Second, Meditation of Christ's death. He that maketh light of sin is guilty of the contempt of Christ's blood, that either despiseth the causes or effects of it: Heb. x. 29, 'Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?' It was not shed for a light cause, nor to produce mean effects: it showeth the heinousness of sin as well as the worth of God's image and favour: Zech. xii. 10, 'They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.' Faith is required to promote repentance.

(3.) After heinous sins we are especially to humble ourselves before God: this is the ready way to obtain pardon: Ps. xxxii. 5, 'I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquities have I not hid: I said, I will acknowledge my transgression unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin;' 1 Kings xx. 32, 'And they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Benhadad saith, I pray thee let me live.' Better come in voluntarily, than be drawn in by force. Heinous sins are wont to rifle all our confidences, therefore after such failings we are more seriously to renew our repentance, and to humble our souls in the sight of God.

SERMON V.

Repent, and be baptized in the name of Christ.—Acts ii. 38.

DOCT. That we obtain remission of sins by believing in the name of Christ.

By 'the name of Christ' is meant Christ himself, as revealed and set forth in the gospel; the doctrine of his person and office: Acts iv. 12, 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;' that is, Christ is the only person by whom we shall be saved; and Christ, as revealed in the gospel; for that is the name by which he maketh himself known to us. Now this must be received and applied by faith; so Peter explaineth it elsewhere: Acts iii. 16, 'And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong.' The name of Christ is Christ himself, and he puts forth his power upon believing.

I shall, for the opening of this point—(1.) Show what Christ doth or hath done for the pardon of sins; (2.) That no other but Christ can procure this benefit for us; (3.) The necessity of faith, that we may apply it to ourselves.

I. What Christ doth or hath done in order to the pardon of sins.

This benefit is chiefly the fruit of his priestly office. Now in his priestly office there are two parts—his oblation and intercession. They are spoken of in many places, but both together you have in one place: 1 John ii. 1, 2, ‘My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.’ Our propitiation and our advocate. Let me insist upon these two notions—

1. He is our propitiation. Christ is not only *ιαστῆς*, our propitiator, but *ιασμός*, our propitiation; that is, *victimā*, *ιαστικῆ*, the propitiatory sacrifice that was offered to God to appease his wrath for our sins. He is both the priest and the sacrifice, the propitiator and propitiation. This last is what we now pitch upon; and the apostle telleth us, Rom. iii. 25, ‘Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins.’ The justice of God, and the truth of his commination in the former dispensation, permitted not so great a benefit to be bestowed without a satisfaction; and this Christ hath made: so that God may be just, though he forgive sin. There can be no propitiation for sin without the expiation of it. The expiation of sin is by suffering the punishment due to it, which Christ hath done for us by his death, and so made way for our pardon and discharge.

2. He is our advocate, ‘We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.’ There are several terms by which Christ’s pleading his merit for us, and going between us and God, are set forth, and they have all their proper use. We shall compare them with this term of an advocate. The general word is ‘mediator.’ Christ is a mediator both in respect of his person and office, but an advocate only in respect of his office. A mediator, as a middle person indifferently disposed between two parties, that hath a mutual interest in both parties: Job ix. 33, ‘Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.’ One that mindeth the concernments of both, and could value the honour of God and the sins and misery of man. A mediator in respect of all his offices, but an advocate in respect of his priestly office. A mediator, as he doth deal with God for man, and with man for God, pacifying God towards man, and bringing man to God; but an advocate as interceding with God and pleading our cause in heaven: ‘We have an advocate with the Father.’ Another word is ‘intercessor.’ Intercession doth more of itself look like a friendly entreaty; as Jonathan interceded for David: 1 Sam. xix. 4, ‘And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant, against David, because his works have been to thee-wards very good.’ And Joab for Absalom’s return, after he had suborned the woman of Tekoah: 2 Sam. xiv. 22, ‘And Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.’ But advocate is *verbum forense*, a judicial word; it noteth Christ’s undertaking the cause of a believer in a legal and judicial way; not to solicit our pardon, but plead it, and make it out in a judicial way. Once more, Christ is not *patronus*, a word used in the civil law, but *advocatus*. A patron or defender is one that undertaketh to justify

the fact, but an intercessor or advocate is one that pleadeth to prevent the punishment, that doth not defend the fault, but intercedeth for the remission of the offence.

Now in what manner this intercession is managed, and how Christ acts the part of an advocate for us, needeth a little to be cleared.

It will not be enough to say that his merit and sufferings do continue to deserve such things for us, as if his pleading were only the virtue of his merit, which figuratively may be said to plead good for his people. So the apostle telleth us, 'The blood of sprinkling doth yet speak,' Heb. xii. 24. As the blood of Abel against Cain, so his blood for us. To grant no more than this would quite overturn the great act of Christ's intercession. And yet, on the other side, it cannot be thought that he intercedeth with such gestures and verbal expressions as men use with men, or as he himself did in the days of his flesh, when he offered up prayers with strong cries and tears, Heb. v. 7, which did become the state of his humiliation, but not his glorification. These are the two extremes.

Let us now see what it is.

[1.] This intercession of his may be conceived to consist in his appearing in heaven in our name, whereby the Son of God, being now man, presenteth himself as ready to answer for such and such sinners. His very being there in our nature speaketh his purpose in reference to this end, and God accepteth of it according to appointment: Heb. ix. 24, 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' He presenteth himself as one that hath made satisfaction for our offences, hath performed his sacrifice without the camp, and bringeth blood before the mercy-seat.

[2.] It may be supposed also to include a declared willingness and desire in our behalf to have such requests granted, such sinners pardoned. This was a part of his intercession: John xvii. 24, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.' 'Father, I will.' He declareth this to be his will; it was his interceding to have it accomplished. The like may be conceived in heaven. Thus far Aquinas explaineth it: *Interpellat autem pro nobis, primo, humanitatem, quam pro nobis assumpsit, representando; item animæ suæ sanctissimæ desiderium, quod de salute nostra habuit, exprimendo*—he intercedes for us by presenting his human nature, which he took for us; and also by expressing the desire of his most holy soul for our salvation.

But is there not more? Certain it is that a proper and formal prayer is not contrary to the human nature of Christ in that glorious estate in which it now is, neither as hypostatically united to the Godhead, nor as glorified. Not the first, for that he had *in via*, in which he made prayers and strong cries, Heb. v. 7. Not the second; still it is a creature, inferior to God, therefore capable of prayer. Indeed, when he was in the form of a servant, there was more subjection than now in heaven; but still he prayeth. Therefore—

[3.] There is a holy, reverent, though inconceivable adoration of the sovereign majesty of God, whereby the Mediator, now at the Father's right hand, doth in all his appearing for us, as being the head of the

body, adore the sovereignty, goodness, and wisdom of God with respect to the covenant of redemption, and sue out the benefits due to him thereby, namely, the pardon of our sins, and our comfort and peace: 'Ask of me,' Ps. ii. 8. By virtue of his paid ransom he may call for those blessings that are necessary for those that come to God by him. His saying to his disciples oftener than once, 'I will pray the Father for you,' John xiv. 16, 'And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;' this doth imply some address to God, even in respect to peculiar persons and particular cases. It is a suing out of his merit in their behalf. I would add one thing more.

[4.] He presents our prayers and supplications which we make in the behalf of ourselves to God, after he hath set us a-work by his Spirit: Rev. viii. 3, 'And there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne;' Heb. viii. 1, 2, 'We have such an high priest, who is seated on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary.' He presents our prayers to his Father, perfumed with his merit. By his Spirit we are furnished with sighs and groans.

II. No other but Christ can procure this benefit for us.

1. Because none else was appointed: Acts iv. 12, 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.' Authorised by the Father: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.' This is necessary, because the supreme authority resideth with God, who must and will choose in what way he will be satisfied and reconciled to sinners. Moses, that interposed of his own accord to be a mediator, was refused: Exod. xxxii. 32, 33, 'Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.' Christ is authorised to do you good: John viii. 42, 'Neither came I of myself, but he sent me.' Christ had a commission from his Father.

2. Because it needed to appear to us upon good evidence that he is the party whom God sets forth to save sinners. This is *opus liberi consilii*, an act of God's free grace; and therefore it cannot be determined by natural reason, but we must stand to the way revealed by God. The light of nature may show that man is fallen, but the light of nature cannot show the way of restoration. Heathens could not dream of it. The angels only knew it by the church: Eph. iii. 10, 'To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.' Those natural apostles, the sun and moon, are gone up and down the world to preach a God, an infinite and an eternal power; their sound is gone out into all lands; and conscience joining with this discovery will easily tell us that this God hath not been glorified as God; therefore we are obnoxious to him.

3. This appointment needed to be evidenced to the world by some notable discovery, that the world may be satisfied that this revelation

is from God: John vi. 27, 'For him hath the Father sealed.' Christ hath a commission and letters patent sealed with the broad seal of heaven. As every ambassador hath letters of credence under the hand and seal of that prince from whom he is sent, so Christ working miracles, and giving other demonstrations of the divinity of his person, hath manifested his commission, that he is the person authorised to do us good: Acts x. 38, 'How God hath anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him;' ver. 43, 'To him gave all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him should receive remission of sins.' He is the person. If you saw none of his miracles, the whole church in all ages and places will come as a witness and deposit for it, and we have the scriptures of the old testament, and many evident principles of natural light, that have a fair correspondence with this mystery. Well, then, God, the supreme judge, hath taken up the controversy between him and us, and appointed Jesus Christ to be the person. His institution is instead of all reasons.

Again, none else is able to satisfy God and pacify conscience.

[1.] Not to satisfy God. Sin being committed against an infinite majesty, the suffering by which he is expiated must be of an infinite value; and therefore it is impossible that any or all the angels, though holy and just, should propitiate God for our sins. As angels, they were not capable of punishment; and though they should have assumed human nature, yet being but finite creatures, the worth of their sufferings would not be infinite. Therefore Christ himself, being God and man, was capable to suffer, and give a value to his sufferings; and therefore we are said to be redeemed by the blood of God, Acts xx. 28, that is, by the blood of that person that was God. God would lose no glory by the fall; therefore, whoever was the redeemer, he was to restore what Adam lost: Ps. lxxix. 4, 'I restored that which I took not away.' Adam was the robber, but Christ was to make amends. By the fall God's authority was violated, his honour despised. His authority was violated in the creature's transgression; his command was just, our obedience reasonable. Now it was meet that God should keep up the authority of his law. His majesty despised in the threatenings; his holiness, as if he did not hate sin; his justice and truth, as if he would not punish it; his power, it was an act of presumption, and a contest with God. Now in all these respects it was necessary God should vindicate his glory, and be no loser, which is fully done by Christ.

[2.] Not pacify conscience. Conscience is not pacified till God be satisfied. God is infinitely merciful, but infinitely just. We cannot expect any more pity from his mercy than fear from his justice; yea, guilty nature is more presagious of evil than of good, as appeareth when we are sensible and serious. Every conscience must have content and satisfaction; therefore till we can have such a righteousness as will take off the guilt of former sins, and make us bold to stand before God, which only we can have in Christ, guilty nature can never be quiet, nor till God be pacified. Conscience is God's deputy; till he be satisfied, the creatures are at a loss. The great inquiry of nature

is, 'Wherewith will he be pleased?' Micah vi. 6, 7, 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, and the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' Barbarous cruelties and costly offerings. Again, lost nature knoweth something of a sacrifice, and something of price and value. Now judge you whether God be satisfied or no. First, *A priori*. He hath the sacrifice of his own appointing: Heb. ix. 13, 14, 'For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?' The sacrifices of the law could do that for which they were appointed, which was typical expiation and external sanctification; they did qualify for worship-work, so far as appointed. And the same apostle saith, Heb. ix. 9, 'Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as appertaining to the conscience.' There was no real worth in themselves. The conscience could not have found any ground of satisfaction how God's justice could be satisfied by such mean things as the blood of bulls and goats. There must be something penal, something of value. But in this sacrifice, besides God's institution, there is a real intrinsic worth, which is the dignity of the person and the innocency of the person; but he could not offer it for himself, therefore it must be intended for some other. Secondly, *A posteriori*. Consider how God hath accepted Christ. Christ is risen, our surety let out of prison. The Lord sent an angel to remove the stone, not to supply any lack of power in Christ, but as a judge, when the law is satisfied, sends an officer to open the prison doors. As the apostles, Acts xvi. 38, 39, 'And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates; and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans; and they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.' 'The God of peace brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ,' Heb. xiii. 20. Though Christ had power to rise, yet not authority till the angel rolled away the stone: he did not break prison, but was brought out; then he arose. If our surety had perished in prison, we could have no assurance; and if he had continued under death, the world could have no discharge. But he rose again for our justification, Rom. iv. 25. And not only so; Christ is not only taken out of prison, but carried up to God in glory and honour: received into heaven, 1 Tim. iii. 16; not ἀνέβη, ascended, but ἀνελήφθη, received. God hath rewarded him; therefore Christ hath perfectly done his work. God hath not only taken him out of the grave, but taken him up to glory. Certainly God is well pleased, since he hath not only given him a discharge, but a reward. He did undertake to carry it through; as Reuben said, Gen. xliii. 9, 'I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, let me bear the blame for ever.'

[3.] None so willing to relieve a poor afflicted creature as Christ: Heb. ii. 17, 'Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.' He was once at liberty, but when he had undertaken he was bound. He was merciful to undertake, and faithful to accomplish it. He was God, equal in glory with the Father; yet merciful to us, and faithful to God: merciful in dying, faithful in interceding, and mindful of us at every turn; and so every way qualified to do our souls good.

III. The necessity of faith, that it may be applied to us.

1. There must be an application. Many think there is a Jesus Christ, we need take no further care, he did die for sinners, and therefore we shall do well enough. No; there must be some way how we may come to receive benefit; besides the meritorious cause, there must be an effectual application, for we read of blood shed and blood sprinkled, of making the atonement and receiving the atonement, Rom. v. 11. It is for Christ's sake, for his merit and worthiness, that we are accepted. But then there is a way appointed how we shall be accepted; therefore let us not presume of a propitiation without application. 'The cup of salvation yieldeth no benefit to us except we drink of it. Therefore since such a great part of the world miscarry, let us see that we do not defraud ourselves of so great a benefit.

2. That God must state the way of application as well as the way of redemption. There is the same reason for the one as for the other; that God should propose the terms upon which Christ should be made ours; for all is a work of his free grace and counsel. Well, then, we must be careful to find out God's appointment, and the way of salvation which he hath declared: Rom. iii. 25, 'Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' Not, 'through his blood;' but 'through faith in his blood.'

3. God hath declared this way to be faith: Acts x. 43, 'That through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.' First, The scripture is very express in limiting the promises of pardon to believers: 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.' Secondly, In declaring all those to be under the curse that believe not: John iii. 36, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' Thirdly, In placing faith, correlatively taken, in the room which works had in the first covenant. 'Thence so often have we these sayings, 'It is of faith, not of works,' which we meet with everywhere; so that there needeth no more ado. Faith is then required, not in the popish sense, as if faith were the beginning of that righteousness for which sins are forgiven; neither is faith that which God accepteth instead of righteousness, but the means to receive it as our legal qualification.

4. This faith must be of a right constitution; namely, such a believing in Christ as receiveth him to all the ends and purposes that God hath appointed him; that he may be Lord and Christ, Prince and Saviour: John i. 12, 'But as many as received him, to them gave he

power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name;’ James ii. 14, ‘What doth it profit, my brethren, though he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?’ Christ must be received so as he may dwell and rule in our hearts, and quicken us in the way of holiness to everlasting glory. When a sinner doth thus take Christ to himself, and give up himself to Christ, the work is ended: Acts xxvi. 18, ‘To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.’ This is the faith that is required on our part, as on God’s part there is required the intervention of Christ’s merits; this is the faith that every one should strive to get, and see if we have it, yea or no.

Use 1. To show us what course to take for peace and pardon. When we lie under a sense of guilt and anguish for sin, plead Christ’s satisfaction to God’s justice. O Lord Jesus Christ, thou didst take these my sinful debts upon thyself, and undertake to satisfy for them; and I know that he hath made a full satisfaction; I renounce all other hope of pardon and rest for my soul but upon his precious blood. If he be not able to save, I am content to perish: ‘But he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.’ When you do this in a penitent broken-hearted manner, God will not refuse. As Adonijah took hold of the horns of the altar, 1 Kings i. 51, and said, ‘If I perish, here will I perish;’ so are we to plead that satisfaction before the tribunal of God. We are allowed to ask blessings in his name, and use his merit in pleading with God: John xvi. 23, ‘Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.’ When you have a feeling of all your wants, and seriously need the pardon of sins, you will get a good answer. This is to use Christ as our propitiation: Heb. x. 14, ‘For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.’ There needeth no more to be done by way of expiation.

2. When you are confessing your sins, depend upon him as your advocate, as one that died for your sins, and is ready to appear before God, to plead for you, and put all your debts upon his score. Let us be sure to arraign and accuse ourselves: we must confess our sins, 1 John i. 9, and then Christ will plead for the pardon of them. If we think to be our own advocates, and do deny, extenuate, or excuse sin, it will never succeed well with us; but if Christ be our advocate, how can we miscarry? There will not want accusers to lay sin to our charge: ‘But we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.’

It is not a servant or a friend, but the dearly beloved of his soul that pleadeth for us, one that pleadeth not by way of entreaty, but merit: he is Jesus Christ the righteous. Now ‘the prayer of a righteous man availeth much,’ James v. 16, but much more the prayer of a righteous Saviour; he that hath fully suffered for thy sins, that can bring blood to the mercy-seat, he prayeth for no more than he hath paid for. Oh, who shall condemn? Rom. viii. 33, 34, ‘Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh

intercession for us.' Here is comfort enough, if we were in a condition to beg it, nay, if we were in a condition to need it; for this comfort is for poor burdened souls.

The next clause in this verse is remission of sins; but this being handled in the first and second sermons of the twenty that were printed in quarto, and in the Lord's Prayer, and on 1 John ii. 11 in this volume,¹ it is omitted here.

SERMON VI.

Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.—Acts ii. 38.

IN Peter's answer we have two things—(1.) His advice; (2.) The encouragement.

In his advice we have two things—(1.) Repent every one of you; (2.) 'Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.'

The second part of the advice I shall now insist upon: 'Be baptized every one of you.' And here I shall speak to three questions.

Quest. 1. Why is baptism mentioned rather than faith, and other things more internal and necessary to salvation?

Ans. 1. Faith is implied: Mark xvi. 16, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' For baptism is an open and real profession of faith in Christ crucified; so that it must be explained thus: Be baptized, believing on the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins. Surely he would not have them dissemble, and seek remission of sins without faith in Christ, by the bare submission to the outward rite of baptism.

2. Baptism is mentioned, because it was the visible rite of receiving proselytes to Christ. Now it imported them who were convinced as persecutors to turn professors, if they would have ease for their consciences; and not only to believe with the heart, but to make their profession manifest and open by submitting to this way: Rom. x. 10, 'For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.'

Quest. 2. Why in the name of Christ only? The Father and the Holy Ghost are not mentioned, according to the precept, Mat. xxviii. 19, 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

Ans. He speaketh not of the form of baptism, but the use and end thereof. Now the great use of baptism is, that we may have benefit by the mystery of redemption by Christ; therefore we are said to be baptized into Christ, Rom. vi. 3, and Gal. iii. 27, 'For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.' He is the head of the church, and by baptism we are planted into the mystical body.

¹ All contained in prior volumes of this Edition.—ED.

Quest. 3. Doth not this put too great an honour and necessity upon baptism to entitle remission of sins to this act, as if every one that were baptized had his sins forgiven him ?

Ans. When we submit to the gospel covenant, we believe that God for Christ's sake will forgive us our sins: in testimony of this faith we receive baptism, which, supposing that we do not *ponere obicem*, lay any block in the way, that we repent and believe the gospel, doth seal and deliver a pardon to us ; it doth seal, that is, confirm us in the expectation of it, and deliver it to us. It is our legal investiture ; it is the rite by which we are first solemnly put in possession of it. Supposing that we have a promise before, as all that repent and believe have, it doth seal and deliver. But because most are baptized in infancy, it doth excite and oblige us to take the way whereby we may obtain pardon according to the new covenant ; doing what is necessary, it assures and confirms us that he will be as good as his word.

Doct. That baptism hath an especial use and respect unto this benefit of obtaining remission of sins in the name of Christ.

To evidence this unto you, I must take it for granted for the present that baptism belongeth to the gospel or the new covenant ; or, if you will have it confirmed, that place doth it fully which was mentioned before : Mark xvi. 16, 'Go, preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' Whence it followeth clearly and undeniably that baptism belongeth to the gospel or new covenant. Supposing this, let me take my rise a little higher.

1. That God hath ever delighted to deal with his creatures in the way of a covenant, that we might know what to expect from him, and we might look upon ourselves under the firmer bonds of obedience to his blessed majesty ; for in a covenant, which is the most solemn transaction between man and man, both parties are engaged ; God to us, and we to God. It is not meet that one party should be bound and the other be free ; therefore both are bound to each other, God to bless, and we to obey. Indeed, in the first covenant the *debitum pœnce*, the debt of punishment, is only mentioned, because that only took place : Gen. ii. 17, 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' But the other part is implied, Do and live, sin and die.

2. Because the first covenant was broken on our part, God was pleased to enter into a second, wherein he would manifest the glory of his redeeming grace and pardoning mercy to fallen man. This was brought about in Christ : 2 Cor. v. 19, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.' And therefore this second covenant was called a covenant of peace, as being made with us after the breach, or with man obnoxious to the wrath of God : Isa. liv. 10, 'The covenant of my peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord.' Man needeth such a covenant, and Christ offereth it to us.

3. In this covenant of peace, both the privileges and duties are suited to the state in which man was when God invited him into covenant with himself. Man was fallen from his duty, and obnoxious to the wrath and displeasure of God, and therefore the new covenant is a doctrine of repentance and remission of sins. What is 'preach

the gospel to every creature,' in Mark xvi. 15, is in Luke xxiv. 47, 'That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.' That is the gospel, or the new remedial law of our Lord Jesus; repentance to heal us and set us in joint again as to our duty, and remission of sins to recover us into God's favour; and both these benefits we have by the Redeemer: Acts v. 31, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.' He giveth the one simply, and both gives and requires the other; so that by the new covenant remission of sins is conveyed to all true penitents.

4. The more distinctly to understand the nature of this covenant, we must consider both the duties and privileges thereof; for in every covenant there is *ratio dati et accepti*, there is something promised and given, and something required; and usually the promise consisteth of somewhat which the party is willing of, and the duty or condition required is that to which he is more backward, and loath to submit unto. So in the covenant of grace; in the promise God respecteth man's want; in the duty, his own honour. Every man would have pardon, and be saved from hell, but God will have subjection: every corrupt nature is not against desires of happiness; these God maketh use of to gain us to holiness. All men naturally greedily catch at felicity, and would have impunity, peace, comfort, glory, but are unwilling to deny the flesh, and are unwilling to renounce the credit, profit, or pleasure of sin, or to grow dead to the world and worldly things. Now God promiseth what we desire on condition that we will submit to those things we are against. As we sweeten bitter pills to children that they may the better swallow them; they love the sugar, though they loathe the aloes; so doth God invite us to our duty by our interest. Therefore whoever would enter into the gospel state must resolve to take the blessings and benefits offered for his happiness, and the duties required for his work. Indeed, accepting the benefits is a part of the condition, because we treat with an invisible God about a happiness that lieth in another world; but it is but part, for there are terms: Heb. x. 22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.'

5. The privileges are two—pardon and life. These are the great blessings offered in the new covenant; you have both together, Acts xxvi. 18, 'To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.' These two benefits are most necessary, the one to allay the fears of the guilty creature, the other to gratify desires of happiness, which are natural to us; the one to remedy the misery incurred by the sin and fall of man, the other to establish our true and proper felicity in the everlasting enjoyment of God; the one to ease our consciences, and to support us against troubles of mind, the other to comfort us against all the outward troubles and afflictions which sin hath introduced into this world. In short, the one to free us from deserved punishment, the other to assure us of undeserved blessings; for one importeth deliverance from eternal death, the other entrance into everlasting life.

6. The duties thereof do either concern our first entrance into the christian state, or our progress therein. Our Lord representeth it under the notions of the 'gate' and 'way;' Mat. vii. 14, 'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life.' Other scriptures deliver it under the notions of making covenant and keeping covenant with God. Making covenant: Ps. l. 5, 'Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.' Keeping covenant: Ps. xxv. 10, 'All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to such as keep his covenant;' Ps. ciii. 18, 'To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.' The covenant must not only be made, but kept.

[1.] As to entering into covenant with God, there is required true repentance and faith: Mark i. 15, 'Repent ye, and believe the gospel.' Repentance respects God as our end, faith respects Christ as the way to the Father: Acts xx. 21, 'Repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.' God is our end: 1 Peter iii. 18, 'Christ also hath once suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' And Christ is our way: John xiv. 6, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me.' And christianity is a coming to God by Christ, Heb. vii. 25. Now in our first entrance faith and repentance are both mixed, and it is hard to sever them, and to show what belongeth to the one and what to the other; at least it would perplex the discourse. Both together imply that a man be turned from a life of sin to God by faith in Christ, or a renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh, and a devoting and dedicating ourselves to God as our God.

(1.) A renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh; for these are the three great enemies of God and our salvation. When God is laid aside, self interposeth as the next heir. That which we count self is the flesh: Eph. ii. 2, 3, '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; among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' There all your enemies appear abreast: the devil as the grand deceiver and principle of all wickedness; the world, with its pleasures, honours, and profits, as the bait by which the devil would deceive us, and steal away our hearts from God, and pervert and divert us, that we should not look after the one thing necessary; the flesh is the corrupt inclination in us, which entertaineth, and closeth with these temptations, to the neglect of God and the wrong of our own souls. The flesh is importunate to be pleased, and is the proper internal cause of all our mischief: James i. 14, 'But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.' These must be renounced before you can return to God: Josh. xxiv. 23, 'Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the Lord God of Israel.' We must be turned from Satan to God; we must be delivered from the present evil world; we must abstain from fleshly lusts; for God will have no copartners and competitors in our hearts.

(2.) A devoting, consecrating, and giving up ourselves to God,

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as our God: 2 Cor. viii. 5, 'But first gave themselves to the Lord;' Rom. vi. 13, 'But yield yourselves unto God.' As our owner by creation: Ps. c. 3, 'The Lord is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.' As his by redemption: 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20, 'And ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.' As your sovereign Lord: Jer. xxiv. 7, 'I will give them an heart to know me that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart;' Isa. xxvi. 13, 'O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us.' As the fountain of our life and blessedness: Ps. xxxi. 14, 'But I trusted in thee, O God; I said, 'Thou art my God;' Lam. iii. 24, 'The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore I will hope in him;' Ps. cxix. 5, 'Thou art my portion, O Lord; I have said, I will keep thy words.'

[2.] As to our progress, continuance, and perseverance; for this is not the work of a day, but of our whole lives. This is our walking in the narrow way, and evidenceth our sincerity in making covenant, and our pursuit showeth it is a true consent. As to this progress and perseverance, three things are required—

(1.) As to the enemies of God and our souls, there must be a forsaking as well as a renouncing. The devil must be forsaken, we must be no more of his party and confederacy; we must resist, stand out against all his batteries and assaults: 1 Peter v. 8, 9, 'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist, steadfast in the faith.' The world must be overcome: 1 John v. 45, 'For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth Jesus is the Son of God?' The flesh must be subdued and crucified: Gal. v. 24, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;' that we be no more governed by the desires of it. If we be sometimes foiled, we must not go back again, but the drift of our lives must be for God and heaven.

(2.) As to God, to whom we have devoted ourselves, we must love, and please, and serve him all our days: Luke i. 75, 'In holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.' We must make it our work to love him, and our happiness to be beloved of him, and carefully apply ourselves to seek his favour, and cherish a fresh sense of it upon our hearts, and continue with all patience in well-doing, Rom. ii. 7, till you come to the complete sight and love of him: 1 John iii. 2, 'We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.'

(3.) You must always live in the hope of the coming of Christ and everlasting glory: Titus ii. 13, 'Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;' Jude 21, 'Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.' As we die at first, thankfully¹ accept of our recovery by Christ, and at first consent to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and resolve to follow God's counsel and direction, we must still persevere in

¹ Qu. 'did at first thankfully'?—Ed.

this mind, and use his appointed means in order to our final happiness. The sum then of our christianity is this, that we should by true repentance and faith forsake the flesh, world, and devil, and give up ourselves to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that he may take us as his reconciled children, and adopt us into his family, and for Christ's sake pardon all our sins, and by his Spirit give us grace to persevere in these resolutions, till our glory and final happiness come in hand.

7. This covenant, consisting of such duties and privileges, God hath confirmed by certain visible ordinances, commonly called sacraments. These are baptism and the Lord's supper; both which, but in a different manner, respect the whole tenor of the covenant; for as the covenant bindeth mutually on God's part and ours, so these duties have a mutual aspect or respect to what God doth and what we must do. On God's part they are a sign and seal; on our part they are a badge and a bond.

[1.] On God's part they are sealing signs. As circumcision is called a 'sign and seal of the righteousness which is by faith,' Rom. iv. 11; that is, of the grace offered to us in Christ; so is baptism, which came in the room of circumcision: Col. ii. 11, 12, 'In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism.' Surely the gospel ordinances sign as much grace as the ordinances of the Jews or legal covenant; as circumcision was a sign and seal of the righteousness which is by faith, or a pledge of God's good-will in Christ, so is baptism, and so is the Lord's supper, to signify they are signs, and to confirm they are seals, to represent the grace, and confirm the grant of pardon and life by the use of these duties. As, for instance, baptism signifies pardon and life, so doth the Lord's supper: Mat. xxvi. 28, 29, 'For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins. I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' That for our growth and nourishment, this for our initiation. Baptism is under our consideration at present. That this hath respect to remission of sins, the text is clear for it; and so are many other scriptures. It was Ananias' advice to Paul, Acts xxii. 16, 'Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' His sins were solemnly washed away by baptism: Eph. v. 26, 'That he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water through the word.' This washing represents the washing away of the guilt and filth of sin. And it signifieth also our resurrection to a blessed and eternal life: 1 Peter iii. 21, 'Even baptism doth now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' Well, then, it is a sealing sign: 2 Kings xx. 8, 'What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me?' It is a witness between us and God: Gen. xxxi. 48, 'This heap is a witness between me and thee this day.' So baptism is a witness that God will pardon our sins, and upon pardon give us eternal blessedness.

[2.] On our part they are a badge and a bond to oblige us to the duties of the covenant; a badge of the profession, and a bond to engage us to the duties which that profession calleth for. It is a debt: Gal. v.

3, 'For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to the whole law.' He bindeth himself to the observances of Moses' law; so a christian to the law of Christ. Therefore the apostle saith, Rom. viii. 12, 'We are not debtors to the flesh.' And it is an answer towards God, 1 Peter iii. 21, or an undertaking faithfully to perform the conditions required of us. It is a vow or obligation taken upon ourselves: Rom. vi. 11, 'Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' It bindeth us chiefly to the duties that belong to our entrance; as the Lord's supper doth more directly to the duties which belong to our progress. It bindeth us to a true belief of the gospel, or an acceptance of Christ, and a consent to the covenant of grace; to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh; and therefore the baptismal covenant, by which we are initiated into the christian religion, is expressed by being 'baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,' Mat. xxviii. 19, which implieth a dedication or giving up ourselves to them in their distinct personal relations. To the Father, that we may return to him and obey him as our rightful Lord, that we may love him and depend upon him as our all-sufficient happiness, and be happy in his love as his dear children, and may prefer his honour before all sensual pleasures in the world. We are baptized in the name of Christ, that we believe him and accept him as our Redeemer and Saviour, expecting to be saved by his merits, righteousness, and intercession, from the wrath of God, and the guilt of sin and eternal death. And we are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost as our guide, sanctifier, and comforter, that he may free us from sin, and change us into the image and likeness of Christ, and lead us into all truth and goodness, and fit and frame us for all holiness and godliness of conversation, and comfort us with the sense of our present interest in God's love, and the hopes of future glory.

8. These visible confirming ordinances give us great advantages above the word and bare proposal of the covenant there, as these sealing signs are an expression of God's earnest and sincere respect to our salvation. God hath opened his mind in the word concerning his love and good-will to sinners in Christ, and he hath also added his seal, that the charter of his grace might be more valid and authentic.

[1.] It argueth the goodness and communicativeness of God to give notice in his word, but his solicitousness and anxious care of our good, to give us visible assurance, as sacraments do, as being willing over and above to satisfy the heirs of promise, Heb. vi. 17. When any one is more than ordinarily cautious to make all sure, it is a sign his heart is upon the thing. It is a great condescension that God would dispose his grace into a covenant form; but it is a further condescension that he would add seals, which needed not on God's part, yet he added them to give us the more strong consolation. *Nudum pactum*, a naked promise is not so valid and authentic as when articles of agreement are put into a formal instrument and deed of law, and that signed and sealed, and interchangeably delivered; this breedeth more confidence and security on both sides. God's word certifieth us of his good-will; but when he is pleased to make a formal indenture of it, and to sign it and seal it, it doth breed more assurance in our minds

that his promises are made with a real intent to perform them ; and it bindeth us the more firmly to God when, besides our naked promise, there is a kind of vow and oath on our part solemnly entered into by baptism.

[2.] There is this advantage in the sacraments above the word, that they are a closer application. The word speaketh to all promiscuously, as inviting ; the sacrament to every one in particular, as obliging. By the word none are excluded from the grace offered to them upon God's terms : ' Go, preach the gospel to every creature ;' but by the sacraments every one is expressly admonished of his duty. The object revealed in the word is like the brazen serpent, which without difference was exposed to the eyes of all, that whosoever looked upon it might be healed ; but the same object offered in the sacraments is like the blood sprinkled on the door-posts, that every man might be assured that his family would be in safety. Now the reason of this difference is because things propounded in the word are like a treaty between God and us. It is an offer and a debating of matters till the parties do agree ; but sacraments are not of use till both sides have agreed upon the conditions of the covenant, in adults at least. The word conduceth to the making of the covenant, the sacraments suppose it made ; therefore the word universally propoundeth that which in the seals is particularly applied. Now those things do not affect us so much which are spoken indifferently to all as those that are particularly applied to ourselves. These stir us up to a more accurate care and endeavour to fulfil the duty incumbent upon us. The conditions are propounded in the word, Repent and believe, and I will pardon and give eternal life ; but the sacraments suppose an actual consent, that thou hast done or undertaken to do it. And then God cometh and saith, Take this as an undoubted pledge that thou shalt have what I have promised, which doth more increase our hopes, and persuade us to our duty.

[3.] By these sealing signs we are solemnly invested into a right to the things promised, put in possession ; as when we are put in possession of a bargain by formalities of law ; so, ' This is my body.' It is our solemn investiture. A believer receiveth Christ in the word : John i. 12, ' To as many as received him.' And is he not received in the Lord's supper ? his right is solemnly owned and confirmed in the way which God hath appointed. As soon as a man consents to a bargain, he hath an interest in the thing bargained for ; but that right is made more explicit when it is delivered to him by some formality of law ; as an house by a key, or a field by a turf or twig, when put in possession of what he hath bargained for. Every penitent believing sinner hath a right to Christ and pardon, but his solemn enfeoffment is by the sacraments : ' Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Christ for the remission of sins ;' ' Arise and be baptized for the washing away of thy sins,' Acts xxii. 16. God gave Abraham the land of promise by word of mouth, Gen. xiii. ; but he biddeth him go through the land, and build an altar, and offer sacrifice there ; then he was actually invested. God gave Israel a grant of Canaan, but the clusters of Eshcol were as it were the livery and seisin of it. Though the gift be sufficiently made over by the promise, yet it is further rectified, and more solemnly conveyed and delivered, by the sacraments.

[4.] This is one advantage more, that the mysteries of godliness are laid before our eyes in some visible rites, and so have a greater force to excite the mind to serious consideration. When God will condescend to give us helps against our infirmities, it must needs be by the senses, by which all knowledge cometh into the soul. Now feeling, smelling, tasting, seemeth not so fit for this, as being more gross, and conducing to the welfare of the body; but sight and hearing convey objects to the understanding, and therefore are called the senses of discipline and learning. Now the covenant is made by words which strike the ear, but the seals by visible things before our eyes: Gal. iii. 1, 'Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you.'

Use 1. Is caution to us, that we be not slight in the use of baptism and the Lord's supper, for they imply a solemn covenanting with God, that we may obtain remission of sins and eternal life, if we accept the covenant for ourselves or others. For ourselves in the Lord's supper, for others in offering our children to baptism. We must come 'with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,' Heb. x. 22; with a true heart, purposing the duties; in full assurance of faith, depending upon the promises of Christ for the privileges thereof.

As to children, we must resolve to instruct them in the duties of the covenant, repentance, faith, and new obedience: Eph. vi. 4, 'And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' This is to make way for the blessing, and to remove the obstructions: Gen. xviii. 19, 'For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.'

As to the privileges, to admire the grace of them: Gen. xvii. 3, 'Abraham fell on his face when God talked with him;' and David, 2 Sam. vii. 19, 'And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come: and is this the manner of man, O Lord God?' Waiting for the accomplishment of them in God's way, as considering how loath God is to let go his covenant children: Acts iii. 25, 26, 'Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed: unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning every one of you from his iniquities.'

Use 2. Is to put us upon self-reflection. We are all baptized in the name of Christ, but what are we the better? have we the more confidence of pardon of our sins for his sake? Voluterranus reports of Lucian, that scoffing atheist, that when he revolted from the profession of christianity, he scoffed at his baptism, saying, *Se nihil ex eo consecutum, quam quod nomen ipsi esset corruptum, ex Lucio Lucianum factum*—That he got nothing by his baptism but a syllable to his name. What do the most get but a name? It should not be so with you; you should improve your baptism.

1. For the obtaining of this benefit by a more serious work of

faith and repentance, for the washing away of sin : 1 Cor. vi. 11, ' And such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'

2. For the further sense, continuance, and increase of it, even to the rejoicing of faith : Heb. vi. 18, ' That we may have strong consolation ;' Acts viii. 39, ' And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more ; and he went on his way rejoicing.' Hath God applied to me his covenant, taken me into his family, planted me into the mystical body of Christ ; and shall not we be glad, and rejoice in his salvation ?

3. For comfort in all our afflictions, perplexities, doubts, and fears. Luther telleth us that all his answer to the devil tempting him to despair was, *Ecce ego baptizatus sum, et credo in Christum*—I am baptized into the belief of the christian faith. We must expect to be tempted. The devil tempted Christ after his baptism to question his filiation : Mat. iv. 6, ' If thou be the Son of God,' &c. So in outward troubles, Dionysia comforted Majoricus her son, an African martyr, with this, *Memento fili, te in nomine Patris, &c.*—Remember, son, that thou wast baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. So in temptations to sin : Luther speaketh of a holy virgin, who, when tempted to sin, replied, *Baptizata sum*—I am baptized. A christian hath but this one answer, I am dedicated to God to obtain pardon and life.

Use 3. To condemn—

1. The careless, who never look after the remission of sins so solemnly sealed in baptism, and those saving graces which may evidence their title thereunto : 1 Peter i. 3, ' Blessed be God, who hath begotten us to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.'

2. The profane, that live directly contrary to their baptismal engagement. To be worse than our words to men is bad enough ; but to forfeit our words to God, to list ourselves into his service, and then to turn deserters and fight against him, is grand apostasy. To be made christians by baptism, and then to live like heathens, is a sin which will be attended with a severe doom.

SERMON VII.

And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—ACTS ii. 38.

THIS chapter giveth an account of the pouring out of the Spirit, according to promise, presently after Christ's ascension. As soon as he was warm in the mediatorial throne, he was mindful of the church, and shed abroad his Spirit for the gathering and increasing thereof by the gospel. As soon as the Spirit was poured out, the apostles were enabled to speak in various languages, to the astonishment and wonder of the hearers.

This was for the glory of God, and the confirmation and authorising them as messengers. At the sight of this miracle, some wonder, others mock, as if this speaking with divers tongues had been a confused jabbering that proceeded from the fumes of wine rather than the operation of the Holy Ghost. To satisfy both, Peter declareth the effect and intent of the miracle, proving Jesus Christ, whom they had slain, to be Lord and Christ. When they heard this, many of the most obstinate among them were pricked in their hearts, and relented. A happy sermon it was that Peter preached; for it brought in thousands of souls to Christ; the first handsel of the power of the Spirit and success of the gospel. It is good to observe what course they took for ease and relief after this piercing and brokenness of heart: 'They said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?' This is the usual question of men under sound and pressing convictions. To their serious question Peter maketh a seasonable answer, of which the text is a part. It is the part of a good physician not only to discover the disease, but also to prescribe a remedy; especially should spiritual physicians be tender of broken-hearted sinners, willing and ready to give them counsel. In Peter's direction and counsel to them observe—

1. What he persuadeth them to do.

2. By what motive and argument. We have seen already what they must do. Now what they shall receive: 'And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' There are twofold gifts of the Spirit—common or saving. The common were either miraculous or ordinary. The miraculous and extraordinary were those gifts of tongues, and prophecy, and healing, which, in the primitive times, were poured out upon the church. The common are such gifts as are still vouchsafed.

Now the question is, which of those gifts are intended in the promise, the extraordinary gifts, which were so rife in those times, or the gifts of the Spirit, which are necessary to salvation.

I answer—I take the promise indefinitely, as it is propounded, and so exclude neither the one nor the other.

First, The extraordinary gifts are not wholly to be excluded, partly because these were the things which they now saw and admired in the apostles. Now saith Peter, Repent, and believe in Christ, and ye shall be made partakers of these gifts which ye so admire in us. And partly because the promise is to be interpreted by the effect. Those gifts were given to many upon their baptism: Acts iv. 30, 31, 'By stretching forth thine hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of the holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost;' Acts x. 44, 45, 'While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word; and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.' And partly because these gifts are not to be slighted, because they conduced much to the propagating and confirming of the gospel: Heb. ii. 4, 'God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.' They were wonderfully confirmed by this means in the assurance of the truth of the gospel.

Secondly, Besides this *gratia gratis data*, these free gifts, there is *gratia gratum faciens*, saving graces; these are principally intended; for—

1. Miraculous gifts would have been small comfort to them that were pricked in heart, and did so anxiously inquire after the way of salvation, to put them off with tongues, and prophecy, and gifts common to hypocrites: Mat. vii. 22, 23, ‘Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity;’ 1 Cor. xiii. 1, ‘Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.’ The apostle, who knew better how to satisfy and to heal these wounded souls, promiseth such a gift of the Holy Ghost as is joined with remission of sins.

2. All parts of Peter’s answer, both the precept and the promise, must be supposed to be suited to the question asked. Now the question asked was, ‘What shall we do to be saved?’ or freed from the misery into which we have plunged ourselves? His answer was, Repent, and seek remission by baptism in the name of Christ. If you do so, you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which shall teach you all things, and make you fit to do all things that are necessary to your salvation; you are weak and impotent, but you shall have power from the Holy Ghost. For it concerned them not only to know what they should do, but whence they should have strength to do what was required of them.

3. In the next words the apostle speaketh of a promise, and such a promise as was to them and their children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. This promise was the promise of internal grace; be it the promise in Joel, or the promise in John vii. 38, ‘He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.’ And the evangelist telleth us in the words that follow, ‘But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.’ Those rivers out of the belly imply something flowing out of the heart; a spring of living waters there, that would send forth life and influence to all their actions. Well, then, this was the promise, and a promise that did not only concern the first age, when these miraculous and extraordinary gifts were dispensed, but all the ages of the church; a promise to us and our children, and as many as the Lord our God should call. It relateth to the gracious covenant, that God will be our God, and the God of our seed; even that promise spoken of Gal. iii. 14, where the apostle saith that Christ was made a curse for us, ‘that the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.’ The blessing of church privileges was Abraham’s blessing, even ordinances accompanied with the Spirit.

4. The process of the story showeth what the gift of the Holy Ghost is: ver. 41, ‘There were added to the church about three thousand souls that day,’ who received the faith of Christ, joined themselves to the

apostles, conversed together in a wonderful, charitable manner, owned Christ boldly and comfortably in the midst of afflictions. The sum is this, that though all had not miraculous gifts, yet they had better, being enabled to believe on Christ unto righteousness, and make a bold profession of his name with their mouths, and live with his followers in a high pitch of charity.

Doct. Those that repent, and believe on Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

I shall handle this point in this method—

1. Show you in what sense we are said to receive the Spirit after repenting and believing.

2. The use and office of the Spirit so received.

3. The peculiar property and right of those that repent and believe to this gift.

I. In what sense we are said to receive the Spirit after repenting and believing; for this doubt doth presently arise in our minds, Can we repent and believe before we receive the Spirit? or can a man convert himself to God without the Holy Ghost? So much seemeth to be intimated by the apostle's method, 'Repent, and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' I answer—

1. We must distinguish between the spirit of regeneration and the spirit of adoption and perseverance; for though the spirit of regeneration be tied to no condition, but is dispensed according to the good pleasure of God, yet the spirit of adoption and perseverance in holiness is tied to conditions, and is promised to all those that, with true faith and repentance, do seek after the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Therefore this receiving of the Spirit is meant of the increase of his grace in us; namely, that the spirit of regeneration is followed with a great increase of light, comfort, and virtue. First the Holy Ghost is given to us to unite us to Christ, and afterwards to take up his abode in us as in his temples, and to dwell in us for our comfort and support. First as a Spirit of regeneration he buildeth an house for himself, then as a Spirit of adoption and perseverance he cometh to dwell in the house so built and furnished; as bees first make their cells, and then dwell in them. By repentance and faith there is a fit mansion and resting-place prepared for him, and then he resteth upon us: 1 Peter iv. 14, 'The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.' He taketh up his residence in us: not, comes upon them, but resteth on them. These two things must be carefully distinguished, the Spirit of regeneration and the Spirit of adoption, or God's converting and confirming grace. The first is given us that we may believe, the second upon believing. The first is spoken of Titus iii. 5, 6, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. The Lord out of his good pleasure, not excited by any works of ours, but merely by his grace, shed abroad the Holy Ghost in our hearts, to renew and sanctify us, that we may repent and believe, and return and obey him. This his prevailing¹ grace also is spoken of Zech. xii. 10, 'I will pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplication.' This

¹ Qu. 'prevening'?—Ed.

goeth before faith and repentance, and is the cause of it, as is there expressed.

2. There is the Spirit of adoption and perseverance, that is, after believing: Gal. iv. 6, 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' First we are sons, and then we have the spirit of sons. When we are entered as heirs to the promises, the Spirit of God doth more manifest his presence in our hearts, and put forth his gracious operations there: Eph. i. 13, 'After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.' Though none can actually believe before the Spirit of God works in them, yet upon believing, he cometh to dwell in the heart, and doth manifest that he hath taken up his abode there.

II. The use and office of the Spirit so received. It may be referred to two things—(1.) Sanctification; (2.) Consolation.

First, Sanctification. The great work of the Spirit is to be the fountain and principle of the new life of grace within us, or to maintain and keep afoot the interest of Christ in our souls: Gal. v. 25, 'If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.' He doth not only begin life, but continueth it, and still actuateth it, enabling us to all the duties thereof. There is having and walking; thence he is compared to a spring or well of living water, that is always springing forth: John iv. 14, 'The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.' Not only a draught, but a well. They that have any measure of true grace have the Spirit as a fountain to make this grace endure in itself and in its effects. Some have only a draught, a vanishing taste, others a cistern or a pond, that may be dried up; but they that have the Spirit have a well, and a well that is always fresh and springing up and flowing forth till this stream become an ocean, and mortality be swallowed up of life. It is a spring that sendeth forth streams to water the ground about it. As the heart of man sendeth forth life to every faculty and member, and a general relief to all his parts, so doth the Spirit influence all our actions. Now both parts of sanctification are promoted by the Spirit, mortification and vivification, subduing of sin and quickening us to holiness. Mortification is seen in two things—purging out the lusts, or suppressing the acts of sin.

1. In purging out the lusts of it. The Spirit is said to cleanse us, and to purify us to the obedience of the truth: 1 Peter i. 22, 'Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.' The Spirit showeth what purity of heart is pleasing to God, and worketh it in us, casting out pride, and hard-heartedness, and malice, and hypocrisy, and sensuality, and all those lusts which defile our hearts, and dispose us to walk contrary to God. It is the contrary principle that sets us a-warring and striving against the flesh.

2. Preventing and suppressing the acts of sin: Rom. viii. 13, 'If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.' That they may not break out to God's dishonour and our discomfort. We cannot do it without the Spirit, nor the Spirit without us: Gal. v. 16, 'This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' There is no possibility of getting the power of inbred corruption subdued, or the lusts of sinful flesh curbed to any saving pur-

pose, without the Spirit of God; otherwise lusts will gather strength, and range abroad without any effectual resistance. He warneth us of our danger, and checketh sin. If we would hearken to him, and observe his checks and restraints, sin would not transport us so often beyond the bounds of duty; a man cannot sin so freely as before.

[1.] He doth quicken us to holiness, increasing the internal habits: Eph. iii. 16, 'That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man.' That we may be fitted for the service of God, for which before we were indisposed to, and prepared to every good work. There is an inward man, holy and gracious qualities infused into the soul, which are so called. These are created by the Spirit of God, and supplied and cherished by him that reneweth strength upon us from day to day, that we may go from strength to strength, and be more able for God's service. Though a renewed heart be yet continued, yet, as the two olive-trees, Zech. iv. 13, dropping into the lamps, and emptying through the golden pipes the golden oil out of themselves; so doth the Spirit of Christ supply an increase of grace to our graces.

[2.] Exciteth to action, and helpeth us and aideth us therein, and inditeth good thoughts, and stirreth up holy motions and desires, besides new qualities, that we may be lively and fresh in God's service: Ezek. xxxvi. 27, 'I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them:' Phil. ii. 13, 'For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.' Especially in prayer: Rom. viii. 26, 'The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities;' goeth to the other end of the staff. Clothes do not warm the body till the body warm them, and the body cannot warm them till the soul, which is the principle of life, warm it; so there can be no fervency in prayer without the Spirit, no warmth in the heart. Oh, what a mercy is it that we have an help at hand! the Spirit of God dwelling in our hearts, to relieve us in all our necessities, and quicken us in the ways of God, which else would soon grow wearisome and uncomfortable to us.

Secondly, The Spirit serveth for consolation, to uphold our hearts in the midst of all trials and difficulties, that we may go on cheerfully in a course of holiness, waiting for the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls. The Holy Ghost, where he cometh, he cometh as a comforter, refreshing and relieving the soul, especially when we most need comfort, after great conflicts, and contrition, and brokenness of spirit. Cordials are for those that faint: 'To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones,' Isa. lvii. 15. To those that were pricked in their hearts Peter saith, 'Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' It is welcome news to poor wounded souls that they shall have the Comforter. So in deep afflictions: 1 Peter iv. 14, 'If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.' The Spirit of God dwelleth in the hearts of all his own, whether they be sufferers or not; but especially in the hearts of those that suffer, in regard of his comforting and supporting operations. Philip, the Landgrave of Hesse, in his imprisonment said, *Se divinas martyrum consolationes sensisse*—that he felt the divine comforts of the martyrs. Their sense of his presence

is greater and sweeter, and their allowance of comfort larger than what others have, or themselves formerly had. How doth the Spirit comfort? Partly with respect to the time present, and partly with respect to the time to come; to witness our present standing in a state of grace, and to assure us of life and glory to come.

1. For the present, to witness to us our adoption and pardon of sins, and acceptance with God: Rom. v. 5, 'The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us.' The love of God is shed abroad in the scriptures: 'Thy name is poured out as a precious ointment.' But it is shed abroad in our hearts, that is, by the Holy Ghost. How doth the Holy Ghost comfort? *Per modum argumenti, et per modum cause efficientis. Per modum argumenti*, by way of argumentation. The Spirit is given as a pledge of God's love; he is known by suitable gifts. Those whom God pardoneth he enricheth with grace. Some things are never given in judgment, as the Spirit. The comforts and honours of the world may be given us in wrath; it is a plain evidence. So *per modum cause efficientis*, by way of an efficient cause. He maketh us to feel the love of God in our consciences, and to be sensible of the comfort of it: Rom. xv. 13, 'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost;' Rom. viii. 16, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.' A witness is one who giveth in a testimony against a man or for a man. Every matter of worth and weight is to be transacted before and proved by two sufficient witnesses. Now here are two witnesses, our spirit and God's Spirit. Our conscience doth accuse or excuse, but that is fallible; but then there is the Spirit itself. A greater witness cannot be had than the Spirit of God, that knoweth all things, the deep things of God and our own hearts. When he assureth us that we have God's favour, and may go boldly to him as to a father, why should we doubt?

2. To assure us of life and blessedness to come. The Holy Ghost is given for this end, that we may look and long for heaven. Our hearts of themselves are taken up with trifles and childish toys. Therefore, that we may more vehemently long after and desire the actual possession of this glory, and to sweeten the bitterness of the cross, the Spirit of God doth somewhat about our future hopes as well as our present interest. It is an earnest, and as the first-fruits. An earnest: 2 Cor. i. 22, 'Who also hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit;' Eph. i. 14, 'Which is the earnest of our inheritance.' It is not only *donum*, a gift, but *pignus*, a pledge; not only *pignus*, but *arrha*, an earnest. A pledge may be taken away, but God hath given us an earnest, that is, a part to assure us of the whole. Now it is not only an earnest to show how sure, but the first-fruits to show us how good: Rom. viii. 23, 'We ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit.' Some foresight and foretastes of glory to come, some preparations. Increasing grace is begun glory: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.'

III. *Quest.* How is this peculiar to them that believe, to have the gift

of the Holy Ghost? Acts v. 32, 'And so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him;' that is, that obey the gospel, that repent and believe: John xiv. 16, 17, 'And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.' That place plainly showeth and proveth that he is peculiar to believers; and that they are incapable of such a gift in the increase of it that have not any begun presence of the Spirit in their hearts. (1.) The world doth not receive him, because they value him not. Carnal men value nothing but the visible pomps and powers of the world; they slight other things. It is so with all men in the state of nature and under the power of sin: 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 have no value for spiritual comforts and spiritual privileges. If religion would make them great in the world, they would embrace it; but these things are so little desired, because so little known. (2.) The world cannot receive them; they are not prepared. There is a capacity or receptivity necessary; they neither see him nor know him. They took no notice of his visible operations, and did as little understand with their heart as see with their eyes; but ye know him, and he dwelleth in you. His familiar presence shall be in them in a larger measure.

Use. First, Why? To quicken us to look after this gift. Let us see why and how.

1. Consider our necessity. Better never had the spirit of a man, if we have not the Spirit of God. Man is only *in fieri*, in the way to his perfection. A brute hath all things now that belong to the perfection of his nature. Man, that was made for a higher end, must have a higher guide: Job xxxii. 8, 'But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.' A brute, when he hath served out his time, hath done his work, and when he dieth, his misery and happiness dieth with him; but man's happiness or misery then beginneth.

2. If the Holy Spirit of the Lord be not in you, the evil spirit is. God and Satan divide the world. The heart of man is not a waste; it is either possessed by God or the devil. Natural men, the devil worketh in them, Eph. ii. 2. The heart of a wicked man is Satan's forge and workhouse: 1 Sam. xvi. 14, 'The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.' As soon as God is gone, the devil taketh possession.

3. You may know where your mansion, your everlasting residence will be, by the spirit that dwelleth in you. Every spirit fitteth for his own place. There are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and vessels of mercy prepared unto glory, Rom. ix. 21. Heaven is not only prepared for us, but we for heaven; and who prepareth us? 2 Cor. v. 5, 'Now he that hath wrought us for this self-same thing is God, who hath given us the earnest of the Spirit.' The house and home of good spirits is heaven, of bad is hell. Each of them labour to conduct us to the several places whence they come.

4. Thou art unable for any duty, and incapable of any comfort : 1 Cor. xii. 3, 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost ;' that is, acknowledge Jesus Christ to be the true Saviour of the world. Thou canst not so much as pray, which is the most natural duty : Rom. viii. 26, 'For we know not what we should pray for as we ought.' Instinct teacheth all creatures to look for relief of their necessities. And thou art incapable of any comfort. All the good thoughts in us, all the good desires, the good hope we have, is by the Spirit ; all that we have and shall receive, all the spiritual joys and satisfactions. The Spirit indeed did not die, suffer, satisfy, reconcile you to God, purchase grace and glory for you. You are beholden to Christ for this ; yet all the sweet comforts depending thereupon, and the application of them to our souls, is from the Spirit. Your joy is from the Holy Ghost. You can neither live nor pray, nor work, nor walk, nor hope without the Spirit.

Secondly, How ?

1. Pray for it. If you feel the want of the Spirit, and do in good earnest seek for him, you shall find him. A cold suitor shutteth the door upon himself : 'Ask, seek, knock,' Mat. vii. 7 ; Luke xi. 8, *διὰ τὴν ἀναίδειαν*, 'Because of his importunity he will rise and give him.' A father may deny a wanton child bread to play with or throw under his feet, but not a starving child, that cries, Bread, bread, to preserve his life. He may and will deny the Spirit to them that ask him in a careless fashion, or to pride himself in his gifts ; but not the hungry soul, that is pinched with a want of his grace, that crieth to him, Father, give me thy Holy Spirit. Nay, the vehemency is some evidence that thou hast him already : Isa. xlv. 3, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground : I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.'

2. The hopes to obtain him. It is *donum*, a gift : 'Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' It is *donum promissum*, a promised gift : 'I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh,' Acts ii. 17. It is *donum necessarium*, a necessary bequest. When you pray for the Spirit, you pray as children when they ask bread. Bread is not so necessary for this life, as the Spirit for the life of grace ; it is the spring and fountain of holiness. We may crave health, and wealth, and outward prosperity, and receive that answer, 'Ye know not what ye ask.' But when you go beg the Holy Spirit, you ask that which is good and necessary for you. It is such a gift as is the foundation of all the rest, and without which we can have no pledge and assurance of God's love. Compare Mat. vii. 11, with Luke xi. 13. That which is called 'good things' in one place, is called the 'Holy Spirit' in the other. Of whom do you seek ? Of God, who is your Father. *Tam pater nemo, tam pius nemo*. No one is so much a father and so good a father. In whose name do you seek it ? In Christ's, whose merit hath purchased this gift for you : Titus iii. 5, 6, 'The renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour ;' Eph. iii. 12, 'In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence by the faith of him.' By him we have a kind of right. He opened the door by his merit, and keeps it open by his intercession.

3. Wait in the word ; the Spirit is gotten and increased there : Gal.

iii. 2, 'Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' The ordinary means whereby God worketh this grace is by the hearing of the word: 2 Cor. iii. 6, 'Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life;' Acts x. 44, 'While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.' Therefore wait at wisdom's gate; lie at the pool till the waters are stirred, John v.; wait for the secret illapses of the Lord's grace; improve the Lord's supper. Sacraments are blessed means to convey the Spirit. Christ is said to return from his baptism full of the Holy Ghost, Luke iv. 1. Especially the Lord's supper: 1 Cor. xii. 13, 'For by the Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.' One Spirit is spoken of as the author, and the other as the end. It is the Spirit that is figured by water, which maketh fruitful, and wine, which maketh cheerful: Cant. i. 4, 'We will remember thy love more than wine.' Now what further degree do you get by every receiving? What further comfort and strength? Now quicken your desires after the Spirit. When Elias was about to depart, he saith to Elisha, 'What shall I do for thee?' 'Only,' saith he, 'that thy spirit may be doubled on me.' Christ, in the same night in which he was betrayed, instituted this supper. Lord, thy Holy Spirit we ask. Will God deny such a request? When Solomon asked wisdom, the thing pleased the Lord. Will a natural father give a scorpion instead of fish, or a stone instead of bread? Ask the Spirit to guide and sanctify and comfort you with the sense of his love; ask and fear not: let your faith be strong. The woman said, 'If I can but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole.' We have more reason to expect a blessing on these instituted signs than she by touching the hem of his garment. Renew your expectations. You take the cup to assure you. Christ continueth the same form in the covenant still. Observe what effect you have. In ordinary repast, how doth a man know that what he hath eaten doeth him good? Why, he findeth himself fresher, abler, stronger, and more cheerful for his work. Do you go away walking in the fear of God and the comforts of the Holy Ghost? Only take heed there be no secret sin harboured in the heart or allowed in the practice: Ps. lxxvi. 18, 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.'

Use 2. Let us see whether we have the Spirit or no. We cannot say it—

1. Because we have some good motions stirred in us. The devil stirreth up evil motions in the hearts of the godly, and maketh a foul stir in their bosoms; yet he doth not dwell there as in those that are in the carnal state. These are slaves of Satan. But the Holy Spirit is often moving in the hearts and consciences of carnal creatures, counselling, rebuking, exciting them; but all cometh to nothing: Gen. vi. 3, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.'

2. It cannot be known by common gifts, illumination, conviction, restraining grace, assistance to perform external duties even to admiration: Mat. vii. 22, 23, 'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works, and then will I profess, I

never knew you ; depart from me, ye that work iniquity ;' 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 'Though I speak with the tongue of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.' All this is nothing when he doth not take possession of your hearts as his dwelling-place and temple, 1 Cor. vi. 19.

3. It will be known by your temper and frame ; if you have a divine nature and disposition put into you : John iii. 6, 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.' A soul is raised above his natural inclination as much as a man is above a beast : 2 Peter i. 4, 'Whereby are given unto us great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature.' A man beginneth to look like God his Father, and to resemble him for heavenly wisdom, holiness, and righteousness ; he acts in another manner, as one that hath a divine spirit in him.

4. By your savour : Rom. viii. 5, 'They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.' Find therefore what thy gust is, and thou mayest know whether thy life be natural or spiritual. Dost thou value thyself by earthly enjoyments or spiritual ?

5. They are led by the Spirit : Rom. viii. 14, 'As many as are led by the Spirit are the sons of God.' Dost thou take his counsel ? Art thou ruled and determined by him which way thou shalt go ? What authority and sway doth it bear with thee ? Art thou not driven, but led ? There is spontaneity and readiness for holy things.
