

men in a dream, eating and drinking, and be quite empty when we have done, for this bread and wine will not satisfy our souls.

2. As it is plain from the sign and the thing signified, that there is a grant, or a real communication of Jesus Christ unto the souls of them that do believe, so it is evident from the nature of the exercise of faith in this ordinance; it is by eating and drinking. Can you eat and drink unless something be really communicated? You are called to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man; unless really communicated we cannot eat it nor drink it. We may have other apprehensions of these things, but our faith cannot be exercised in eating and drinking, which is a receiving of what is really exhibited and communicated. As truly, my brethren, as we do eat of this bread and drink of this cup, which is really communicated to us, so every true believer doth receive Christ, his body and blood, in all the benefits of it, that are really exhibited by God unto the soul in this ordinance: and it is a means of communicating to faith.

We come to receive a crucified Christ, come to be made partakers of the body and blood of the Lord, to have the Lord Jesus really united to our hearts more and more. The Lord open our hearts to embrace the tender, receive the exhibition, take in Jesus Christ as food, that he may be incorporated in our hearts by faith, that he may dwell in us plentifully, more and more; that we may go away refreshed by this heavenly food, this glorious feast of fat things which the Lord has made in his mount for his people. The whole of our comfort depends on our particular receiving of Christ by faith, and carrying him away by believing.

DISCOURSE XXIV.*

WE are met together again by the patience and kindness of God for the celebration of this great ordinance, and therein to shew forth the death of the Lord.

I have often spoken to you on this occasion concerning the nature of this ordinance, the expression of the love of

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God, and Christ that is in it, and the especial acts of faith and love that are required of us in this ordinance.

I have one word now somewhat of another nature, but yet such as I judge not unseasonable; and it is to this purpose, that we, who so frequently enjoy the privilege of the representation of the death of Christ unto us, ought to be very diligent in inquiring after an experience of the power of the death of Christ in us. Without this our privilege will not be to our advantage.

The power and efficacy of the death of Christ, which we now remember in a peculiar manner, is twofold.

1. Towards God, as the consummation of the sacrifice of atonement. This we have often spoke to.

2. Towards our own souls; towards the church, and that is to be an example, a precedent, a pattern of what is to be wrought in us. In this sense the power of the death of Christ is its efficacy to conformity with Christ in his death. It is to be 'crucified with Christ,' as the apostle speaks, Gal. ii. 20. Power comes forth from the death of Christ, if received by faith in a due manner, to render us conformable to him in the death of sin in us. The apostle has a great and glorious word concerning himself, 2 Cor. iv. 10. 'Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.' I acknowledge the words are usually applied to the representation of the sufferings of Christ in the sufferings of the ministers of the gospel, concerning which the apostle there discourses; but the antithesis in the following words, 'that the life of Jesus might be manifest in our body,' does certainly lead to a larger sense. Then, brethren, we may have an experience of the power of Christ in us, when we can say, we always carry about with us the dying of the Lord Jesus, to carry it in our meditation, to carry it in our conversation, to carry it in our constant universal endeavours for conformity to it; and without this we have not experience of the power of his death in us, and it will not avail us to have the nature of his death represented to us.

1. We are always to carry about the dying of Jesus Christ, in our thoughts and meditations. O that our thoughts were much fixed upon it! I verily believe that the life of faith doth answer in proportion to our thoughts about the dying of Jesus. The dying of Jesus compriseth the love from

whence he died, the death itself he died, and the end for which he died. Let us carry about us always thoughts hereof, for his sake who loved us and who died for us. Meditate more on these things.

2. In our conversation. It is not a time to reflect upon any, unless I did it upon myself. But truly, brethren, I am afraid we do not carry about and manifest to all the dying of the Lord Jesus in our conversation; to perform all things, so as it may appear and be made manifest to ourselves and others, that our hearts are set upon his dying love, that we have not such quick, such active, and vigorous affections to the world, and the things of the world, nor that fury of diligence after them and in them, as other men have, and we have had; we cannot do it; the dying of the Lord Jesus crucifies our hearts. These are hard words I know; how far from our practice! But if we live not in an endeavour after it, in all things to manifest that our hearts are full of the dying of the Lord Jesus, we have not experience of the power of it in our souls. These things depend on one another. If we dwelt more upon this subject in our meditations, we should manifest it, and carry it about and represent it more in our conversation.

3. Carry it about in a constant endeavour for conformity to Jesus Christ in all things in his death. Did Christ die, and shall sin live? Was he crucified in the world, and shall we have quick and lively affections to the world? O where is the temper and spirit of that apostle who by 'the cross of Christ was crucified to the world, and the world crucified to him?' If there be any among us that should be indulgent to the life of any one lust or corruption, that soul can have no experience of the power of the death of Christ in himself, cannot carry about him the dying of Christ. Endeavour to destroy sin that we may be like unto Christ.

I will not make particular application of these things to all the concerns of our walk, but leave it with you, with this word, begging of you, and my own heart, and of God for us all, that having these blessed representations of the death of Christ to us, we may have no rest in our spirits but when we have experience of the power of the death of Christ in us.