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THE
THEOLOGICAL WORKS
OF THE
REV. DR. PROUDFIT.

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SERIES
OF
DISCOURSES

ON THE
LEADING DOCTRINES AND DUTIES
OF
CHRISTIANITY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY ALEXANDER PROUDFIT, D. D.
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, SALEM, NEW-YORK.

THE THIRD EDITION.

VOL. I.

SALEM :

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TO THE HONORABLE

STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER.

SIR,

A NEW edition of those sermons which you have deigned to honor with your approbation is shortly to be published, and various considerations have induced me to solicit the liberty of offering them to your patronage. *Angels, who excel us in rank and intelligence, no less than in strength,* are looking into the mysteries of redeeming love; these subjects therefore cannot be deemed unworthy the attention of the most exalted among men: Yet it must be considered an additional honor to our holy religion, and an additional evidence of its reality when it is professed and patronized by those who move in the superior walks of life; who are distinguished by their birth, their fortune, their education, and those various virtues private and public which constitute the chief ornament of the man and the christian. The testimony of such tends to silence the common, although erroneous, sentiment that religion is fitted only for the vulgar, for persons of contracted understandings, of illiberal learning, and who are destined to move in the inferior situations of

life. Every friend to christianity who is acquainted with *your* character, Sir, must therefore feel peculiarly gratified in being able to reckon you among the number of her ardent advocates. Those important stations, both civil and military, to which you have been called by the suffrages of your fellow citizens, are an ample proof of their confidence at once in your integrity and talents: That sacred office in the church of the dear Redeemer, which at the request of its members you have consented to occupy, evidences that with the splendor of the statesman and soldier you are willing also to connect the more humble, although more imperishable honors of the christian. The God of nature has showered upon you in the richest profusion the blessings of his providence, and, what is a much rarer and nobler endowment, he has inspired you with a disposition to employ them for every benevolent and valuable purpose. Your hand, yielding to the impulse of a generous heart, is never wearied in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and relieving the wretched who are recommended to your sympathy. Many in different denominations, who now preach to others the unsearchable riches of Christ, are indebted to you as the in-

strument of aiding them with the means of obtaining an education ; and the funds of our seminaries both literary and theological, of our Tract and Missionary and Bible Societies have in their turn been replenished with streams from your liberality.

Although the volumes which are now respectfully offered to your patronage make no pretensions to superior excellence either of arrangement or style, yet I venture to assert that they contain those doctrines of the cross which will last for eternity ; for the excellency of which the great apostle counted all things but loss, which angels explore with even increasing delight, in which it was your distinguishing privilege to have your mind early instructed, and on which, I trust, that your hopes and my own are immovably established. No apology is offered for the simplicity of the manner in which these discourses are written. As they were designed chiefly for the frontier settlements, the more plain the language, and the more practical the matter the better they are adapted to answer the end of their publication. Indeed to attempt recommending the truths of inspiration by any outward ornaments is an equal display of ignorance and arrogance ; it is like lighting up a can-

dle to increase the radiance of the sun, or attempting to add to the majesty of the ocean by an inconsiderable rivulet or stream.

Accept, Sir, this public, unfeigned expression of my esteem for the variety and lustre of your virtues ; accept also my most ardent wishes for your welfare both temporal and spiritual. That you may be long spared as a comfort to your amiable and accomplished partner, a guide and guardian to your promising offspring, an ornament to the church and a blessing to the world, and that your evening sun may be as serene as its meridian has been illustrious is the prayer of

Your unworthy,

But sincere friend,

And humble servant,

ALEXANDER PROUDFIT.

Salem, April 28, 1815.

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SERMON I.



II. CORINTHIANS, V. 14.

For the Love of Christ constraineth us.

WE are assembled once more to commemorate the death of our Saviour, and Lord in the ordinance of the supper. This institution affords a most interesting and astonishing display of his love to our perishing world. The bread and the wine, the elements used in this ordinance, are a visible, affecting exhibition of "the Lord of glory wounded and bruised for our iniquities;" suffering, bleeding, and dying for the redemption of apostate, guilty man. The peculiar circumstances of the Son of God when he instituted the supper are eminently calculated to "commend his love to us," and to excite our gratitude to Him. He thought upon us, and ordained this feast for our entertainment not when the admiring multitude acknowledged that "man never spake like this man:" not when they led him in triumph to Jerusalem "spreading their garments in the way," and shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David." Very different were the circumstances of our Lord when he appointed this ordinance for the support and edification of his followers. It was done "the same night in which he was betrayed." The darkest scene of his hu-

miliation and suffering lay open to his view : The cup of sorrow which he had often tasted, and the last dregs of which he was doomed to exhaust stood full before him. Already he was treacherously sold by one disciple ; he knew that he was soon to be disowned, and deserted by the other disciples and that his blood must shortly flow by the hands of those whom "he came to seek and to save ;" already his "soul was troubled," and recoiling at the prospect of the horror of that wrath which was soon to overwhelm him he began to expostulate, "O my Father ! if it be possible let this cup pass from me." But amidst these circumstances of humiliation and agony, the compassionate Jesus was not unmindful of us ; he spread a table, and covered it with the richest blessings which his bounty could afford. I could not choose a subject more appropriate to the occasion of our meeting ; more adapted to affect *your* hearts and my own, or prepare us for a suitable and profitable approach to this sacred festival than the love of Jesus Christ. The great apostle tells us the effect which was produced on his own soul by contemplations on this theme, "the love of Christ constraineth us."

The word which we translate "constrain" is often used in the New-Testament, and literally signifies *to hold, to possess, or exercise dominion over ; so completely to subdue the object upon which it fastens as to control or carry it along at pleasure.* "The love of Jesus,"

says Paul, "constrains me ; it has obtained, and now possesses an unlimited dominion over my soul. While I contemplate its freedom, its riches, its sovereignty, its immensity, I am lost in amazement ; I am altogether transported and scarcely know whether I am in the body or out of the body." The Lord grant that such, through the abundant unction of the Holy One, may be the effect on our cold, lifeless hearts while I endeavour,

I. To mention some instances of the Saviour's love, and shew

II. To what this love will constrain us when powerfully felt.

1. The Saviour's love is luminously manifested by what he has already done for us. But we feel utterly at a loss when we attempt to enumerate particulars, because the powers of language must fall infinitely short of the subject. To form any suitable conceptions of the love of God our Saviour it would be necessary to comprehend the number and exquisiteness of those sorrows which he endured from his cradle to his cross, the enormity of all those crimes which he expiated ; the odiousness of those pollutions which he washes away ; the terrors of that "second death the sting" of which he extracted ; the majesty of that law the precept of which he obeyed in his life, and the penalty of which he sustained in his death ; the horrors of that hell from which he effectually redeems, and the glories of that kingdom to which he has procured a full, unalienable title. "Christ

hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. That he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate." He made, in short, a real, a full, and everlasting satisfaction for the iniquities of his chosen. This truth, so expressive of the Redeemer's love, and so replete with consolation to his followers, is taught in innumerable passages, and in language easy to be understood. "He was made of a woman; made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" "he is the end of the law;" he, as the Substitute and Sponsor of his people, obeyed and suffered until there was no more demand either for obedience, or suffering; until the injuries of the law were fully repaired, and the claims of divine justice paid to the uttermost farthing. "He through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot, and by this one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified." Christian, has thy conscience been often agitated by the recollection of past offences? Hast thou been ready with the Patriarch to cry out, "the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit." When, during these seasons of disquietude and dismay, thou art enabled to plead the atoning blood of Jesus, and to behold the Father as fully pacified through him, art thou not constrained to a-

dore his love? Dost thou not consider it as presenting "a breadth, and length, and depth and height" which surpass all comprehension?

But when in connection with the blessings which the Redeemer procured we consider the expence by which they were obtained our admiration of his love necessarily encreases. Had he purchased our pardon by a price easily furnished, or removed every obstacle in our way to glory without incurring much labor, or overcoming strong opposition: had he expiated our guilt by the blood of lambs, or he-goats; had he washed off the stain of our iniquities by the application of rivers of oil, or opened a way to the holiest of all by a single effort of his arm, his love must have appeared great, but it appeared infinitely greater, infinitely more disinterested when we reflect that our salvation was procured at the expence of so much toil, and shame, and suffering to himself. Indeed, we can conceive no species of degradation to which the Saviour did not stoop, nor any sufferings which he did not endure in obtaining the redemption of sinners. That we might enjoy "riches, durable and unsearchable riches," "he became poor" in the extreme; he passed like a stranger and sojourner on his own earth and "had not where to lay his head:" he did not possess the least portion of this world as his own, although he was really its Creator and Lord. "That he might redeem us

from the curse of the law" he endured that curse in his own body and soul because, in the estimation of law and justice, of earth and heaven, "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." That he might bring us near to the Father, and provide for us fulness of joy in his presence he was shut out for a season from the fellowship of the Father, and refused a solitary ray of his countenance to support or revive; he was treated as an alien and outcast. Believer, hast thou any assurance of Jehovah's love, and any enlivening prospect of his communion forever, remember that to obtain this a "horror of great darkness" overspread the soul of the Surety, and extorted from his lips that melancholy exclamation, "my God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" It is this circumstance which ought to enhance the blessings of salvation in thine esteem, and excite the most elevated conceptions of the Redeemer's love that the purchase of these blessings cost him a life of exquisite, unparalleled sorrow, and "brought him at last to the dust of death." This was a consideration which the apostle often mentioned for influencing his own heart, and the hearts of his hearers, and readers. "He loved me and gave himself for me. He was made sin, a sin-offering for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." This consideration will

command the admiration of the redeemed, and swell the arches of heaven with shouts of adoration, and thanksgiving through eternity. They now sing, and will be ever singing, "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen." Again, they turn their faces towards the throne, and say with loud voices, "thou art worthy—for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." What mingled emotions of wonder, and gratitude, and joy must they ever feel when they behold in the midst of the throne "a lamb as it had been slain," and then reflect that *their joys had been procured by his sorrows; their glories by his reproach; their life by his death; their crowns by his cross; their elevation to thrones by his degradation to the manger.*

2. "The love of Jesus" is manifested by what he is now doing as our advocate in heaven. After he had, by his vicarious obedience and sacrifice, laid down the full price of our redemption, constrained by the same love he ascended to the higher court to see that every blessing should be applied: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us;" and the same love to his people, the same concern for their salvation which he felt and manifested on earth, he now feels,

and manifests amidst all the splendors of the throne. Our Lord, before his departure from his apostles, fully assured them of his gracious design in going to heaven, and of the benefits which he should procure by residing there in our nature and name. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away." It was expedient for us that he should continue on earth until our redemption was finished, and sin put away by the sacrifice of himself, and afterwards it was no less expedient that he should "enter the most holy place, and there appear as our Forerunner and Advocate." "If I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I depart I will send him unto you." He sends down the Holy Ghost in his varied influences to seal, to console, to sanctify, and prepare them for the possession of that kingdom which he procured on his cross. "He possesses all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and from this fulness he imparts to his favored members more life, more light, more love, more joy, until they receive the end of their faith even their full and final salvation. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, because he ever liveth to make intercession for them." This passage is peculiarly instructive, and affords a display of the Redeemer's concern for our interests altogether incredible, had not Jehovah revealed it. It appears to intimate that the great design of his life in heaven is to inter-

cede for his church upon earth, to manage all her concerns, and perfect her salvation. Although he is there "exalted far above all heavens, angels and principalities and powers being made subject unto him," yet his eyes are constantly fastened upon his living members: "In all their afflictions he is afflicted:" Every reproach that is cast at them he feels as cast at himself: Every tear he notices as it starts in the eye, and tenderly wipes away: Every arrow that is shot at them by the archers of hell he wards off, unless necessary for the more perfect trial of their faith and patience. This "Keeper of Israel neither slumbers, nor sleeps." "Having loved his own which were in the world, and given himself an offering without spot for their reconciliation he loved them unto the end." He never ceases to watch over them; to guide and guard, and sympathize, and support while they are exposed to the sorrows or toils or perils of this wilderness.

But the Saviour's love to his people, his solicitude for their welfare is not confined to the present world.

3. It will be illustriously displayed in supporting them during their last conflict, and giving them a safe, triumphant entrance to the possession of all that glory which is reserved for them. "I go to prepare a place for you: And if I go, and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Next to the glory

of his Father, their felicity and glory in his presence were the great purposes which he contemplated in his undertaking from eternity; in all the sufferings which as their Surety he endured on earth, and in every plea which he offers up as their Advocate in heaven, and he will never rest until these purposes are fully accomplished. While he intercedes, "holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me: sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth," he adds with equal affection for them, and zeal for their welfare, "I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." Such is his prayer before the throne in their behalf, and when the moment of their translation arrives he sends forth his angels, as ministers of state, to take charge of their departing spirits, and conduct them safe to his communion. With what expressions of love will he then receive and welcome them to those mansions which he had obtained at the expence of his own blood? With what affection will he introduce them to his Father by whose hands their names had been written in the volume of life from eternity, and the pledges of whose favor they had frequently enjoyed upon earth? With what delight ineffable will he lead them along, introducing them to the various orders of elect, unsinning angels who had invisibly guarded them in this world, and ministered to their

wants? How affectionately will he then invite them to a seat with himself and all the kindred spirits before the throne, that innumerable throng of all nations, "who came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and are therefore before the throne of God?" "Behold, what manner of love, but its displays will not terminate then. He will hereafter descend from heaven; he will raise up their bodies which had slumbered for ages inactive in the grave; "he will fashion them like unto his own glorious body," and render them a fit partner for the perfect spirit in the joys of the heavenly world. "This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality." It was necessary that they should be "conformed to the Lord Jesus in the likeness of his death:" It was a part of his humiliation that he "should become obedient unto death," and it is a part of theirs in consequence of sin that the relation between soul and body must be dissolved by dying; but if they are "conformed to him in the likeness of his death they shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection." The little reproach of falling victims "to the King of terrors" will add to the triumphs of that hour when they shall rise from his dominion "more than conquerors through him that loved them:" the pain which the soul and the body experienced in being separated from each other will

only tend to augment their joy in meeting never to part any more, and all the gloom of the grave will serve only to heighten the glories of the heavenly city, and enhance their gratitude to their great Deliverer.

This is a part of the Redeemer's love, but how imperfectly can it be either known, or uttered, or conceived in the present life? It possesses a "height" which no intellect, human or angelic, can soar to conceive, and a "depth" which after the lapse of everlasting ages cannot be fully fathomed. The infinite mind alone is capable of comprehending its vast dimensions. The chief that we are now capable of knowing is that the love of Jesus is not to be known, and the chief that we can speak or write of it is that it cannot be fully described.

As the Son of God manifested his love, a love the most pure, unmerited, disinterested in engaging from eternity to become the Surety of his chosen, in emptying himself of his glory, in appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh and making his soul an offering for their sins he will display it through eternity to come in imparting to them all the blessings of his purchase, and inconceivably more than can now be imagined. "He will lead them into living fountains of water:" He will unfold to their expanded, and ever expanding capacities all the mysteries both of his providence and grace: He will shew them that as wisdom and love reigned in the council of peace when the scheme of

their recovery was devised, these attributes of Jehovah no less reigned in every dispensation towards them from their first existence until their entrance into heaven: He will shew to them that those trials at which their faith staggered, and their corruptions murmured were probably among the most wise and gracious parts of his procedure; that only "when need was they had been in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of their faith being much more precious than gold which perisheth might be found unto praise, and honor and glory" at last.

From these reflections on the love of Christ, we are led,

II. To consider its effect on the hearts of his children. "We love him because he first loved us." "The love of Christ constraineth us."

1. The love of Christ shed abroad through the heart will constrain us supremely to delight and rejoice in him. To the carnal eye there is no excellence in the Saviour of the world. "He appears without form, or comeliness, or any beauty that they should desire him." There is nothing to charm *the mighty* or *noble* in one who was known, or owned by "none of the Princes of this world;" who "as concerning the flesh" descended from an obscure virgin, and after associating with illiterate, despised fishermen died upon a *cross*. There is nothing to attract the attention of the gay

in one who was a stranger to all the pleasures of life ; who was distinguished “ as a man of sorrows ; who was acquainted with grief and hid not his face from shame and spitting.” To persons of this character the Saviour appeared while he dwelt on earth, and to such he still appears, although raised to the throne, “ as a tender plant, as a root springing out of a dry ground, despised and rejected.” But when in the light of celestial truth shining upon his heart the sinner beholds the Saviour in his mediatorial excellencies and fulness ; when he discerns him in his true character as “ a propitiation for our sins,” as “ coming to seek and save them that are lost ;” when he apprehends him by the eye of faith as a Saviour suited to his own circumstances and wants ; when he beholds him as not only “ mighty to save,” but willing “ to save to the uttermost all that come to him,” how does his soul kindle with admiration at his love ? How does it expand with gratitude, and joy ? How eagerly does he embrace this friend of sinners as his *righteousness*, his *shield*, his *glory*, and the *lifter up of his head* ? How cordially does he render love for love ? Every created object then loses its charms when contrasted with precious Christ, as the taper is obscured when the candle is lighted up, or as the stars disappear at the rising of the sun the Prince of day. The soul, having tasted that the Lord Jesus is gracious, would not part with any office, or relation, or pro-

mise belonging to him for the acquisition of a world, and there is nothing in the world with which he would not willingly part at the call of Christ. "Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord. Whom having not seen ye love, and in whom although ye see him not yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Jesus as stooping to assume our nature, and "redeem us to God by his blood;" as carrying this nature and his own blood "into the most holy place there to appear in the presence of God" is chief in the thoughts and desires of his people: He appears *fairer than the children of men*: Yea, he is in their estimation *altogether lovely*. And permit me to remark that there cannot possibly be an excess of love towards him, because the object loved possesses infinite excellencies. We may admire and esteem a created object too much, because its nature is limited, and we give that affection to a creature to which the Creator is exclusively entitled. But when Jesus, who is Jehovah, is the object of our affection, we cannot be extravagant: We cannot go to an extreme in admiring, and esteeming, and loving him. There are no bounds to his goodness and glory, and therefore there need be none to our desires after him, and our delight in him. In proportion as our knowledge of Christ and him crucified improves, the more intense and disinter-

ested our love to him necessarily becomes. "Whom have I in heaven," blessed Jesus, "but thee," will be the language of all who have seen his glory, or tasted his grace. They delight to *think* of him; to *read* of him; to *hear* of him; to *speak* of him, and to him, and for him; to *wait* on him in the sanctuary; to *receive* him as exhibited in the holy supper under the symbols of bread and wine; to *serve* him in every act of new obedience; and to *follow* him through glory and reproach; to *take* up the cross in compliance with his call and as a pledge of receiving a crown hereafter: It is their chiefest grief, their deepest humiliation that they cannot love him more ardently, and serve him more perfectly. Their most refreshing, joyous seasons are those when "his love is shed abroad through their hearts," and their most melancholy, disconsolate hours are those when "he withdraws himself and is gone:" In the lively exercise of faith they occasionally exult in the prospect of spending an eternity near to him, basking under the light of his countenance, and receiving the full communications of his love.

2. The love of Jesus when savingly felt will constrain us openly to profess and follow him. "As with the heart man believeth unto righteousness with the mouth confession will be made unto salvation." This is a consideration to which I would most earnestly solicit your attention. There are

many in the visible church who appear afraid to be considered *altogether* christians. They endeavour to play a species of loose game between Christ and the world, or to reconcile, what is absolutely irreconcilable, "the friendship of this world and the friendship of God." Conscience will not permit them to deny the gospel, to turn their back upon ordinances, and altogether renounce the christian character and hopes, yet the fear of reproach and derision, or reluctance to deny themselves some fashionable amusements prevent them from avowing openly their attachment to the Saviour's cross. Their profession is of a general nature. They attend upon those ordinances where mankind promiscuously attend, but keep back from the peculiar, distinguishing institutions of religion, those institutions by which the christian character is discriminated, and by the observance of which we are obliged to come out of the world as followers of the Lamb. But this spirit betrays a cowardice unworthy of the christian name, and the claims of such to the christian character will not be acknowledged by the great Author of our salvation. None who are ashamed to own the Saviour *now*, shall be owned by him before his Father, and the angels *hereafter*. He is exhibited in the capacity of a *Captain*, and every true soldier must rally openly beneath his standard: He is a *Prince*, and will be obeyed in all his commands by all his subjects. "Who-

soever shall confess me before men ;” who-
 soever actuated by a principle of love to
 me his Saviour, and of submission to my
 authority as his Lord makes a generous,
 open acknowledgement of me by obeying
 my commandments, and walking in mine
 ordinances, “him will I also confess before
 my Father which is in heaven.” “But
 whosoever,” be his occupation or rank what
 they may, “shall be ashamed of me, and of
 my words, before this adulterous and sin-
 ful generation, of him also shall the Son of
 man be ashamed when he comes in the glo-
 ry of his Father with the holy angels.” He
 does not more affectionately invite, “Look
 unto me and be ye saved,” than he imperi-
 ously commands, “take my yoke upon you,
 and learn of me.” He is not only a *Priest*,
 but a *Prince* upon his throne, and as he of-
 fers a righteousness with which his followers
 must be adorned he also reaches forth a
 sceptre to which they must bow. “Him
 hath God exalted with his right hand to be
 a Prince and a Saviour,” and all who cor-
 dially rejoice in the righteousness of the *Sa-
 viour* will cordially revere the majesty of
 the *Prince*, and obey every law of his house.
 When the Eunuch was converted to the
 christian faith he immediately asked water
 that he might be baptised ; he improved the
 first opportunity of expressing his love to
 the Saviour by attending to this institution
 of his worship. When Saul of Tarsus was
 brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is

in Jesus "he arose, and was baptised;" the early converts to the christian church "continued stedfast in the apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer."

3. The love of Jesus savingly shed abroad through the heart will constrain us to make any sacrifice that is requisite for holding fast our profession. It is a maxim laid down by eternal truth that "we cannot serve God and mammon," we cannot approve ourselves the faithful followers of Christ, and conform to the false opinions, or sinful practices of the world. The war between "the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent" began in Paradise, and will continue until the consummation of all things, and therefore opposition may be expected; it must be encountered by all "who live Godly in Christ Jesus." They who are enmity against God cannot be the real friends of any who bear his image, or appear openly for his cause. They will deride all religion as imposture or enthusiasm: they will vilify its professors as either deceiving or deceived, and its ministers as preaching to others doctrines not believed by themselves. But they who are sanctified by divine grace will "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," and at all hazards: They will accompany him to the *cross*, if he is calling them to it, no less than to the *crown*; "in evil report no less than in good report:" They will adhere to their profes-

sion of him, and aim at walking worthy of their profession at the hazard of feeling, or property, or reputation, or life. It is an antient and just remark that "all christians are martyrs in resolution;" they feel obligated to part with any thing rather than part with Christ; they love their character, their estates, their relations, their friends, but their love to a compassionate, bleeding Saviour is incomparably more ardent and inviolable, and rather will they resign all the former than renounce him, or be eternal outcasts from his presence. Our Lord and Master has not deceived us in this respect, and as we value our souls let us not deceive ourselves. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me cannot be my disciple;" he ought not to be reckoned among my followers now for he shall have "neither part nor lot" in their glory hereafter. Again, "if any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, yea, and his own life also he cannot be my disciple;" that is, if his love to them be not less than his love to me; if he is not ready to resist their intreaties and commands when they come in competition with my authority or are hostile to my interests "he cannot be my disciple." But every obstacle of this nature the constraining influence of Jehovah's grace will enable us easily to surmount. The christian while the love of Jesus is glowing in his heart and heaven with its glories is opening to his eye will reason

in the following manner, "the Saviour did not recoil at opposition or hardship when substituted in my room and accomplishing my redemption: For my sake he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself," he hid not his face from shame, and spitting;" he was vilified as an *enemy* to Ceasar, as a *deceiver*, a *babbler*, a *blasphemer*, nay, "he became obedient unto death even the death of the cross" for me, and shall I recoil at the prospect of a little reproach for him, and in promoting the interests of his kingdom? For my sake his soul was *troubled* through a sense of the displeasure of his Father; he bear the vengeance of Almighty God, that vengeance which like an overflowing torrent must have overwhelmed my soul forever, and shall not I in return meet the derision, or rage of feeble, mortal man; man whose breath is in his nostrils; whose friendship cannot materially profit, and whose reproach or wrath cannot materially injure me." This ardent, inextinguishable love to the Saviour; this dignified, unshaken adherence to their profession in defiance of opposition eminently appeared in the early ages of the church, and adorned the first converts to the christian faith. "They received joyfully the spoiling of their goods;" when they were obliged either to sacrifice them, or their allegiance to the Captain of their salvation: "They loved not their lives unto the death," but *rejoiced*

that they were counted worthy to suffer not only shame, but even death for his name.

4. The love of Jesus powerfully felt in the heart will constrain us disinterestedly to aim at the advancement of his glory in the earth. The christian, contemplating the condescension and grace of his Lord, will readily acknowledge, "it is little that I can do in return to him who has done so much, and suffered so much for me; who has redeemed me from *an exceeding, eternal weight of wrath* and purchased for me *an exceeding, eternal weight of glory*; yet as ability is given I desire *to spend and be spent* in his service, and for his honor: I cannot express my gratitude for his love, nor my obligation to live *to him, and for him*: I acknowledge that after all I do or can do, were my talents much more numerous than they are, and these all exclusively devoted to his service, I must remain an infinite, eternal debtor to his grace: I am admonished this day that I am not my own, but bought with a "price, all price beyond:" I behold in the bread and wine, these symbols of the body and blood of my dear Redeemer, the amazing expence at which my pardon and peace were procured: Here I behold in the most impressive, interesting light, the grace of the Lord Jesus, and his compassion to insignificant, wretched, hell-deserving sinners: I behold in this ordinance a representation of the Father's EQUAL and FELLOW becoming a man of sorrows; him who originally

was fairer than the children of men with his visage so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; the Prince of life made of no reputation, put to grief, and dying the death of the cross: I will therefore glorify him in my body and soul which are his." Is the christian possessed of wealth, he will cheerfully part with a portion of this for supplying the poor of Jesus or spreading abroad *the savour of his name*, as providence may require: That same principle of love which constrained the primitive believers to resign houses or lands, will constrain believers now to give up a share of their worldly substance when the honor or interest of their Lord may require it.

Beloved brethren, need I mention that, although this is a reasonable, it is a mournfully neglected service. Many professors are seemingly willing to do any thing for Jesus Christ, except sparing their property. They will talk eloquently, and, to human appearance, feelingly of his condescension, and for his cause.—They will pray with seeming fervor, "that his poor may be supplied, that his kingdom may come, that his gospel may be diffused, and his glory promoted;" but ask them for the means of *supplying his poor*, or *diffusing his gospel*, or *promoting his glory*, and they instantly startle and call it a *hard saying*. How inconsistent is such conduct? How unworthy the followers of him who "although he was rich

yet for our sakes became poor?" Can we, if our hearts are warm with his love, refuse a share of our earthly goods at his call; goods which his free, unmerited bounty has given us; which his blessing alone can sanctify or render comfortable, and which he may recall at his pleasure? Besides, a disposition "ready to distribute, willing to communicate," may be pronounced the most honourable because it is the most disinterested expression of our gratitude to the Redeemer's love. There is something dignified in taking our seats in his sanctuary, and in mingling our voices in his praise; in listening with solemnity to his message, and bearing our public testimony for his cause. There is something dignified in rising from our seats on this sacramental occasion, and approaching his table, and, over the symbols of his body and blood, affectionately avouching him to be our Redeemer and Lord: There is something dignified in speaking boldly for Jesus, when his divine glories are denied, or any part of his truth ignorantly or wilfully perverted; but there is something more dignified, because more disinterested, in consecrating to him a portion of our property, the worldling's idol, when we expect nothing.

Permit me to apply this doctrine by urging you all to entertain elevated views of the love of "the great God our Saviour." Imperfect, contracted thoughts of his grace may be considered as the chief source of un-

belief in sinners, and the radical cause of all that indifference in his service, that distrust and discontent under the dispensations of his providence which appear among the saints. When the sinner is brought to serious reflection ; when he has obtained some deep discovery of his guilt, and deformity, and danger, he is prone to stand aloof from the Saviour ; he is afraid to look towards him, or trust his soul on his mercy for salvation ; he considers himself infinitely unworthy the attention of a being so glorious ; too vile, too contemptible to be noticed by Him who is greater than the kings of the earth, or to receive a blessing so precious as eternal life through his name. All these reasonings of unbelief arise from want of suitable conceptions of the love of Jesus. What moved him from everlasting to offer himself as a surety for fallen man, and actually undertake in our room ? It was LOVE. What moved him to appear in the fulness of time, to veil his glory in human flesh, and stoop even to the humble condition of a servant ? It was *love*. What moved him to submit voluntarily to poverty, and reproach, and sorrows, and sufferings which remain without a parallel, without even a comparison in the annals of the world ? It was *love*. Why need he be “an hungred, when the earth was his and the fulness thereof ;” without a place to lay his head, when “he was the heir of all things, and upheld them by the word of his power ; or bear to be mock-

ed as a *blasphemer* when *zeal* for his Father's glory was *consuming* him? It was *love*. Why did he suffer himself tamely to be betrayed into the hands of sinners, when legions of angels were ready to *avenge his quarrel*, or he could, with his own uncreated, omnipotent arm, have ground to powder the hosts of his opposers? It was *love*. Why need he *steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem*, when he knew the ignominious, painful decease which he had there to accomplish, and at last bear, without "opening his mouth" by way of murmur, that shock of heaven's wrath which would have crushed a world to hell? It was *love*. Anxious, trembling sinners, has the Saviour done and endured all these things in love to your souls, and to work out your salvation, and can you now question his good will to you, or doubt his readiness to receive. Did he with his own "blood redeem you from the wrath to come," and will he doom you to sink beneath the weight of this wrath with desires after mercy in your hearts, and cries for mercy in your lips? Has he wrought out on his cross, does he bring near in his gospel "a garment of salvation," and will he refuse it to those who are willing to put it on? After he has tendered to his Father's justice the full price of your emancipation, and is now "proclaiming liberty to the captives," will he leave you to languish in everlasting chains when supplicating for help? Has he "opened a new and living way to the holiest

of all," by suffering "the vail of his flesh to be rent in twain," and will he shut out any who are anxious to enter in? Surely a part thus inconsistent, would not be acted by any prudent, reflecting man. Would a Prince, after he has prepared a banquet for his subjects, and under his own hand and seal issued his proclamation, inviting all to partake of it, exclude any that approached? Or would a physician, moved by pure pity, enter the very room where a patient lay tortured with some malignant disease, and yet refuse the healing balm, knowing that he could easily effect a cure? And will the Son of God, who came to *save sinners*, refuse salvation to any sinner who earnestly seeks it? Will he reject them because their sins *are great*, when the more numerous and aggravated our offences are the greater opportunity he has of displaying his grace in forgiving them? The more foul and desperate our diseases are the more illustriously can this physician manifest both his skill and compassion, in perfecting our cure. Aim therefore, O brethren, at cherishing a suitable persuasion of his love. Believe that "he waits to be gracious;" that he stands with out-stretched arms to receive any who apply; that "his blood cleanses from all sin," and that he is willing, infinitely willing that it be applied for cleansing you. "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." How cordially does he

entreat, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." How impressively does he this day proclaim his love not merely by the promises of his gospel; but by placing before you, in the ordinance of the supper, his very body "crucified for you?" Every *print* of the nails in his hands; every *mark* of the thorns on his head; every *drop* of that purple laver which flowed from his pierced side, is a voice speaking loudly and movingly of his love. And while your eyes see, and your ears hear, may your hearts melt with penitential sorrow, and your lips be ready to cry out, *the love of Christ constraineth us.*

The want of suitable conceptions of the Saviour's love is also the source of all that distrust in difficulty, and that discontent amidst the afflictions of life, which frequently appear among even his true followers. Those who are in poverty of outward condition, who have numerous families, and small means of supporting them, are often distracted with anxious fears. When this or the other stream, from which they have been supplied, seems to dry up, they are instantly alarmed, and ready to conclude that they, or their children must unavoidably come to want. But contemplations on the grace and all-sufficiency of Jesus, would relieve from all these anxious thoughts. Has he in infinite love furnished a robe for our souls, a robe which will shine *unfading* forever, and will he refuse a little raiment for our perishing bodies? Or "does he clothe

the lilly of the field which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven," and shall those who were ransomed with his blood, and renewed after his image, be doomed to nakedness? Does he give us *his flesh to eat*; even that living bread which came down from heaven, and from all the stores of his bounty will he not supply our bodily wants during the few days, or weeks, or months that we continue upon earth? Or does he "feed the young ravens that cry to him," and will he suffer the children of his own family to languish with hunger? Is he gone to "prepare a place for us" in his Father's presence, *an house eternal in the heavens*, and will he not afford a suitable habitation in this world? "O, ye of little faith," contemplate the love of Jesus, and no longer *doubt*. The earth is his, and the fulness thereof, and as the treasure is inexhaustible, his heart is infinitely ready to bestow. "He will give grace, and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Again, when we are shaken from our confidence, and discouraged by the trials of our christian warfare, let us reflect on what the Saviour suffered for us. While we consider him who "endured the contradiction of sinners against himself," cannot we bear a little reproach, or persecution, for *righteousness sake*? Or can we feel discontented without earthly riches, when we behold him "for our sakes becoming poor?" The Lord Jesus has consecrated the humble cottage

by choosing a *manger* for his residence, and has conferred glory on *obscurity* by living unknown to the princes of this world. Can we repine at any neglect with which, on his account, we may be treated by our former friends, or acquaintances, when we remember that "he came to his own and they received him not;" and that when his conflict was the most arduous, he was forsaken and denied by his own apostles? We may learn submission to the various trials of our life, not merely by contemplating the more exquisite, complicated sufferings of our Lord, but the patience and fortitude with which he sustained them. "When he was reviled, he reviled not again: He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

Enlarged views of the Redeemer's love will not only tend to reconcile to all the difficulties of life, but must necessarily enflame our zeal, and excite to a holy diligence, and disinterestedness in his service. Can we cherish a selfish, contracted, interested disposition, a disposition which "seeks only its own" when we behold him leaving the bosom of his Father, "emptying himself of his glory, enduring the cross, and despising the shame for us?" Can we feel reluctant in ministering to the necessities of others, particularly of his saints, when we consider that he "became the author of eternal salvation to us?" Which of us could

refuse a little raiment to a needy disciple of Jesus, when we recollect that he has furnished a robe of righteousness for us, or deny a lodging to one of his destitute followers, when we reflect that he himself is preparing a *mansion of glory* for us! Who would not love a Saviour who thus ardently and disinterestedly loved us? Who would not serve him? Who would not speak of him, and *for* him? Who would, who could spare their silver, or gold as a thank-offering to him who spared not himself in our room, and for our profit? Constrained by love to us he thought nothing too dear to resign for promoting our interests and constrained by the same principle we shall cheerfully part with all for promoting his. This holy flame kindling, and glowing in the soul will reconcile us to endure any difficulty, to encounter any danger, to discharge every duty, to glory in any reproach, to make any sacrifice of ease, or interest at his command. The more frequently we contemplate and the more fully we comprehend the love of a dying Saviour the more "patient we will become in tribulation;" the more "fervent in prayer;" the more pure and ardent in every expression of gratitude; the more cheerful in every act of obedience; the more regardless we must feel of the empty honors, and pleasures of earth, and the more desirous to participate the unmingled joys, and the full-orbed glories of the heavenly world.

With suitable conceptions of his love,

how joyfully would we this day behold this entertainment which his bounty has provided? How eagerly would we press forward to receive these memorials of his death, and pledges of his future appearing? Owing to the contraction of our hearts we often measure "his ways by our own ways," and "his thoughts by our own thoughts," and therefore view this ordinance with a degree of anxiety and dread; we approach it rather with the terror of slaves, than with the confidence and affection of sons. But did we reflect that the Lord Jesus is both the author, and substance of this banquet; that it is *a feast of love*; that he here unlocks for our enjoyment the treasures which he purchased as our Surety, and which are now deposited with him as the Trustee of the covenant; that he has not only covered this table with the richest blessings of salvation, but has provided every thing that is necessary for our comfortable approach to it; that he presents his own righteousness to adorn, and recommend us to the acceptance of the Father; that he promises his Spirit to enlighten, and enliven, and awake to suitable exercises all the graces which he has implanted; that he sends forth his ministers as stewards in his family to declare "that all things are ready;" that he is really, although invisibly, present at his own table to see that every arrangement is made for their accommodation, did we realise these things how cheerfully would we go

forward to take our seats ; how freely would we partake of *that feast of fat things*, those *wines on the lees* which his bounty has furnished ? When the table is removed at the conclusion of one entertainment, how would we long until it was spread on another occasion ? Sisters and brethren, improve these truths for your greater liberty this day in approaching the table of your Lord. Every step to it is paved with love ; the arms of his mercy are over you and underneath you ; on your right hand and on your left. No language can express the ardor of his *love* to you, and that delight with which he dispenses every necessary blessing : And remember, the greater the expense at which the purchase was made, the more pleased he is in seeing them received for your establishment and consolation.—When your faith is strengthened ; when your peace is promoted ; when your love rises up into a purer flame ; when your hopes are brightened ; when your enemies are defeated, and driven before you ; when your vows are renewed, and your souls animated to greater vigor in *the work of the Lord*, then his design in dying for you ; his design in spreading and furnishing this table for you is answered : He recollects with new pleasure all that he underwent from the cradle to the cross for your salvation. May the celestial fire come down on the heart of every intended communicant, obliging us to exclaim, *the love of Christ constraineth us.* AMEN.

SERMON II.



ISAIAH, LIII. 5.

*But he was wounded for our transgressions ;
he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and
with his stripes we are healed.*

THE redemption of man, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, is the chiefest of the ways of God. We may trace the origin of this scheme back to the depths of eternity past ; we behold the great out-lines drawn by the Co-Equal Three, when sitting "in the counsel of peace," and deliberating on the recovery of our ruined world ; we see it occupying the attention of holy men, inspired by the Holy Ghost in all the ages of time, and its effects both on the damned and the redeemed will be great beyond conception through eternity to come. Abel the second child that was born in our world offered up a sacrifice to typify Jesus Jehovah our propitiation : " Enoch, the seventh from Adam," prophesied of his coming. Abraham, the father of the faithful, saw in prophetic vision his day afar off : Prophets, who arose in succession, during a period of nearly four thousand years, foretold his sufferings and glory : Still as the fulness of the time drew near, their anxiety was more awakened, and they pointed out more min-

utely the time, and place, and circumstances of his coming. Rays of light reflected from "the Sun of righteousness" ages before he arose, enabled them to discern more clearly the mystery of his birth, and sufferings, and salvation. But perhaps no part of antient prophecy exhibits more explicitly these interesting events than the chapter from which our text is chosen. Alluding to the meanness of his birth, this inspired harbinger asserts, "he shall be like a root out of a dry ground, and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him," no external charms to captivate the carnal eye. Referring to that neglect, and those sufferings which the Saviour of the world so singularly experienced, he adds, "he is despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:" But in the verse which we have chosen as the subject of our present consideration, the prophet becomes still more pointed in his meaning, and declares, "he was wounded for *our* transgressions; he was bruised for *our* iniquities; the chastisement of *our* peace was upon him, and with his stripes *we* are healed."

The sufferings of the Son of God, the procuring cause of these sufferings, and their happy issue, are truths obviously contained in the text, and to these, in their order, your attention shall be directed.

I. The sufferings of the Son of God. These are expressed by the prophet under

a variety of language. He represents the Lord of glory as "wounded, and bruised," as bearing "chastisement, and stripes." These may be considered as comprehending all the miseries which he endured from the manger to the cross, from Bethlehem to Calvary. His whole life was a scene of humiliation, and suffering, and sorrow. In his birth he was denied a residence in the abodes of men, but was laid in a manger: Bethlehem the place of his nativity was an obscure village, and as a prophet expresses it "was small among the thousands of Judah;" He was early persecuted, and banished from his kindred, and native country through the influence of an envious, capricious prince: Although constantly employed in offices of kindness to man "he was despised and rejected;" and a stranger to those enjoyments which are requisite for the comfortable support of human nature: Although he was the Father's servant, appointed to "destroy the works of the devil," and erect a kingdom of righteousness in the world, and although he was ardently engaged in accomplishing this work, yet he was vilified as a "blasphemer" and as "casting out devils by Belzebub the prince of devils." In short he is distinguished in scripture as "a man of sorrow," intimating that the sorrows of all other men were not to be compared to his, and "acquainted with grief," as if he was really a stranger to every thing else. But the language used by the prophet

is too strong to be applied to any part of the Redeemer's sufferings yet mentioned: It was in the concluding scene of his humiliation that they were realized in all their emphasis, and may be considered as including all that he then endured from earth, and hell, and heaven.

The Saviour suffered much in his last hours from the men of earth. A full and very affecting history of this is given by those who were eye witnesses of the fact, and inspired by the Holy-Ghost to record it. Judas Iscariot introduced the tragical scene by shamefully betraying, and selling his Lord. "Lo! Judas, one of the twelve came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, and they laid hands on Jesus, and took him." This deed was rendered inconceivably more afflicting to our Lord from the very circumstance of the person by whom it was perpetrated. The betrayer was not a stranger; he was not a professed enemy, but his familiar friend, and avowed disciple; the companion of his life; a witness of that celestial truth which flowed from his mouth, and the many miracles of mercy which were wrought by his hands, one who ought therefore to have sympathized, and soothed the anguish of his soul in the hour of his calamity. This treachery of Judas was succeeded by every species of contempt, and insult, and violence on the part of the multitude into whose hands he delivered him. "Then did

they spit in his face, and buffet him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee. Then the soldiers took Jesus into the common hall, and stripped him, and put on him a purple robe, and when they had platted a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and a reed in his hand they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, hail king of the Jews." All that their individual and united malignity could devise was done to deepen his humiliation and add to the poignancy of his sufferings. Not satisfied with spitting upon him, and smiting him, "they put upon his head a crown of thorns," a mock emblem of royalty, and "a reed in his hand" the representation of affected, but empty power, and then insolently cry out, "hail, king of the Jews." To a feeling, generous mind such mockery gives a deeper gash, and occasions more exquisite pain than all the punishment which can be inflicted on the body. But the rage of the persecutors of our Lord did not terminate here. When his thirst became ardent through pain of body, and the vehemence of divine wrath which was consuming his soul they "gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall." What deep humiliation is here! He who had formed the fountains which rise in ten thousand hills and filled up the larger caverns of ocean is denied a drop of water to quench his thirst, or cool the fervor of that indignation of the

Almighty which was drinking up his spirit. His enemies inflicted the last degree of either ignominy, or torture which their malice could invent by nailing him on the cross. There they suspended him, between heaven and earth, a public spectacle of scorn and execration, "for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." It ought to be remarked that this was a mode of dying peculiar to slaves, and never inflicted on a free citizen of Rome. To add even to the infamy and bitterness of the cross they "placed him between two thieves, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. And they that passed by railed at him, wagging their heads, and saying, ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross." Little did they reflect that soon he will come, and "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him."

Earth, however, was not alone in aggravating the sufferings of the Son of God. The powers of hell combined with the men of this world in adding to the sorrows of his dying hour. Those fiends of darkness which are so malignant against the members were much more malignant against Jesus the Head: While they are throwing their fiery darts at the spiritual soldier, they levelled their heaviest artillery against him, the "Captain of our salvation:" They knew well that if he was vanquished, his followers must speedily be put to flight. But at this

hour the powers of darkness were inspired with the highest possible rage against the Son of God. They probably knew that now the decisive battle was to be fought; that the contest, whether heaven or hell should triumph, was coming to an issue, and that the victory on their part must now be secured, or they and their compeers driven from the field, and exposed to perpetual shame. With an obstinacy, and fury unexampled before "the dragon and his angels now fought." In the prospect of this assault, the Redeemer informs his disciples, "the Prince of this world cometh;" collects all his forces; he rouses them to the highest possible rage to aim at defeating me, and destroying my kingdom on earth: Again, when accused by the "chief priests, and captains of the temple," he declares, "this is your hour, and the power of darkness:" This is your hour; the time has now arrived that I must "be made perfect through sufferings," and you will be permitted to execute your hostile designs against me; and "the power of darkness," hell is now combined with earth in opposition to me, and my mediatorial kingdom. The particular temptations with which the great adversary assailed our Lord, in his last conflict, are not recorded in scripture, yet no doubt they were varied, repeated, and unusually virulent, and blasphemous in their nature; all to add to the bitterness of his sufferings, and brighten the splendors of that triumph which

he was shortly to obtain. We find that, in the wilderness, when one temptation was resisted, the devil immediately made trial of another, and we cannot but remark that they were all artful in their nature, and calculated to succeed. Our Lord having fasted forty days "afterwards hungered," the seducer then suggests that he "should command the stones to be made bread;" he tempts him not to wait for a supply in the ordinary course, but work a miracle, and thus dishonor his Father by manifesting a distrust of his providence: When our Saviour was in the wilderness alone, remote from the observation of men, the arch-deceiver offers him "the kingdoms of the world; and their glory, if he would fall down and worship him," insinuating, although with an insolence of impiety which could originate only in hell, that our Lord might easily promote his own interests, and the act by which it was done should be unnoticed and unknown. Thus, although scripture is silent, we may readily conjecture that temptation after temptation was suggested by the infernal spirits to seduce the Son of God in his last struggle, and if possible defeat his mediatorial work; dart after dart was thrown hot from hell to vanquish the Captain of our salvation, and demolish that kingdom which he came to establish. The arch-fiend would probably insinuate to the suffering Saviour that the Father was unkind to him; that it was in-

justice in the extreme to punish with such severity the innocent in place of the guilty ; that if he was pleased to pardon the sin of man, he might do it without such expense to his own, and only Son : he probably aimed at discouraging him in his undertaking, by suggesting that the mercies of Jehovah were clean gone for ever ; that the cloud which blackened over his head was never to be dispelled, nor softened by one cheering ray ; that the cup of trembling which he was appointed to drink, would never be exhausted, but his sufferings must be as endless as they were exquisite ; he thus endeavoured to seduce the Surety to turn away his lips from that cup, or shrink back from that Jordan of wrath which would infallibly overflow and overwhelm him : he no doubt painted to his view, with every circumstance of aggravation, the horrors of that cross on which his body was to be stretched, and his course on earth to be finished ; that it was a mode of dying painful to the flesh, reproachful in the extreme, fit for the off-scouring of society, and inflicted only on slaves : The deceiver would represent to our Lord that the offence of the cross could never be removed : that it must entail perpetual infamy on his own character, and remain an insurmountable barrier to the progress of his gospel among the nations ; that the very consideration of a Chief expiring ignominiously upon a tree must be disgusting to all who heard it, and discourage them from enlisting

under his standard, and therefore that he was "laboring in vain;" that he must remain a Captain without soldiers, or a Prince without subjects. Sin to a pure being is always more offensive than suffering, and without doubt these foul, blasphemous suggestions added inconceivably to the anguish of the Son of God; they were more painful to his immaculate soul, a thousand fold, than either the nails or the thorns which tortured his flesh. It was to prepare him for this conflict, and animate him to persevere that Moses and Elias had appeared on mount Tabor, speaking of that "decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem;" representing to our Saviour that however painful his sufferings, and degrading the manner of his death, the issue would be everlastingly glorious: "An angel also appeared strengthening him in the garden," and legions of angels really, although invisibly, attended on that occasion; they waited to hail with new hallelujahs every conquest which our Captain obtained over the hosts of darkness.

As in the wilderness, so in the garden our adorable Lord instantly repelled each temptation of the arch-apostate: he would reply that all this humiliation was agreeable to his own voluntary undertaking from eternity; that as he had substituted himself in the room of a chosen world, it was proper that he should bear that wrath to which they were obnoxious; that it "became Jehovah, of whom are all things, and by whom

are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make him the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings :” “ True it is,” the Surety probably replied, “ my blood must flow, but in flowing it quenches the flames of hell which were kindled by the crimes of my children, and must have consumed them forever ; I must die, but in dying I will be a conqueror, and establish a kingdom to comprehend all nations, and last forever : My body must be stretched on the cross, and it is written “ cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” but the offence of the cross must cease : it ceases to me, it must cease to my followers, when we reflect on the infinitely important consequences : thereby the law is magnified, the injuries of the divine government are repaired, and millions of the human family redeemed.” “ With the sword of the spirit,” as thus it is written, he repelled these principalities and powers ; he drove them back to their native hell ; bound them in heavier chains, and locked upon them the gates of the bottomless pit. “ He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them upon his cross.” “ Now,” the captain of our salvation victorious over the hosts of darkness exclaims in holy exultation, “ now is the judgment of this world ; now is the prince of this world cast out : I beheld satan as lightning falling from heaven.”

But all the sufferings which the Saviour

underwent from earth and hell, were not to be compared to the infinitely greater wrath of his righteous Father." "It pleased the Lord to bruise him: He hath put him to grief;" he not only took off the restraint from Judas permitting him to betray him, and from Pilate permitting him to pass sentence against him, and from the multitude, permitting them to crucify him: He not only lengthened the chain of the great dragon, permitting him to assail and exhaust all his rage upon him, but with his own hand actually "oppressed and afflicted the Son of his love." With his own breath he kindled up that flame which would have melted the rocks, consumed the mountains, and dried up the waters of ocean: With his own arm he inflicted that stroke which would have ground to powder the creation of God. It is therefore worthy of notice, that it was the displeasure of his Father which our Saviour chiefly deprecated, and of this he exclusively complained in the hour of his agony: He says nothing of those nails which tortured his hands; of the sword which pierced his side, or of the thorns with which his head was mangled: He says nothing of the infamy of that cross on which his body hung, or of the fury of all the hosts of hell which he was called to encounter. So far "he was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth" by way of complaint. But when Jehovah came forth to execute upon him the fierceness of his anger, he

then "became sorrowful, and sore amazed." His sufferings in his soul, under the infinite pressure of divine wrath, were the very soul of his sufferings. These extorted from his lips groan after groan. "My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? I have not language to express that horror of great darkness which has collected, and now envelopes me: All my bones are out of joint; my heart within me is melted like wax, consumed by the fervor of thy wrath: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me; why hast thou cast me off, and art thou so far from the words of my roaring?" Again, "being in an agony, he prayed more fervently, if it be possible let this cup pass from me." But the cup of vengeance was filled up for Jesus as the substitute of his chosen, and must be emptied to its dregs: The sword of justice was already roused from its slumbers, and must perform its office, in being bathed in his blood. "Without the shedding of his blood, there could be no remission of sins. He must be made perfect through sufferings, before he could become the author of eternal salvation."

The peculiar nature of that wrath which the Son of God endured in the garden, and upon the cross, we cannot comprehend in its full extent: As he appeared in the capacity of a Surety, sustaining our nature, substituted in our covenant-room, and bearing our iniquities, the vengeance which he suffered must have been the same in substance

which was denounced against sin, and will be inflicted upon the damned forever : Nay, it was greater inconceivably than will be executed at once upon any of the reprobate in hell, either man or angel, because he was infinite in his nature, and thus capable of sustaining an infinite shock. The fire of divine wrath came down, and consumed the human nature as the sacrifice, and “ brought him to the dust of death.”

But why did he thus suffer ? Why was the cup of sorrow filled up for the man Jesus beyond a parallel, without even a comparison ? Why did it please earth, and hell, and heaven to unite “ in putting him to grief ;” in aggravating his anguish both of body and soul ? This question is fully answered in our text, and constitutes the second part of our discourse. “ He was wounded for our transgressions ; he was bruised for our iniquities ;” The crimes of his chosen were exclusively the procuring cause of his humiliation and agonies. All the sufferings which he endured were vicarious in their nature ; they were inflicted upon him considered as the Substitute of his people ; as their Representative by an explicit, eternal contract. There was virtually an interchange of condition between him, and his ransomed : Their crimes were really transferred to him, charged to his account by the adorable Father, so that in the estimation of law and justice he was answerable for them ; and upon him in his mediatorial capacity

that wrath was executed in all its horrors to which they were exposed. This is a doctrine to which I would earnestly invite your attention, and in which I desire particularly to establish you. It is this consideration which renders our reconciliation by the Saviour's cross a scheme worthy of God, and rich with consolation to his children. To suppose that iniquity is pardoned without a real, full satisfaction, either from the sinner or Surety, is an impeachment of Jehovah's truth, which declares, "the soul that sinneth it shall die: Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them:" It is an impeachment of his government, as being neither "holy, nor just, nor good;" It exhibits the ruler of the universe as either unwise in forming the sanctions of his law, or afraid, or unable to execute these sanctions upon the offender: But the doctrine of Messiah's substitution in the room of his people; of the transfer of our transgressions to his account; of his vicarious sufferings, and satisfaction is not more important in itself, than obvious from scripture. It is the doctrine of the law, and the prophets, and the apostles. It was taught in figure by every sacrifice that bled during the former dispensation. The High Priest took a lamb for a sin-offering, acknowledged over it his own crimes, and the crimes of the people, and then slew it before the Lord. Surely the blood of a lamb, or he-goat

could not avail in themselves for expiating the guilt of man, or repairing the injuries done by his disobedience: The blood of a man could not atone for the guilt of an angel, and much less could the sacrifice of a mere animal satisfy for the transgressions of man. The virtue of these sacrifices, if they had virtue at all, was merely typical; they pointed immediately, and exclusively to the Lamb of God, the true propitiation of human guilt. When the High Priest raises his hand, confesses over the head of the victim his own sins, and those of his nation, we behold, in emblem, the Father laying on Jesus our Sponsor the iniquities of us all; when we see the sacrifice, whether lamb or he-goat, really offered up, its blood flowing, its life destroyed, we see, in type, Jesus "made sin, a sin-offering for us; suffering the just in the room of the unjust, and giving his life a ransom for many." This same doctrine is taught in that ordinance of the supper which it is our great business this day to celebrate. What is the import of that bread which is presented on the sacramental table, but to symbolize, to hold forth to view the body of the Divine Redeemer, "bruised and broken for us;" bearing our sins, and crucified on their account? "This is my body broken for you." Now, can we conceive one suffering for another, unless he is either voluntarily or involuntarily substituted in the room of the other? In common life do we ever consider one man as liable for the debts of

another man, unless he interposed and became surety for him? Again, "this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins;" flowing by that very sword of divine justice which was unsheathed against them, and must have been bathed in their blood forever. Indeed it is impossible to conceive any meaning in the ordinance of the supper, any propriety in its original institution, or any profit in the observation of it from age to age, unless it be considered as a memorial of Jesus Christ actually crucified for us; "making his soul an offering for our sins." This same doctrine which appears obvious from the worship of the Old Testament and the New, is taught in the utmost perspicuity of language, both by prophets and apostles; in language which none seemingly could misunderstand, unless they had resolved either to misrepresent or misunderstand. "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself;" and surely if not for himself, it must be for some other, and it cannot be for another without a substitution in his room. Eternal justice would not scourge a man for the crimes of an angel, much less would it scourge the only "beloved, begotten Son of God" for the iniquities of man, unless he had stepped forth as our Sponsor. Another prophet becomes explicit, and asserts, "for the transgression of my people was he stricken: Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, and the Lord

hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." This truth which had been preached so frequently, and with such evidence by prophets before the coming of Messiah, was afterwards taught by apostles who were "eye witnesses of his sufferings and glory;" who had often and intimately conversed with him before his death, and after his resurrection; who had been present on the holy mount with Moses and Elias, these representatives of the church in heaven, and heard them "speak of that decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," probably explaining with celestial eloquence its nature, its necessity, its glorious issue. With all these advantages for knowing the truth, and inspired by the infallible spirit what do apostles testify? One of them asserts, "for Christ hath once suffered for us, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Another apostle declares, "I delivered unto you first of all;" I considered it first in importance, and therefore gave it the most prominent place in all my discourses, "how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures:" Again, "he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin." Paul exhibits the Lord Jesus in his original character; abstracted from any relation to his people, "he knew no sin," knew it not experimentally; he never felt its power, he was never stained with its pollution; he was not chargeable with its guilt; he was in the highest sense of the word, "a lamb without

blemish or spot; the holy one of God, harmless, undefiled;” yet however innocent, or holy in himself, “he was made sin for us;” he was constituted such by the imputation of our guilt, and as he assumed the debt he was answerable for the payment. “I am the good shepherd:” the faithful and true witness testifies concerning himself, “the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” Their lives were forfeited to my Father’s justice, but I offer my life as a substitute for theirs, and my blood as the price of their redemption: I voluntarily die that they may live.

But it may be enquired by some, what is the consequence of this humiliation and death? Is there any benefit resulting to us from all this degradation, and suffering of another in our room? These advantages are expressed by the prophet, and are now to be illustrated. “The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.”

Among the blessings which result to man from the mediation of the Eternal Son, none is more frequently noticed than that of *peace*. The angels who announced his appearance in the world rapturously sing, “glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace*, good will toward men.” As the Saviour rode in triumph to Jerusalem, the multitude cried out in transports of gratitude and joy, “blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: *peace* in heaven, and glory in the

highest." The sin of man kindled up the flame of war between heaven and earth. The Creator then became an enemy to man, who was formerly the favorite part of his creation. As the moral Governor of the world, HE was obliged, for evincing the rectitude of his government, and maintaining order in his dominions, to manifest his displeasure against disobedience, and against man on account of it.—Thus we behold the Lord God coming forth immediately after the apostacy of our parents, and challenging with a holy jealousy, "hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" He then put on the garments of vengeance, unsheathed his glittering sword, and "drove out the man:" He turned Adam out of Paradise, as a proof that he had forfeited his confidence, and was no longer worthy of his communion. But the Lord the Son seasonably interposed; assumed the nature which had sinned; undertook to suffer all that we were liable to suffer, and negotiated a *peace*. "He hath made *peace* by the blood of his cross: He is our *peace* who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition." And as the creditor is satisfied with the debtor, when the demand is fully paid; or as the prince is reconciled to the rebel when the punishment threatened against his crime is really executed, and the majesty of the law maintained, so the Father is reconciled to us through the obedience, and blood

of his co-equal Son. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again—who also maketh intercession for us. We now joy in God through our Lord Jesus, by whom also we have received the reconciliation." The gospel which discloses this scheme of pardon is called *the gospel of peace*: The covenant which was ratified by the blood of the infinite Surety is called *the covenant of peace*: The Eternal Jesus who repaired the breach by finishing transgression, and bringing in everlasting righteousness is called *the Prince of peace*: God the Father, who has received from the substitute that satisfaction which he might have exacted from the sinner, is called *the God of peace*; and as a proof of this, "he raised from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ," just as the creditor orders the debtor to be released when the debt is discharged, and the bond is cancelled: "Mercy and truth, righteousness and *peace*," these seemingly opposite attributes of Deity, now *meet together*; they cordially embrace each other; harmonizing, concurring, co-operating in the salvation of man through the finished righteousness of Jehovah our Sponsor: Mercy is indulged in her most tender compassions towards the sinner, and truth is vindicated in the execution of all her threatnings against sin; peace walks abroad with the olive branch in her hand, and righteousness delivers up the indictment against us, having seized another

in our room. "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus: The work of this righteousness shall be *peace*, and the effect of this righteousness shall be quietness and assurance forever."

Healing is another blessing which results to us from the sufferings of Jesus the Surety.—"By his stripes we are *healed*." This is another and glorious effect frequently ascribed to the virtue of the Saviour's cross. The prophet therefore asks, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Is not the balm which grows upon Calvary a sovereign remedy for all the maladies of sin? Is not the Divine Saviour a Physician infallible in his skill, ever ready to pity those who apply, and administer to their relief; why then do men perish in their iniquities? Why do they wilfully languish, and die eternal victims to the disease of sin? And the evangelist mentions, "in the midst of the street of it, of the new Jerusalem, was there the tree of life, and the leaves of the tree were for the *healing* of the nations." Sin has converted this world into one great hospital: It has brought diseases both upon the bodies and the souls of men; diseases which are countless in their number, and desperate in their nature: Who can enumerate those frailties to which the body is liable, and those afflictions with which it is tortured in consequence of transgression? Who can paint in all its horrors

that remorse which often agitates, and harrows up the soul through a consciousness of guilt; those lusts which lurk malignantly in the heart; those disorders which infuriate the passions, and break forth in pride, envy, revenge, murders, adulteries, and those nameless abominations by which man becomes hateful to man? But for all these foul, complicated distempers the laver of the cross furnishes a sovereign antidote; from all these it effects a thorough, everlasting cure. "The chastisement" of the Son of God secured "our peace," and "his stripes our healing." "He was wounded" in the garden, and on the cross, but from his pierced side issued forth a balm for "the healing of the nations;" it *heals* the disquieted conscience by expiating that guilt which is the cause of all its disquietudes; it *heals* the polluted heart by washing away its pollutions; it *heals* the disorderly, tumultuous passions by subduing them to the obedience of faith, and restoring them to their primitive order; it *heals* the very maladies of the body by procuring for it a resurrection to immortal vigor and glory. Thus all the disorders which have seized either the bodies or the souls of men in consequence of the sin of the first Adam are removed by the interposition, and merit of the second Adam: Every wound is carefully bound up, infallibly and eternally *healed* through the virtue of the balm of Gilead, and the compassion and skill of the Physician there. The remedy

which he administers to the diseased soul was provided at an incalculable cost, even his own most precious blood, yet the importance of the effect is fully answerable to the immensity of the expense. It secures glory in the highest to God; and imparts to every sinner who improves it a "peace which passeth all understanding."

May we not infer from this doctrine the love, the unequalled, inconceivable love of Jehovah to our perishing world? We scarcely know whether to admire most the condescension of the Father in not sparing his Son, or the condescension of the Son in not sparing himself. The grace, the good will of both are displayed in a degree without any parallel, and should excite our wonder, and gratitude, and praise. The faith of Abraham in taking Isaac his son, and standing ready to offer him at the divine command has been admired in all ages. But the love of God the Father rises *infinitely, infinitely* higher. Abraham was directed to this deed by the command of his Creator, and in performing it was only performing a reasonable service. But the sacrifice of his own Son by God the Father was voluntary, unmerited, unasked, unexpected. The amazing thought could have originated only in the bosom of a God. Abraham in offering Isaac his son merely gave back a child which he had received from the divine bounty, and returned that which he was unable to retain; but in sending his Son to be

the Saviour of the world, the Father was moved by no other consideration than that of love, love the most pure, ardent, disinterested. "He loved us because he loved us." Abraham in carrying his son to the altar was delivering him to the torture of a few moments, and in performing the dreadful office could soothe the agonies of his soul by imparting words of consolation; but Jehovah delivered up Jesus to sufferings as lingering as they were painful; they commenced in his cradle and never abated until they were consummated upon his cross. *He spared him not* during all that time, but delivered him up to every species of ignominy and pain; he *delivered* him to the men of earth to be "mocked, and spit upon, and scourged;" he delivered him up to the powers of hell to be derided, and tempted, and insulted: Nay, with his own hand he "oppressed and afflicted" him. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief." *It pleased him*; all that vengeance which he executed on the Son of his love standing in our covenant room he executed *cordially*: This act was not only conformable to his purpose from eternity, but consistent with his good pleasure: That he might *spare* us he *spared not* the "child of his love, the brightness of glory:" He was perfectly willing that he should suffer in order to secure our escape, and die that we might live; "he laid upon him the iniquity of us all;" he not only charged him with

the debt, but at his hand demanded payment to the utmost farthing.

While we adore the grace of the Father in *not sparing his Son* may we not equally adore the grace of the Son in *not sparing himself*. "He loved me, and gave himself for me." Love greater, love equal, love to be compared to this has no example among men, nor is recorded in the annals of the world. That man should die for man would be considered a great expression of good will ; that one man should interpose, and undertake either to pay the debt, or suffer punishment for another who was his open, unreasonable, irreconcilable enemy would be pronounced an instance of goodness still greater ; "but God commendeth his love towards us ;" displays it in a degree which admits of no comparison, "in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Here the Sovereign leaves the throne, and suffers that punishment to which the subject was exposed. And yet notwithstanding the character of man for whom he interposed, a transgressor of his law, a rebel against his throne, daily aggravating his guilt by the wilful repetition of his crimes, how cheerfully did the Saviour undertake? How patiently did he persevere, until his work was accomplished? Isaac willingly ascended the mount, but he knew not his father's design ; he saw the wood, and the knife, but still expected that God "would provide a lamb for a burnt offering. But the whole scene of Messiah's

sufferings was open to his view ; he saw with his eyes the sword waving in the hand of justice that was shortly to be bathed in his blood, and longing for the execution of its office ; he beheld those lightnings blazing around which were soon to concentrate upon himself, and cleave him "to the dust of earth:" Yet in the awful prospect, how calm, how firm, how cheerful does he remain ? "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire," he addresses his righteous Father as the hour of his suffering approaches, "lo, I come, to do thy will ;" in making my soul an offering for sin "O, my God, I take delight." The heathen consider it as an unfavorable omen when the animal to be offered in sacrifice went reluctantly to the altar, but auspicious when it walked willingly forward. Jesus our sacrifice was not only willing for his work, but he longed for the moment of its consummation. "When the time was come that he should be received up," says the sacred historian, "he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." How passive when he was betrayed by Judas ? How silent when unjustly condemned by Pilate ? How resigned when railed at, and insulted, and "spit upon" by the mob ? As he was entering the arduous conflict, he makes provision for an aged, desolate mother ; when hanging upon the cross he dispenses pardon to a fellow-sufferer ; with his expiring breath he asks forgiveness for those whose mouths were openly vilifying him, and

whose hands were encrimsoned with his blood.—“Behold what manner of love is this!”

2. We are instructed from this doctrine in every contemplation of the Redeemer's sufferings to consider our own sins as the procuring cause. “For the transgressions of my people was he stricken.” We often stand amazed at the treachery of Judas in betraying his Master, and his accursed avarice in selling him for a few pieces of silver. We view with horror the servility of Pilate in passing sentence against him, and the cruelty of the Jews in murdering the Prince of life: When our Saviour informed his disciples that one of them should betray him, they all appeared to startle at the horrid thought: Each asks for himself, “Lord is it I? Am I a dog that I should be guilty of conduct so base? Rather let me never possess silver than obtain it by such unheard of perfidy as delivering up a master so indulgent, a friend so faithful, and a benefactor so liberal. Sooner let my hand forget her cunning, and lie inactive in the grave than be stretched out to smite or crucify the Lord of life.” But remember, and while you remember weep bitterly, that your sins brought upon the Son of God all this infamy and suffering. “He was delivered for our offences.” Our sins prepared that cross on which his body was suspended: They pointed the nails with which his hands were tortured; they formed the gall, and the worms

wood of that cup which he recoiled to drink ; they collected that horror of great darkness which enveloped his holy soul, and beneath which the "Sun of righteousness" labored under an eclipse. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." We never entertained either suitable or profitable views of the Redeemer's sufferings, unless we considered them as undergone for us, and mourned and wept while we beheld. "They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son, and they shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for a first born." Although the scene of his anguish was remote from us ; his decease was accomplished in a different country, and distant age, yet we ourselves were accessory : "The Lord laid on him," made to meet upon him as our Surety "the iniquities of us all : " All the transgressions of all the redeemed in this assembly ; of the unnumbered millions of the saved in all generations of men ; and all ages of time met in one moment on the head of the Son of God as our sacrifice : This was the mighty load beneath which "strong cries and tears were extorted to him that was able to save him ;" beneath which the blood was pressed through all the pores of his body, and he at last bowed in agony his guiltless head. And no wonder that beneath the amazing weight his soul was troubled, and all his "bones were out of joint." The weight of a single act of

rebellion sunk the "angels who excel in strength" from the heights of heaven to the depths of hell. The consciousness of having shed the blood of his brother constrained Cain to cry out, "my punishment is greater than I can bear," how great then beyond all conception the load which pressed upon the everlasting Surety, as the representative of a chosen yet hell-deserving world! Not the guilt of one transgression only lay upon him, but of millions: Not the guilt of millions of transgressions which are chargeable to one believer, but the guilt of millions of transgressions which were committed by all the millions of the redeemed which "come out of every nation, and people, and language under heaven." The demerit of all their vain, impure, malicious thoughts; of all their frivolous, unedifying, profane expressions, and their unjust, impious actions: The repeated murders of Manasseh; the impurities of Mary Magdalene; the frauds of the thief who expired on the cross; the deliberate denial of his Master by Peter, the injuries, and persecutions, and blasphemies of Paul: These lay at one moment on the Eternal Son having undertaken for us, and were exclusively the procuring cause of all the humiliation of his life, and all the bitterness of his death. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities."—Turn aside, sisters and brethren, and behold in the ordinance of the supper the symbols of that Je-

sus "whom you have pierced, and mourn for him:" And while holy sorrow fills our hearts at the affecting sight, let us mingle in the exultations of the celestial choir, "to him that loved and washed us from our sins in his own blood—to him be glory and dominion forever, amen."

3. We learn from this doctrine the aggravated guilt of those who slight the redemption of Jesus Christ; a redemption which he obtained at the expense of so much reproach, so much sorrow, so much travail of soul: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" *How shall we, how can we escape?* As all the Persons in Jehovah now concur in offering pardon and glory to the hearers of the gospel, they will all concur hereafter in executing vengeance on those who will not believe and obey. We may conceive the Father as coming forth in the hour of judgment, and thus addressing the gospel despisers; those who never actually closed with Jesus, nor gave him the love of their hearts, nor the obedience of their lives. "What could I have done more for your salvation than I have done? I had **ONE SON**, an **ONLY BEGOTTEN**, an **INFINITELY BELOVED**, mine Equal, my Fellow, and him I delivered up at the call of your necessities, and in compassion to your miseries: I did not spare him that I might spare you: I sent him from heaven to earth, where he lived an exile from his own home, a stranger to the honors and plea-

sures, and even common enjoyments of life : He was doomed to hunger and thirst, and derision, and at last died on a cross a spectacle of reproach, and execration ; I made him to be sin for you that you might be righteous through him ; I sent an angel at his nativity to announce peace on earth, and glory in the highest through his substitution and suffering : I employed men of your own nature, and of like passions with yourselves to declare that I was pacified towards you ; that notwithstanding your repeated rebellions I was willing to receive you into favor : All this concern have I manifested for your salvation, but you would not comply ; you made light of all the threatnings denounced against the unbelieving, and all the promises offered to the penitent and holy ; you went to your farms, and merchandise, and other callings, neither moved by my love in sending my Son, nor by his love in bleeding for your salvation.” We may conceive the Eternal Son as then coming forward and addressing those who misimprove his sacrifice and grace. “ What higher expressions of good will to you could I have given, or what more could I have endured for your salvation ? I came down to earth and appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, that I might satisfy in the same nature which had sinned : I was laid in a manger to shew that I was willing to stoop to any degree of humiliation for your benefit : I was denied and derided ; I was wounded and bruised ;

I endured insult after insult from earth, and temptation after temptation from hell, and above all I suffered the wrath of my Father to save you from that wrath: Ask the trees of the wilderness where I was an hungered forty days; ask the lonely mountain where I spent night after night, offering up strong cries with tears for your future welfare; ask the garden of Gethsemane where my soul was troubled, and the sweat of my body was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground; ask the tree of Calvary where I hung a public monument of ignominy and pain; ask the angels who ministered to me in the wilderness, and aimed at strengthening me in the garden; ask either, or all these what I have suffered, or rather what I have not suffered to redeem you from the damnation of hell: But how have you requited me? I gave you my word, but so ardent were you in pursuing the pleasures or profits of the world, that you rarely read it: I offered you a robe of righteousness which might have adorned you forever, but you neglected to put it on: I was exalted to give repentance, and remission of sin, but you scarcely offered up a cold petition either for repentance or remission: I set before you an open door, and invited you to enter, but you postponed, and postponed, and postponed, until the season of mercy was past, and the door was shut: I sent my servants, and am witness of all their prayers, their tears, their watchings, their fastings,

their studious days, their restless nights through anxiety for your salvation: I beheld all their earnestness in private, and in the pulpit, beseeching you to return, and live; and not only my wounds and bruises, but their secret sighs, their groans, their emaciated bodies, their neglected estates bear testimony against you: And now, seeing you would not hear, and obey, *depart from me, ye cursed*: **CURSE** them, ye ministers of the sanctuary who wept at their stupidity, who travailed as in birth for their conversion, who refused to be comforted, because they refused to be reconciled: **CURSE** them, ye apostles of the Lamb who were witnesses of all the groans which I uttered; of all the insult to which I submitted; of all the agonies which I endured as their Substitute and Saviour: **CURSE** them, ye holy martyrs who loved not your lives unto death, but constrained by my love followed me to prisons, and flames: **CURSE** them, ye prophets of my God, who spake of me ages before I was born, testifying beforehand my sufferings and glory: **CURSE** them, ye angels of light, who sang praises at my birth, who strengthened me in the garden until my decease was accomplished, who attended and aided at my resurrection, who waited to rejoice at the repentance of these sinners: **CURSE** them, O righteous Father, for all their contempt of thy love in sending thy Son, and to thine authority which commanded them to receive him for salvation: **Ye**

cherubim with your flaming swords shut against them the gates of glory, and drive them down to hell as the despised of Jehō-vah: Let my body, which still retains the marks of its crucifixion, stand forth an eternal monument of my compassions towards them, and my justice in now executing vengeance upon them." *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honor be not thou united,* "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Is not the thought overwhelming that a male, or a female who now hears me should sink the prisoner of never ending despair? O brethren, "turn ye to the strong holds while you are prisoners of hope." In virtue of the *chastisement* of Jesus, you may yet have *peace*, and through his *stripes* you may yet be *healed*.—He is once more laying his crucified body before you, and tries to stop you in your career to destruction: He continues affectionately to intreat, "hearken unto me, ye stout hearted, that are far from righteousness: Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die, O foolish people, and unwise?" As an ambassador of Jesus Christ I ask you with all affection, will you halt a moment longer between two opinions? Is it prudent to hesitate about a question which concerns not your health merely, not your fortune, not your character, not your temporal ease, but your souls, your precious souls, and that forever? Draw near, ye

drunkards of Salem, ye who waste your time, and strength, and property over the intoxicating cups : Draw near, ye lovers of mammon ; ye whose hearts go after your covetousness, and seek your gain from every quarter : Draw near, ye children of pleasure, who spend your evenings in mirth, sporting around in the jovial dance : Draw near, ye careless youth, ye who live without prayer, without Jesus, and without God, who perhaps never spent an hour in self-examination, or in dedicating yourselves to Him who created you, and will soon judge you : Draw near, ye Sabbath-breakers, who waste that holy day in idleness, in amusements, or in pursuing your common employments : Draw near, all such, and survey with me for a few moments the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary : Behold the Lord of glory wounded, and bruised : See the cold sweat like great drops of blood rising upon his body, through the insupportable pressure of his Father's wrath : Hear the piercing groans which escaped involuntarily from his lips, " my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? O my strength, haste thee to help me ; I am poured out like water ; all my bones are out of joint, and thou hast brought me to the dust of death ? " Contemplate these scenes, and then say, can you drink of that cup which even the Son of God recoiled to drink ? Can you sustain that shock of almighty vengeance which was too much for him to sustain ; before the fierceness of

which "the vail of the temple parted in twain, the rocks were rent, the graves were opened," and before which the "elements hereafter shall melt with fervent heat, and the world and the things that are therein shall be dissolved?" I ask you again, can you endure the wrath which the Saviour endured? Because, as the Lord liveth, if you will not improve that sacrifice which he offered up, you yourselves must be the sacrifice: That fire of divine indignation which came down and consumed him, must come down and consume you, and that eternally: The threatenng denounced against disobedience must be inflicted: Justice must be satisfied either by the Surety for the sinner, or by the sinner himself: If God spared not his own Son bearing our iniquities, will he spare you chargeable with all the guilt of your nature, and life? "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" **AMEN.**

SERMON III.

JOHN VI. 54.

*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,
hath eternal life.*

THE natural world, through the condescension of God, is in general an emblem of the spiritual world. Almost every object that strikes the bodily senses, and every action in common life is employed to represent some object in grace, and some exercise in which we engage as christians. The air in which we constantly breathe; which is the great mean of support to animal life, is an emblem of the Holy Ghost by whose influences we “live, and breathe, and move” as christians; by whose free, omnipotent agency our spiritual life is commenced, and carried on, and consummated. The natural sun which rises in the east; which dissipates the shadows of the night, and enlightens and cheers the natural world, is employed as a representation of the Sun of righteousness; of Jesus-Jehovah who is the light of the spiritual world; who as the prophet of his church dispels that darkness which envelopes the souls of his children, and diffuses over them the light of immortal life. The rain, as it drops from the clouds, and the dew, as it gently distils, refreshing the earth, causing the grass to bloom in the fields, and the corn to

flourish in the vallies, represent to us the graces of the spirit which renew the face of the church ; under whose genial showers the hearts of his people “ revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, and diffuse their scent like the trees of Lebanon.” The bread which we ordinarily eat, which is the great mean of nourishment and support to our bodies, is made a representation of that more costly, and better provision which is prepared for our immortal souls. Thus the Redeemer declares, “ I am that bread of life ;” again, “ I am the living bread which came down from heaven ;” but as bread must be eaten in order to nourish the body, or as wine must be drank before it either exhilarates or strengthens, so without a reception of the Son of God, without an application of him to our spiritual wants, there is no life, or consolation, or support to the soul. “ Except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of man ye have no life in you : But whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.”

On the last sacramental occasion your attention was directed to the Lamb of God as the propitiation of our sins : I aimed at stirring up your souls to a suitable frame for approaching that holy communion by exhibiting the sufferings of the Surety, the procuring cause of those sufferings, and the infinitely blessed effects. “ He was wounded for our transgressions ; he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our

peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." Through the tender mercies of God we have again assembled for the interesting design of "shewing forth our Lord's death until he comes;" *until he comes* at the consummation of all things, when we shall see him without a veil, without the intervention of any ordinance. As a mean of preparing your minds for a comfortable interview with him at his table *now*, as an earnest of beholding him with joy when he shall come *hereafter* in the glory of his Father, I would invite your attention to the words which have been read. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life."

Here we have the provision furnished, "the flesh and blood" of the Son of God; the exercise required on our part, "eating and drinking;" and "eternal life," as the exalted privilege of all who receive it by faith. "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."

The provision offered for our entertainment is "the flesh and blood" of Christ Jesus the Lord. The *flesh* expresses the Son of God as really incarnate, as actually clothed with our nature, and the *blood* expresses him as suffering and satisfying in that nature. This is that object to which the faith of the redeemed ought uniformly to be directed, and upon which it ought uniformly to fasten. It was necessary that Jesus, the Mediator, should have a body; that,

as he undertook for the redemption of man, he should be clothed with the nature of man, and thus be capable of obeying, and satisfying in the very nature which had sinned. We therefore hear him, in the character of surety, thus addressing his righteous Father, "a body hast thou prepared," fitted, or finished for me ; "as thou didst in thine adorable sovereignty, in thine ineffable compassions to guilty man, appoint me to this mediatorial work, thou hast appointed a body for me in which I should accomplish this work ; thou didst thus qualify me for magnifying the precept of thy law, and enduring its penalty in the self same nature which had trampled on its authority." It was no imaginary body in which our Lord Jesus Christ was revealed ; it was not merely a human form such as that in which angels occasionally appeared, or in which the Saviour himself was manifested under the former dispensation, but it was real manhood ; human nature in the strictest sense of the word. He who was essentially the "Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace," was pronounced a "Child born," "a Son given ;" he was born as others are born ; he grew up as others grow, and was liable to infirmities in common with others, sin only excepted. "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us : " he was "flesh," assuming the nature of man, and "dwelt among us," manifesting wants in common with other men, hunger and thirst. "Even as the children,"

those whom he appeared to redeem, “were made partakers of flesh and blood, Christ also himself likewise took part of the same.” As it was requisite that the Saviour should be man, the reality of his manhood is clearly evinced both by prophets and apostles.

The Redeemer’s *blood* which is particularly mentioned implies those sufferings which he endured, and that satisfaction which he effected in the human nature. His whole mediatorial work as to the purchase is very frequently expressed by the effusion of his blood.—“He hath made peace by the blood of his cross:” “We are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” The just made perfect, who now surround the throne above, are represented as having “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb:” While they strike their golden harps they also exclaim with rapturous hearts, and elevated voices, “to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood—to him be glory for ever.” It is not without an important design that the satisfaction offered by Jesus to his Father’s justice is generally expressed by the shedding of his blood. It was not sufficient that HE, as the surety of his people, should be clothed with their nature, but he must actually suffer in that nature, and suffer *even unto death*. “He must be slain,” before he could “redeem us to God:”

“The vail of his flesh must be rent in twain” before the way could be opened for the introduction “of many sons to glory.” It was by his actually “pouring out his soul unto death,” or “coming by water and blood,” that ancient prophecy was fulfilled, and the correspondence between the type and the antitype, the sacrifices of the former dispensation and the great new testament sacrifice was maintained. It was not enough, under the economy of Moses, that a lamb was provided “for burnt offering:” It was not enough that the iniquities of the people were acknowledged over the head of the lamb chosen for sacrifice: It was not enough that the devoted animal was laid upon the altar, and there bound: It must be *slain*; its blood must really *flow* by the hand of the High Priest who made the typical atonement. “Into the second tabernacle went the High Priest alone once every year, not without blood which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.” “Almost all things,” the apostle mentions in another place, “almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission.” Therefore that Jesus Jehovah, who is the substance, might answer to these shadows, or that he as the antitype might correspond with these types, he must *bleed* and *die*.

But there is another, and more important, reason why it was necessary that he became “*obedient unto death.*” *Death* was the curse

to which those whom he represented were doomed by transgression. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," was the divine denunciation: "The wages of sin is death." Therefore Jesus, being substituted in the room of his chosen, was liable to this *death*, and could not make a proper satisfaction, a complete reconciliation for sin without dying. "Wherefore Jesus also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate:" "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood, and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." He hath thus redeemed us from the curse by literally bearing that curse; he hath abolished that *death* to which we were exposed in consequence of transgression, and hath made a real, perfect, and everlasting expiation for sin. Through the merit of the sacrifice of his cross we may behold the honors of the broken law fully vindicated, the flames of wrath which had been kindled by our crimes eternally extinguished, and that sword of divine vengeance which had been unsheathed against us laid aside for ever. We may freely approach to, and "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation."

Such is the import of the "flesh and the blood" of the Son of God: They express him as having really assumed our nature, and suffered and satisfied in that nature.

This is the affecting, interesting object uniformly presented to our view in the glass of the gospel, and which in visible symbols is shortly to be exhibited for our enjoyment in the ordinance of the supper. Here we see really accomplished what the seraphic Isaiah foresaw in prophetic vision, Jehovah the Surety not only incarnate, "but wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "The cup of blessing which we bless," in this holy institution, "is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

But how shall we become interested in that sacrifice which he offered up? And how may we receive nourishment to our own souls from this spiritual provision which is exhibited for our enjoyment? We must "eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, or we have no life in us;" we have no interest in him or in the blessings of his salvation.

To explain the import of this exercise, was our second proposition, and now claims our consideration.

I need not remark to you that the expressions "eating and drinking" are altogether figurative. We are chiefly conversant with material objects, and our ideas are chiefly received through the medium of the bodily senses. In accommodation, therefore, to our usual habits, and in order the more

deeply to impress divine truth upon the mind, the exercises of the soul in *receiving* Christ Jesus the Lord, in *resting* upon him, and *rejoicing* in him are usually expressed by the actions of the body in the common offices of life. Faith is sometimes represented as consisting in *hearing* the voice of the Son of God; again, in *looking* to him the author, and finisher of our salvation; again, it is expressed by *coming* to him for life; by *receiving* him, and *putting* him on, as we receive a present from the hand of another reaching it forth, or as we put on a garment to warm and adorn the body. In the present instance the grace of faith is expressed by *eating* his flesh and *drinking* his blood. This expression stripped of its figure, and understood in a manner agreeable to the nature and operations of the soul implies,

1. A full persuasion that the infinite Surety did suffer, and make reconciliation for iniquity. This belief necessarily precedes our *coming* to Jesus, or *receiving* his finished salvation. The soul, in closing with the Eternal Son for righteousness, and sanctification, and support, in committing to him its most important concerns, both for time and eternity, acts rationally and deliberately: It is brought to a reliance on the sacrifice, and atonement of Jesus Christ from a full, mature conviction upon evidence both of the reality and all-sufficiency of his atonement; that he really "suffered the just for the unjust," and in thus suffering made an end

of sin, and introduced everlasting righteousness. The believer yields the assent of his understanding to these important realities relative to the Saviour of the world upon evidence, as much as he believes that any other person ever lived, or that any event ever occurred; only in this instance he possesses evidence infinitely higher in its nature, the testimony of the Living God. Ignorance is no more the mother of faith than of devotion. We are not called to trust the Son of God with concerns infinitely and everlastingly important, without ample proof that he is both able and inclined to manage these concerns. This is the great reason why his coming in the flesh, and his dying in that flesh formed the substance of each divine revelation since the foundation of the world, and are taught by testimony plain, and repeated. His sufferings, and "the glory that should follow" were foretold by a succession of prophets during a period of four thousand years. His nativity was announced by an angel the very day that it took place, and the *glory* that should result to God, and the *peace*, the *good will* to man were celebrated in anthems of praise by "a multitude of the heavenly host." The miracles which he wrought in healing the diseased, in giving sight to the blind, and life to the dead in order to prove the truth of his mission, were attested not merely by his followers, but by those who were the open enemies of his person and cause. The facts

of his death and resurrection were witnessed by the women who stood afar off; by the scribes and pharisees who sealed the stone over his entombed body; by the angel who afterwards rolled away the stone, and declared his resurrection to the disciples, and by Himself who appeared to his apostles again and again, shewing the very marks which his body had received upon the cross. The infinite, eternal sufficiency of his sacrifice for the remission of sin is taught not only by the Holy Ghost, speaking through evangelists and apostles, but by that "perfect peace," that "strong consolation" which millions of his followers have experienced in all circumstances and ages. "These are written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;" and without a persuasion of the reality of these things there can be no saving acceptance of him. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is;" and he who comes to the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life must believe that he is; that he appeared in the character of a Saviour, and that he possesses every qualification which is requisite for the important work.

2. This exercise implies an acquiescence in the scheme of reconciliation through that sacrifice which he offered up. We may be convinced of the truth of a particular fact, and yet not impressed with its excellence, or expediency. It is possible for the sinner to entertain a conviction in his own mind of all that is revealed with respect to the

Son of God, and yet never consent to be saved wholly by his merits: Nay, although his understanding cannot resist the evidence by which these facts are attested, yet the pride of his heart often rises up in enmity against this scheme of salvation. He revolts at the thought of being exclusively indebted to the mercy of another for pardon and glory. He cannot consent to the self-denying doctrine of coming as a *fool* that he may be instructed; of stripping off his own righteousness as unprofitable, not only unprofitable, but odious, that he may be adorned with a borrowed robe: He recoils at the mortifying sentiment that he must be reckoned "poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked" in himself; that he can have no account made, no credit given for all his prayers and tears; for all his alms to the poor, his hospitality to the stranger, the civility of his carriage, the equity of his dealings with others, or the services which he has rendered to society: He cannot consider it as proper that with all these recommendations he must be placed on a level with adulterers, with drunkards, with the profane, with the dishonest, and like them "be justified freely by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." It is this circumstance which renders the scheme of reconciliation by the Saviour's cross offensive and unpopular: This is an obstacle over which many stumble and fall to their eternal perdition. They choose rather to run the hazard of being

damned for ever than to be indebted to free, sovereign grace for all their salvation. But while the sinner in truly closing with Jesus Christ believes that "there is redemption in his blood," he really acquiesces in the expediency of this plan of redemption. He fully consents to it not only as *sure* but as well *ordered* in all things ; as admirably suited to advance the majesty of the divine government, the glory of all the divine perfections, and answerable to the circumstances of fallen man. He is willing not only to be *saved*, but to be saved precisely according to that scheme which the wisdom, and love, and sovereignty of Jehovah have prescribed. No man perhaps ranked higher in his own estimation than the apostle Paul, previous to his conversion, and probably to no man was the Saviour's cross more offensive. "I was alive without the law once," he informs us : Again, "as touching the righteousness of the law, I was blameless ;" and he declares on another occasion, "I thought that I must do many things against Jesus of Nazareth ;" he not only disdained the doctrine of depending on another for a justifying righteousness, but openly embarked in opposition to the Saviour and his cause : Yet listen to his language when in the light of the Holy Ghost he had obtained more correct views of himself, of the law, and of Jesus, the formerly despised Nazarene. "When the commandment came ;" when it was brought home to my conscience and understanding

in its purity, and spirituality, and rigour, “sin revived;” crimes without number, which I had long forgotten, came fresh to my recollection, and those, which were once considered trifling, excusable levities, now appeared damning in their nature, “sin thus revived and I died;” all expectations of pardon by my own performances instantly and utterly expired; I was brought to the feet of sovereign mercy, and was made willing to become nothing that the Saviour might be all: “I now count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord;” *For the excellency of this knowledge;* that plan, which once appeared uninteresting, unsuitable, and even odious, now appears transcendently excellent and glorious; calculated to reflect honor on each divine Person, and perfection, and infinitely adapted to us. How cordially does he acquiesce in this scheme for his own salvation? How affectionately, and earnestly does he recommend it to perishing fellow sinners? “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”

3. This exercise implies an appropriation of Jesus and him crucified for our salvation in particular. Although this act of the soul is nearly related to the former, yet it may be considered a distinct operation. When there is an acquiescence in the scheme of reconciliation through the Saviour’s blood as excellent and eligible, there

must be an acceptance of him for all our salvation ; yet the latter may be considered a higher exercise of faith than the former : The awakened sinner, in contemplating by faith *the Lamb of God*, is not satisfied with knowing that he “ takes away the sins of the world ;” but he improves him for taking away his own sins in particular : He is not contented with knowing that “ there is a fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness ;” but he desires to bathe in that fountain, both for pardon and purification : He is not satisfied with a speculative belief that the incarnate Jehovah is a “ refuge from the storm, a covert from the tempest ;” but he aims at entering this refuge, at hiding beneath this covert, and there taking shelter from the storm of divine wrath : It is not enough for the awakened sinner to know that the righteousness of Jesus is “ an everlasting righteousness ;” that it is a robe which secures the acceptance of all who apply it ; but he desires to be actually clothed with this robe as his own security and glory : He does not rest satisfied with hearing that the Redeemer’s “ flesh is meat indeed ;” that his “ blood is drink indeed ;” that they impart substantial nourishment and strength to the soul ; but he really “ eats this flesh, and drinks this blood ;” he particularly appropriates the precious Saviour in his person, and relations, and righteousness, and fulness, for spiritual life, and strength and consolation. While Jesus in the depth of

his condescension, and the ardor of his love, is expostulating, "if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: look unto me, and be ye saved;" the believing soul is disposed to reply, "thou art fairer than the children of men; yea, the perfection of beauty: to whom would I go, or to whom shall I go, but unto thee? thou hast the words of eternal life; thou art all my salvation, and all my desire." It is this application of the general promise, and of Jesus in the promise, which gives us an actual interest in him, and his salvation. A present, although intended for me, is not strictly my own while it remains in the hand of the person offering it; there is an act of receiving on my part requisite for giving me the full possession of the gift: A shelter, however large, however impenetrable to every storm, or however easy of access, will not secure my body either from the scorching sun, or chilling blasts, or falling rains, unless I actually enter it: Provision, although furnished in the richest abundance, although perfectly suited to my wants, and spread freely before me, will neither satisfy my hunger, nor strengthen me for the duties of life, unless I particularly receive it. As these remarks are obviously true in things natural, they are no less obviously true in things spiritual. And therefore with special emphasis the Redeemer declares, "except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you;" and in language no

less explicit he adds, "whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."

Life, "eternal life" is the privilege immediately and unalienably secured by all who thus appropriate the adorable Jesus. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." To aim at illustrating this privilege was our next proposition, and remains now to be considered. Want of time prevents me from explaining at any considerable length the import of this life. Nay, it can not be either explained, or understood in the ten thousandth part of its import, while we remain upon earth: It will be the joy of eternity to participate its blessings, and it will be the work of eternity to celebrate the praises of him who died, and made the purchase. This "everlasting life" does not imply merely an immortal existence, a duration that shall never end. A perpetuity of being is secured to the damned, no less than to the redeemed, and this continuation of existence will constitute their misery. "They shall go away into everlasting punishment." Eternal life implies not only a never ending duration, but comprehends all that can minister to the happiness of that existence; whatever can render life either desirable, or comfortable. This privilege may be considered,

1. As it commences in grace here. The christian receives the first fruits of "eternal life," in the remission of all his sins, in the

justification of his person, and his adoption into the family of Jesus, when he is recognised as a son of God, and an heir of future glory. He occasionally receives the earnest, the precious pledge of his inheritance, when he experiences the assurance of his Father's love, peace of conscience through the atoning blood of his loving Saviour, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Sometimes, when the believer approaches his God in the devotions of the closet; or when he meditates on the promises as the charter of his heavenly hope; or while he contemplates his dear Redeemer in his sacrifice, and righteousness, and salvation; or when he is receiving at his table the emblems of his body and blood; foretastes of the pleasures of heaven are communicated to his soul; "The Spirit of God and of glory rests upon him," and seals upon him the assurance of his adoption into the family of Jesus. He is then emboldened to cry, "Abba, Father," and in the language of confidence to exclaim "behold, God is my salvation: I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength, and my song; he also is become my salvation." They are greatly mistaken who suppose that the blessings of redemption are reserved exclusively for the heavenly world.—The earnest of glory are ordinarily imparted to the souls of the ransomed before their translation from earth. "He that hath the Son hath life." The Lord Jesus not only gives the title to this life,

by imputing to them his own righteousness, but occasionally gives them the partial possession of this life. Streams from that river which issues out of the throne, watering the paradise above, are communicated to refresh the spiritual Israelite while he passes through the wilderness of this world. Jehovah their Substitute not only reconciles them "by the body of his flesh through death," but sanctifies them through his grace; he seals them by his Spirit; he "fills them with all joy and peace in believing, that they may abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Ghost."—The father indeed does not give to his son the full possession of the estate while he continues under age; yet he supports him out of the estate; he affords him every assurance of his good will, of his solicitude for his welfare, and gives occasionally animating pledges, that, when his minority is past, he shall be placed in the actual enjoyment of the expected inheritance. Thus affectionately does the Everlasting Father deal with the objects of his adopting love: He not only brings them into his family, but he feels towards them, and deals with them as sons and daughters; he sympathizes with them in their complicated sorrows; he supplies their wants from his covenant fulness; he forgives their frequent and shameful imperfections towards himself and each other; he cheers them from time to time with intimations of his love, and thus grants them the first fruits of that full salva-

on earth! And yet all, and unutterably more than can be conceived is the "gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And yet all, christian, is thine, unalienably, eternally thine; it is thine in reversion now, and soon; very soon shall be thine in full fruition.

How has the Son of God manifested his condescension in stooping to assume a body; "in becoming a little lower than the angels;" by veiling the glories of his God-head in the frailties of the manhood! "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." What opposites are here united! Natures essentially and infinitely different are intimately and inseparably joined in the same Person. In Immanuel, God with us, we behold the Creator, and yet a creature; the Mighty God, and yet a man "without comeliness," subject to meanness, and every sinless infirmity of human nature, "bearing our griefs, and carrying our sorrows." Contracted, benighted must be that understanding which discovers nothing interesting, nothing astonishing here. More impenetrable than the flinty rock must be that heart which is not melted, nor moved by such a display of condescension and love. Obdurate indeed must be that spirit which is not softened into contrition; which is not constrained to holy obedience while it contemplates Jehovah's "Equal" emptied of his glory, and appearing "without beauty or form."

“Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh.”

But our wonder rises when we reflect that the Son of God, thus clothed with our nature, should suffer and die. He not only appeared “in the likeness of sinful flesh,” but had his “visage so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” This is another interesting mystery presented to our contemplation in the text. While “the flesh of Jesus is meat indeed, his blood is represented as drink indeed.” He is not only revealed as a “lamb without spot,” but this lamb “must be slain” in order to redeem us to God. “Him hath the Father set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood for the remission of sins.” How precious must be that soul for which a price so great has been laid down ! How amazing must be the evil of sin which nothing but the sacrifice of a God could expiate ! How awfully stern and inexorable must be that justice which “spared not the Son of the highest” when substituted in the room of sinners ! How great, how perfect that salvation which has an “author, and finisher” so illustrious as Jesus Jehovah, the brightness of the divine glory ? Surely then while we adore that mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, we ought to adore the more affecting, incomprehensible mystery, God suffering for us, and “purchasing the church with his own blood.” The more these doc-

trines are admired, the more admirable and inconceivable they must appear and be acknowledged. To overlook them argues carelessness; to contemplate them with indifference manifests stupidity; to misimprove them is folly; to deride them argues a hardihood of impiety surpassing that of "devils, who believe and tremble;" but by devoutly prying into them, and admiring them we become assimilated to angels who "stoop down to search them," and then wonder and adore. "These things the angels desire to look into." But our obligation to enquire into them is much greater than theirs, because our interest in them is much deeper. Angels look into them merely as spectators, but we are a party concerned. We see the "Eternal Son" assuming not the "nature of angels, but of the seed of Abraham; as really our "kinsman, our brother, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh:" We see him giving his "flesh to be meat indeed," and his blood flowing at the hand of justice as the price of our reconciliation and peace. Turn aside then, and behold *this great sight* the Prince of life manifested in the flesh, and "brought to the dust of death as a propitiation for our sins:" And while you behold in this glass the glory of the Lord, may "you be changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

2. We learn from this doctrine what is a suitable exercise for communicants when surrounding the table of their Lord, it is "to

eat his flesh, and drink his blood" as there exhibited under the emblems of bread and wine. Useless will be the reception of the sign, without a reception of the things signified. A little bread seen, handled, tasted, or a little wine received can be of no avail for diffusing peace over the conscience, or ministèring consolation to the heart. They have no more efficacy in themselves for promoting the faith, or love, or hopes, or joys of the receiver, than the waters of Abana, or Pharpar for washing off the leprosy of Naaman, or the blood of a lamb for expiating the guilt of an offender: We must look through the sign, if we expect the ordinance of the supper to be "a feast of fat things" to our souls. We should perform this service in remembrance of the suffering Jesus; we should aim at entertaining an affectionate, tender recollection that he had a body; that "this body was really broken," and that it was broken for our sins as the procuring cause, and that thus suffering he obtained eternal redemption for us. "They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him." In receiving the bread and wine the believing communicant may be secretly saying, "these symbols which I now handle and taste are representations of that dear Lord who loved me, and gave himself for me, and with these outward signs I cordially accept a bleeding Saviour as the Father's gift, and freely and fully offering himself: I embrace him this moment as my own Redeem-

er, and portion : I accept of him for wisdom, for righteousness, for sanctification, for redemption ; for atoning all my transgressions with his precious blood ; for healing all my diseases with the balm of his cross ; for supplying all my wants from the infinite treasures of his grace ; for covering all my nakedness, all my deformity with the spotless, everlasting robe of his own righteousness : I rejoice in him as my portion not only this day, but forever ; as mine through all the years of my continuance on earth, and through the ever revolving ages of eternity : I would depend on him from this moment to enlighten me in darkness ; to shield me in danger ; to cheer and support me in distress ; to strengthen me in weakness ; to be my glory in reproach and my life and confidence in death. This Saviour in all that he is, and all that he promises to bestow both in grace and glory, is my beloved, and my friend." A crucified Jesus is really the provision presented on a sacramental table ; this is " the feast of fat things, of wines on the lees " there exhibited, and the great business of faith is freely to receive these blessings which are so freely tendered. And justly we may ask in holy amazement, will *this man give us his flesh to eat ?* Will he replenish a table at an expence so great as the offering of his own body and blood ? It was mentioned as the privilege and glory of Israel in their journeyings through the wilderness " that they did eat angels' food," but a more costly feast is

furnished for us, and as the entertainment is more costly than theirs, it is better; "they did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead," but Jesus declares, "I am the bread of life; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood shall live for ever."

3. Since God has promised us "eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," let us rely on his wisdom, and mercy, for all that concerns us, until we are brought to the possession of that life. Christians often appear to act as if they thought there was merit in doubting and fearing. If the Spirit departs from them for a season, and they lose that assurance and enlargement which they once enjoyed; or if their heavenly Father frowns upon them in his providence, bereaving them of property or friends, they are overwhelmed with perplexity and sorrow; they feel no confidence in looking to God for support in their adversity, or for the renewed manifestations of his love; they hang their harps upon the willow; their lips are sealed up in silence, no longer uttering praises to God; and they are ready to conclude that "his mercies have failed for evermore." This distrust, and these disquietudes which are the consequence of such distrust, are equally displeasing, and dishonoring to God; they call in question not only his word, but his oath, which he has given "for our strong consolation, that he will not turn away from us to do us good;" that he will *never*, in no emergence, upon

no occasion, "leave us, nor forsake us." There is not indeed any assurance that he will not chastise ; but there is an assurance that every chastisement is inflicted in love, and shall issue in our profit : There is not any promise to his children of constant prosperity in the world ; this would no more suit us in this state of imperfection, than perpetual sunshine or summer would suit the natural world ; but there is a promise that he will not "contend for ever, neither be always wroth : " There is no security for the constant, unclouded light of our Father's countenance in this militant state ; Abraham did not experience it ; Jacob did not experience it ; David did not experience it ; Paul did not experience it ; his own Son did not experience it ; but there is ample security that all these shadows shall recede, that every cloud shall be scattered in the hour of death, when the "day-star" of glory shall rise upon us never to be obscured more. Learn then, believers in Jesus Christ, to entertain becoming views of the dispensation of mercy, and walk towards God, towards the world, towards yourselves, in a manner worthy of your privileges and prospects.— "This is the promise that Jehovah hath promised us, eternal life," and he who promised it has given us the pledge, and he who has given us the pledge will give you in due season the full possession ; and remember that he will give you whatever is requisite, until you are brought to the actual enjoy-

ment of this inheritance. I would repeat the remark, that the children of the kingdom often dishonor God, and forfeit their own comfort, by distrusting his promises and providences respecting them while they are to continue in this world.—They can rely on his mercy for all blessedness and glory hereafter, but they are anxious about his dealings to them here: Through this want of faith on the faithfulness and all-sufficiency of God, they who are poor in this world are anxious about themselves and their families; and the rich “do not communicate” for purposes of piety and charity, but eagerly treasure up for their children after them. The conduct of both classes is in this respect highly inconsistent and dishonorable. As gratitude to a Benefactor so liberal, should excite the rich to nobler conduct; a reliance on the bounty and loving kindness of their Father, might relieve the poor from those anxious, disquieting fears. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” how shall he not protect, and feed, and clothe, and comfort? how shall he not justify us *freely*, sanctify us fully, and save us eternally? “Rejoice therefore in the Lord, ye righteous;” trust him for every temporal, no less than every spiritual blessing, until ye “receive the end of your faith, eternal life.” Will a prudent, affectionate father, after providing a large estate for his

son, suffer him to perish through want, before he brings him to the enjoyment? or will a gracious God after laying up for you a crown, a kingdom, an inheritance, refuse whatever is best for you until you are brought to possess them? "Be not henceforth faithless, but believing." The more unshaken your reliance is on his promise and covenant; the more frequently that you come to him for the supply of each want, for redressing every grievance, for wiping away every tear; he will be the more glorified, and your peace the more promoted.

4. We are taught from this doctrine who they are, who may rationally expect *eternal life*, they, and they only who believe in Jesus Christ; or, as it is expressed in our text, "who eat his flesh, and drink his blood." There is no salvation in any other, and there is no other means of making this salvation our own, but by coming to Jesus Christ, actually receiving him in his covenant fulness, and all-perfect righteousness. "He that hath the Son hath life." As I desire to be found faithful in the ministry which is committed to my trust: As I wish to give in my account at last with joy, and not with grief, I now admonish you, it is not every one that crieth, Lord, Lord; it is not every baptized person; not every one who frequents the sanctuary, who yields a general assent to the doctrines delivered, who is "almost persuaded to be a christian," or

puts on the mask of a profession, that shall enter the kingdom of heaven ; but he in whom Jesus is formed “the hope of glory.” Separated from him, you can no more bring forth the fruits of repentance, of love, of joy, of hope, without which no man shall see the Lord, than a branch can blossom without union to the vine, or a stream can flow with living water unconnected with any fountain. “To as many as received him, to them, and to no others, gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Would the ark, however ingeniously planned, or carefully executed, have saved from the devouring flood Noah and his family, without entering it? No. Would the city of refuge, although devised by infinite wisdom as a means of safety for the nation of Israel, have saved a single Israelite from the avenger of blood, unless he had fled within its walls? No. Will bread nourish ; will water purify ; will medicine heal ; will a robe warm, unless they are applied ? No. Neither will Jesus the Saviour profit for the salvation of any, but those who particularly receive him. He is “the ark of the covenant,” appointed for the protection of sinners ; but the flood of wrath will overtake, and overflow the man who does not actually enter it. He is a “city of refuge,” devised by infinite wisdom and mercy for the security of perishing men ; but the sword of the destroyer will be bathed, and that forever in the blood of him

who does not hasten to this city, and really enter within its walls: Jesus is "the bread of life," but he is nourishment to those only who eat or receive him by faith: His cross yields a sovereign balm for the disease of sin, but it gives health only to such as apply it to their diseases. "Examine yourselves, therefore, whether you be in the faith; prove your ownelves; know ye not your ownelves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobates." Thou "Spirit of God, and of glory!" pour light upon every heart, enabling us to know in our day the things that belong to our peace: glorify the Saviour by receiving of his, and shewing them savingly unto us, "that being justified by his grace we may become heirs according to the hopes of **ETERNAL LIFE**;" and to Thee, with the coequal Son, and Ever-Blessed Father, Jehovah in covenant, be ascribed dominion and thanksgiving, world without end.—**AMEN.**

SERMON IV.

ACTS III. 21.

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things.

THERE were various degrees in the humiliation of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. It began in his incarnation, it continued throughout the whole course of his life, and was consummated upon his cross. "That decease which he accomplished at Jerusalem" was the last, and lowest step of his degradation; and in that he "finished," as to its purchase, "the work that was given him to do." "He became obedient unto death," and in dying "made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness," for the justification of his chosen. By one step of his humiliation, the Mediator, as man, was fitted for another, and lower step of humiliation. "Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and being made perfect became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." As in the humiliation of the Son of God *formerly*, so in his exaltation *afterwards*, there was a variety of steps, and by the reception of one degree of mediatorial glory, he was prepared for the reception of another and higher degree.

His exaltation as Mediator properly commenced in his resurrection from the dead, by which "he was manifested to be the Son of God," and to have accomplished our redemption: it was promoted by his ascension on high, in the very nature which had suffered, and amidst a retinue of angels, who came down to hail their ascending Lord, and to add to the grandeur of the scene. His exaltation was farther advanced by his promotion to the right hand of the Father, and will be consummated in his coming at last to judge the world. The various grades of the exaltation of our Lord are either expressed or implied, in the verse to which your attention is now invited.

It is a profitable exercise occasionally to contemplate the Saviour in his humbled, sorrowful state; we have thereby affecting views of the evil of sin, which brought upon "the Holy One of God" sufferings thus continued and complicated; of the Father's justice, which would not "spare iniquity even in his own Son" when substituted in our room; and we are taught our infinite obligation to love him, who so amazingly "loved us, and gave himself an offering for us." It is equally pleasing and profitable to trace the Saviour through all the steps of his exaltation; to see him rising from the tomb as the Conqueror of death, as the Prince of life, as the immediate pattern, and infallible pledge of our own resurrection; to follow him by the eye of faith as he ascends on

high, perfectly and everlastingly relieved from all the reproach, and sorrow, and toil of his humbled state ; going to his Father to receive a full reward for his former degradation, and to realize in his ascension a security for our own ascension. We shall not always be imprisoned in this world, which has become dreary and loathsome by transgression, but shall in our own order "be caught up to meet the Lord in the air," and enter that kingdom which he has entered in our name. It is animating to our faith and hopes occasionally to contemplate the co-equal Son and Surety introduced to the right hand of the Father, to plead our cause, and prepare mansions for us. In this event we have the highest conceivable evidence that his vicarious sacrifice was received as a full discharge of our debt ; that the "hand writing which stood against us" at the upper court is cancelled and destroyed, and that therefore there is no condemnation to any who are in Christ Jesus.

As the resurrection and ascension of our Lord are events deeply interesting to our faith, they are established by evidence various, and satisfactory. The former was attested by Mary, who saw and conversed with him ; by the eleven, who met with him on different occasions, and on whom he perceptibly breathed, communicating the Holy Ghost ; by Thomas, who saw in his hand the print of the nails which he received upon the cross, and who thrust his finger into

the hole which was made in his side by the soldier's spear; and in addition to all this testimony, our Lord was seen at once by more than five hundred brethren. The fact of his ascension is attested by evidence no less satisfactory; by the apostles who retired with him to Bethany, and beheld him as he rose, until the cloud received him out of their sight; by a concert of angels, who spoke to them out of the cloud, and assured them that this same Jesus shall hereafter descend, in like manner as they now saw him ascending; by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; and by the martyr Stephen, who saw him standing on the right hand of God. The precise manner in which the Redeemer ascended is not for us to know, because it is not revealed. This event is recorded by the Evangelists in three different places, and it is worthy of remark that three different words are used to express the same event. Sometimes he is said to *ascend* or *go up*, as if he arose by his own power; sometimes to be *carried*, or borne up, as if he was raised by the power of another; and again as *received up*, probably to express that affection with which he was received by his Father, and by angels, and all the inhabitants of heaven. As in the resurrection, so in the ascension of the Son as Mediator, there was a co-operation of each divine Person in Jehovah, to shew their concurrence in the redemption of sinners, and their full satisfaction with that

righteousness which the Surety had introduced: "Him the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things."

In the more full illustration of this subject we shall enquire,

I. Why it was proper or necessary that the heavens should receive the risen Saviour? and,

II. In what capacity he still continues as thus received?

1. It was proper or requisite that the heavens should receive him on account of God the Father. It was the Eternal Father who, vindicating the honors of the divine government, demanded satisfaction for sin; who laid upon, or imputed to the Son interposing for man the iniquities of his chosen; who inflicted upon him the unnumbered sufferings which he endured both in his life, and at his death. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief: He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." Judas in betraying him; Pilate in condemning him; the multitude in crucifying him, although they indulged their own rage, were really fulfilling Jehovah's absolute, everlasting purpose. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." The Father in the scheme of our redemption acted the part of Creditor, and therefore exacted from his Son our Surety the payment of the debt. By him

the command was uttered in all its terrors and glory, "awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and smite the man that is my fellow." When the sufferings of Jesus became most exquisite and insupportable, it was into the bosom of his Father that he poured his complaint, and from him he solicited sympathy and support. "O my God, if it is possible let this cup pass from me: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me: Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." As the Father had thus humbled his Son and put him to grief; had executed upon him the penalty denounced against sin, it was proper that with his own hand he should raise and reward him; that he should glorify the Son who had so eminently glorified him. The exaltation of Jesus to his mediatorial honors is therefore ascribed to the immediate interposition of his Father; it is pronounced the Father's act no less than his humiliation and death. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour:" Again, "because he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—to the glory of God the Father;" in doing homage to the Son they do homage to the Father, by whose authority he was raised from the grave, and exalted to the highest heavens. We hear the Son in the prospect of his sufferings thus appealing

to his righteous Father "thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; thou wilt not doom me forever to languish in the grave, the invisible state, in whose dreary dominions the dead cannot praise thee; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption: but when the debt is paid the prison shall be opened, and I, the Surety, discharged; thou wilt shew me the path of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."

2. It was proper or requisite that the heavens should receive the Son of God, on his own account. This world was to the Saviour a scene of the deepest degradation, and of grief almost uninterrupted, and unmingled. "He was despised," and not only despised, but "rejected of men," yea, of that very nation whose chief glory it was to give him birth according to the flesh. This life of neglect, and toil, and sorrow was concluded by a mode of dying unparalleled for infamy and pain.—To all this humiliation he submitted, and all these sufferings he endured, with a design the most important and gracious; to repair the injuries of the divine government; to reflect glory on the divine perfections, and save sinners from the wrath to come. It was therefore proper, that the Saviour should be translated from this world of trial and grief, and crowned with honor and glory; that, as he had by his obedience and blood, brought honor to his Father, and redeemed from destruction millions of men, he should

be raised to the midst of the throne, and dignified with all power in heaven and earth. This reward was solemnly promised to Messiah in the contract from eternity, and we hear him explicitly demanding it, shortly before he concluded his mediatorial work in this world. "I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself; with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." He possessed an essential glory as God; this was veiled while he tabernacled on earth: he had also a glory as Mediator, but this he was to receive upon his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to the higher sanctuary. And this honor which Messiah solemnly demanded, was immediately and fully imparted to him. "The Father loveth the Son;" is pleased with him, as the medium through which his own glory is displayed, and revolting men restored to their primitive obedience and bliss: "he loveth the Son, and hath committed all things into his hands;" he hath exalted him to the highest throne; placed upon his head a crown of pure gold; given into his hand the sceptre of universal dominion, and issued forth the royal command, "that every knee should bow to him," whether of saint, or angel, or archangel. It was therefore highly proper that the heavens should receive the Saviour on his own account; that the cross should be succeeded by the crown; the sorrows of

earth by those full joys which are at Jehovah's right hand ; and the reproach of men, and the temptations of devils by the acclamation of all the celestial hosts.

3. It was proper and requisite that the heavens should receive him, on account of holy angels. The Son as Mediator had been often *seen of angels* in the progress of his humiliation upon earth ; they had seen him when he lay in Bethlehem an obscure, helpless infant ; they had seen him in Egypt, banished from his kindred and country, through the persecution of an unnatural tyrant ; they had seen him in the wilderness when he was doomed to solitude and hunger, and tempted of devils ; they had seen and attempted to strengthen him in the garden " when his soul was troubled, and the sweat of his body was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground ;" they had seen him mocked and mangled on mount Calvary, and at last consigned a lifeless corpse to the dominion of the dead. On all these occasions had angels seen the suffering Jesus, and marvelled and trembled while they beheld. It was therefore proper that joy should fill their hearts, and melody return to their harps by seeing him in all the splendors of the heavenly state. How promptly therefore did angels roll away the stone from the sepulchre, and aid, so far as their aid would be accepted, at his resurrection from the dead ! How patiently did they wait and announce to Peter, and Mary, and others, the joyous message, " the Lord

is risen indeed ;” come see the place where *our* Lord and *your* Saviour lay ! With what ecstasy ineffable did they attend at his ascension, and aim at reconciling the bereaved apostles to the painful separation ! “ And while the disciples looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men,” two angels in the fashion of men, “ stood by them in shining apparel ; which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” How readily did they fling open the everlasting gates, and welcome the King of glory to his native heaven ! With what transports of joy do they now behold him fully possessed of each mediatorial honor ! With what enraptured hearts and harmonious voice do they pour forth that anthem of praise, “ salvation to him that sitteth upon the throne, even unto the Lamb, forever and ever !” How ardently do they long for that hour when the heavens shall again reveal him in the character of Judge, for the full redemption of his church, and the dismay and destruction of his enemies !

4. It was proper and requisite that the heavens should receive Messiah, on account of the saved from among men. Millions of our family had been admitted to glory during the four thousand years which preceded the incarnation of our Lord, and all through the merit of that sacrifice which he was ex-

pected to offer up. Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Elijah, Isaiah, and many others had believed on him ; had prophesied of his coming ; had presented sacrifices to typify his great atoning sacrifice : and these anxiously waited to see him clothed with their own nature ; they longed to see in the heavenly world that very Jesus who had suffered and died for them, and procured for them a weight of glory exceeding and eternal ; they longed for that hour when he who had been crucified for them should be glorified with them, and they might see for themselves the Lamb who was slain, and had redeemed them to God by his own blood. Saints under the former dispensation waited with anxious expectation for his manifestation in the flesh ; they frequently and fervently prayed, " O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion," and when Messiah did appear " many were looking for redemption in Israel." And if the church militant longed for his manifestation on earth, much more would the church triumphant long for his manifestation in heaven, because they had known better by experience the preciousness of his salvation ; their powers were more enlarged to comprehend the depth of his condescension in stooping to be veiled with our nature, and make his soul an offering for our sins ; they were thus capable of realizing more fully their obligations to redeeming love. To shew that interest which the spirits before the throne felt in the transactions of the Son of God,

Moses and Elias came down beforehand, and “spake of that decease which should be accomplished at Jerusalem;” and many of the saints arose at his resurrection; the glorified spirits probably descended and occupied their bodies that they might see with their own eyes as the heavens received him: and no doubt all “the spirits of the just made perfect” dropped their crowns, started from their thrones, and welcomed their Saviour and King as he entered the gates of glory.

It is impossible to conceive that increase of light which burst forth upon the heavenly world, or those transports of joy which were felt by its blessed inhabitants on that occasion. . . “The light of the sun then became seven-fold, as the light of seven days.” More enlarged, elevating views of all the prophecies and promises which had been uttered from the foundation of the world were instantly acquired, and loftier ascriptions of praise were poured forth to Him who had inspired them. When their Redeemer and Prince *first* appeared to his disciples after his resurrection from the dead, it is recorded, “then were they glad:” Their faith was confirmed, their love was inflamed, and their hopes brightened when they saw his risen, and glorified body; when they heard from his mouth words of consolation, and felt with their hands the marks of the spear and the nails: What extacy of joy then must have transported the redeemed above, when the Saviour, covered with still greater glo-

ry, stood in the midst of them; when they saw in person that Lamb whom they had formerly seen in type, by whose blood they had been ransomed from the pit of hell, by whose righteousness, as their title, they were admitted to heaven, and from whose meditation they looked forward for an eternity of glory and joy!

5. It was also proper that the heavens should receive the Son as Mediator, for the enlargement of his church, and the edification of his children upon earth. It was the absolute arrangement of Jehovah "that the Spirit should not be given;" that he should not be communicated in great abundance until "Jesus was glorified;" and therefore, although it was painful to the disciples that their Master, who had been endeared by long and familiar intercourse, by the miracles which he wrought, by the doctrines which he preached, by the many offices of love which he had shewn them, by the spotless example which he had exhibited, should altogether depart, yet it was intended that this very departure should eminently issue in their profit. The loss which they should sustain by the want of his bodily presence, by not seeing him, and conversing with him as formerly, should be more than compensated by that increase of light and joy which they should experience by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in consequence of his ascension. "Nevertheless," he assures them in the prospect of his removal, "I tell you

the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come ; but if I depart I will send him unto you. When he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." How literally was this promise accomplished by our Lord after he ascended to the upper court, and how obviously did its accomplishment issue in the establishment and glory of his church ! " The joy of Jehovah was their strength. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with new tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance ; praising God, and having favour with all the people." How rapidly were the limits of the true Zion enlarged, and the number of her spiritual worshippers increased ! " The word of the Lord grew and multiplied." The wall of partition which had long stood between the Jew and the Gentile tottered and fell : The truth, which had been imprisoned for ages in the region of Palestine, burst forth, and shed its radiance to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south. The Saviour being *lifted up*, being extended *first* on the cross, and exalted *afterwards* to the throne, *drew all men unto him*, some of all nations to the knowledge of his truth. On one occasion three thousand, and on another occasion five thousand were savingly called by his grace, and " they continued stedfastly in

the apostles, doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.”

6. It was proper, it was requisite that the heaven should receive Messiah the Son, for the greater mortification, and the more complete destruction of his irreconcilable enemies. *Because he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him—that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, not only of things in heaven, and things in earth, but of things under the earth; the damned in the regions below really, although reluctantly, bow in homage to the Son as thus ascended. The powers of earth and hell had long insulted and afflicted this anointed of the Lord; particularly towards the conclusion of his work they combined in mocking him, in spitting upon him, in nailing him to the cross, and in deriding him while he was there suspended. As the Saviour had been lately in the hands of his adversaries vilified, tortured, condemned, crucified, it was proper that he should be received into the heavens, and there revealed in all his glory to their mortification and dismay. And no doubt “while the disciples looked stedfastly towards heaven,” as their Redeemer was carried up, the fiends of darkness turned away ashamed and confounded at the sight: How must their bosoms have been transported with alternate emotions of envy and remorse, when they beheld him who was lately hanging on a tree, now promoted to the throne,*

and wearing a crown: Him who had been lately surrounded by his enemies, now encircled; admired, adored by angels, and all the hosts of heaven. Although the Son of God "spoiled principalities and powers" in his conflict upon the cross, yet the victory was not so publicly announced, nor the triumph so formally celebrated until he ascended on high. Then "the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Why do the heathen rage," Jehovah challenges in holy indignation, "and the people imagine a vain thing? He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision: then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The Redeemer still appears in heaven "as a lamb that had been slain," and each recollection that his adversaries have of their agency in crucifying him must add to their perplexity and horror. But how inconceivably must their amazement and confusion increase, when the heavens shall hereafter reveal this same Jesus for the judgment of the universe! When he, whom they once saw in the garden suffering and bleeding, shall appear on his great white throne; when he, whom they *unjustly* condemned, shall pass the sentence of *just* condemnation upon themselves; when that hand, to which in de-

rision they had offered a *reed*, shall wave the sceptre of dominion over collected worlds ; when he, of whom in the madness of their rage they exclaimed, “ crucify him, crucify him,” shall announce the irreversible decree, *depart from me, ye cursed*. “ Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.”

It therefore appears proper on many accounts that the heavens should receive our blessed Lord after the work of redemption was accomplished ; that as he had been delivered, and slain to procure a kingdom, he should rise as a Conqueror, and triumphantly take possession of that kingdom. “ God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises ; sing praises unto our King, sing praises.” O brethren, he is this moment enthroned in the highest heavens, let us willingly offer him the highest throne in our hearts and affections : Every knee in the church above bends before him in cheerful submission, and every tongue is loud in adoration, let us cordially mingle in the general concert, and say, “ salvation to our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb :” Let us long for more-enlarged powers to comprehend his glory, and a nobler eloquence to speak forth his praise.

We proceed to enquire,

II. In what relation he still remains to his

church, although the heavens have received him ?

1. He continues the general bond of union, and the great medium of communion and enjoyment among the inhabitants of the heavenly world. In him, as the common center, saint in the upper sanctuary is united and endeared to saint ; saints are united and endeared to the various orders of angels ; and all to Jehovah who is the fountain of perfection, and glory, and bliss. It is the opinion of some distinguished divines that holy angels were established in their *first estate* by an interposition of the Son in his mediatorial capacity, and that they are called *elect*, as chosen in him and confirmed by his mediation ; that although they were not redeemed by him yet they were established by him in holiness and happiness, and thus placed beyond the necessity of a redemption. This sentiment is rendered probable from the consideration that these exalted spirits appear so deeply concerned for the success of his mediatorial work. They attended the Son and exulted at his birth, they waited upon him during his last sufferings, at his resurrection, at his ascension, and are "all ministering spirits" to his living members upon earth. But whether "these principalities and powers in heavenly places" were confirmed by Jesus Jehovah or not, they are unquestionably subordinate to him in his mediatorial character, and under him intimately connected with

the redeemed from among men. While he "is head over all things to his church, angels, and authorities, and powers are made subject unto him:" They worship him as their king, and learn through his cross "the manifold wisdom of God." "In the dispensation of the fulness of times are gathered together," recapitulated, summed up into one head "all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." And the apostle mentions in another epistle, that "by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him—and by him all things consist," stand together, are bound in the chains of ardent, unextinguishable, everlasting love. Saved men, and elect, confirmed angels are now "knit together," intimately connected as one great family under the infinite Jesus, as their common sovereign and head. But although Messiah is related to angels as a sovereign, and king, he sustains a relation much more intimate and endearing to "the spirits of just men made perfect" before the throne. To them he is the great medium of fellowship, and enjoyment with the ever-living, ever loving Father. The glory of God shines forth to their full felicity, only in the face, through the person of Jesus Christ. Paul therefore expressed a desire "to depart that he might be with Christ;,"

and he represented the perfection of celestial joy to consist in seeing him "face to face." The expression "face to face" is used in condescension to our weakness, and points out nearness of access, clearness of vision, familiarity of converse, and in return every assurance of good will and affection. While Jesus is represented as "the lamb in the *midst* of the throne," obvious to all, accessible by all the happy inhabitants, he "leads them unto living fountains of water," he communicates that fulness of glory and bliss which was contemplated in the Father's purpose, and purchased by his own infinitely meritorious *decease*. "The glory," he says in his address to his God and our God, to his Father and our Father, "the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them:" He exalts them to the same throne with himself, gives them possession of the same kingdom, and will everlastingly dispense all that measure of happiness, which their ever expanding powers are capable of enjoying.

2. Jesus the Mediator, although received into heaven, still remains the fountain of all life, and light, and consolation to his church upon earth. By his removal from this world to the upper world, his administration of the concerns of Zion hath not ceased, but is only changed as to its nature, and he is *there* capable of managing her interests to much greater advantage. "When he ascended upon high he received," and upon receiving immediately and liberally "gave gifts

to men:”—He has been calling in every age, and is still calling and qualifying some as under-pastors to dispense the word of reconciliation, and by his spirit co-operating with “the foolishness of their preaching,” inclines and enables others to believe. “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins.” That abundant unction, which was poured out upon his disciples at the inauguration of this Priest and Prince upon his throne, the apostle Peter ascribes to his immediate agency. “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see, and hear.” The dear Redeemer has indeed departed as to his bodily presence, yet his attention to the interests of his children still continues; and “he ever liveth to make intercession for them:” He is gone beforehand in the character of a *Forerunner* to take possession of a kingdom in our name, and to make preparation for our entrance in due time: He is gone as the *High Priest of our profession*, carrying his own blood into the most holy place, and through the merit of this, maintains a free intercourse between the Father and us: He is gone as our *Beloved* to raise up our affections thither, to make us consider heaven as our home, and render us desirous to follow

him that we may behold his glory, and be filled with his love.

This doctrine, thus explained, suggests a variety of inferences both for our instruction, and consolation on the present occasion.

1. We may infer from the ascension of our Lord, that his sacrifice has been received as a full satisfaction for our offences, and a complete discharge for himself, and his children. We need no other, nay, we can conceive no higher proof that the Father is well pleased with his righteousness, and perfectly pacified towards all who embrace it. When the Saviour first appeared in our world, angels rapturously sing, "peace on earth, and good will towards men;" but this peace, this good will was more luminously manifested, when the Son was admitted into the very presence of the Father: When the Surety who had stepped forward in our room was invited to sit down with the Creditor, and received with every expression of esteem and affection.—The exclusion of the *first* Adam from Paradise, and from the divine communion was an awful proof that the Creator was displeased with him, and with the human kind whom he represented; and therefore the exaltation of the *second* Adam, the Lord Jesus, and his introduction into the holiest of all are animating displays that Jehovah has accepted of his sacrifice, and is reconciled to all whom he represented. Here is the most satisfactory evidence,

that "as by the disobedience of the former many were made sinners, so by the obedience of the latter many are made righteous."

Who will now dare condemn, or even accuse thee, O believer, pleading the atonement of Calvary? "It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God." Would the Father raise him to the throne, place him at his right hand, and cover him with such glory, unless he felt the most perfect satisfaction with that sacrifice which he had offered up? An apostle thus informs us that he was "justified by the Spirit;" that is, the Holy Ghost, in raising our Lord from the dead, openly, and formally *justified* him; he pronounced him free from that debt which he had contracted as the Surety of his people, and proved that the bond was completely cancelled by the blood of his cross. And our Saviour himself declares, "when the Spirit of truth is come, he shall convince the world of righteousness,—because I go to the Father;" he shall plead my admission to the Father's presence as a sufficient proof, that my righteousness is satisfactory to him; that it is acknowledged as a full reparation for all the injuries done by the transgressions of my chosen, and as forming a legal title to that inheritance of immortality which was forfeited by them. Cherish this day, intended communicant, the pleasing persuasion that Jesus your Substitute is received into heaven; and that since he is discharged

there can be no condemnation to thee : None in heaven will lay any thing to your charge, and none on earth, or in hell dare do it.

2. We may infer from this doctrine, that every necessary blessing may be expected from the compassionate Saviour in his exalted state. Although he has returned to his Father's house, he knows "the heart of a stranger:" He has travelled through this world before us, and he still recollects the toil and difficulties which he underwent : He knows by experience the dreariness of the valley through which we are called to pass ; the thorns which will annoy us in our course ; the enemies which are "lying in wait" for us on the right hand, and on the left ; and therefore he will not "leave us comfortless :" although he be absent from us in body he is "present in spirit," to sympathize in distress, to cheer in despondency, to protect in danger, and to supply all our wants from "that fulness of the Godhead" which he possesses. "We have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Let us therefore look to our glorified and compassionate Redeemer for those gifts which he received upon his ascension. We cannot ask too largely, because he is not enriched by withholding, neither can he be impoverished by all that he imparts. How were the treasures of his grace opened, and

poured forth for the supply of his apostles and followers, immediately after *the heaven received him* ! “ Great grace was upon them all: The Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied : Out of his fulness they all received grace for grace,” one communication of grace after another for their abundant supply ; and remember that the covenant is yet full, and Jesus the Mediator is yet ready to communicate. “ Hitherto,” he complains, “ hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name ; ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full.” What greater assurances of *good will* to us, and of concern for our joy and establishment, could we have desired than he has already afforded ? He has given us his word and promises as our charter, our written security for every blessing both temporal and spiritual ; He has revealed a covenant ratified with his own blood, and annexed seals to it, thus presenting visible signs, signs which our eyes may see, our hands may handle, and our mouths may taste, of blessings spiritual and everlasting. In the baptismal water he gives a lively representation, an outward, obvious emblem of the influences of his spirit, which flow freely, and refresh the soul as they descend : In the sacramental bread he exhibits an outward sign or symbol of his own body which was *broken* for us, and which being thus *broken*, is the food and nourishment, and support of his children : In the wine he gives a

visible representation of his blood which flowed for our redemption, and which being applied by faith secures peace to the conscience, and "joy unspeakable" to the heart. In addition to all these testimonies of his love he comes forth on this occasion, and at the head of his own table affectionately invites to a full participation. "Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved."

3. We may infer from this doctrine, that our conversation and affections ought to be in heaven. Whither our beloved is gone, and where he resides in our name, and for our profit, should not our most ardent desires ascend? Ought we not fervently to follow him "unto the most holy place," with adoring thoughts of his love, and with earnest desires to be with him, to behold him, and enjoy without interruption the smiles of his countenance? Is that Jesus in heaven, who has redeemed us at an infinite expence, even his own precious blood; who has brought us with an omnipotent arm into the paths of righteousness, and has hitherto kept us in these paths; who has so often proved our light in darkness; who has dispelled so many doubts; disappointed so many fears, and refreshed us in the moment of dejection with the joys of his salvation; is this Jesus in heaven, and shall we remain carnal and earthly? Can we feel more pleasure in the fellowship of our natural friends, than in the communion of Him, who is "fairer than the

children of men," and "whose loving kindness is better than life?" Can we rejoice more in our little, uncertain, unsatisfying, perishable possessions, than in that inheritance *above*, which the Saviour obtained with so much travail, and which he now occupies in our name; "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled," all-satisfying in its nature, and endless in its duration? Shall we be more eager in pursuing the duties of our temporal calling, in attending to our farms, our merchandise, or other occupations, than "in pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and preparing for an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom? How can we think so much, and talk so much, and toil so much about this passing world, and yet feel so regardless about heaven, our eternal home, where alone perfection either of holiness or bliss is to be expected? O how happy beyond conception are they, who have reached that region of glory, "whither the Forerunner is for us entered!" They are seated upon thrones; they hold palms in their hands; they wear crowns upon their heads; their natures are perfectly purified; their capacities inconceivably expanded; their eloquence most elevated; their vision unclouded; their pleasures unceasing and all-satisfying; their song uninterrupted; they see without a veil the lovely, loving Jesus, "who is the brightness of the Father's glory," and with the smile of his counte-

nance diffuses a plenitude of joy through all the inhabitants of the heavenly city. Are such their attainments, and yet shall I not long to be there, to be near my best friend, to be like him, to feel his power, and see his glory? Am I a stranger on earth, and yet not desirous to be home? Am I often enveloped "with clouds and darkness," and yet not looking out for the dawn of unclouded, everlasting day? "The night is far spent;" come therefore, ye virgins of light, and let us "gird up the loins of our mind; let us be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The heavens have *received* our beloved, but it is only "until the restitution of all things;" they will soon reveal him to our exceeding joy: *For as often as ye eat this bread, which is now to be consecrated as a memorial of his dying love, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death* TILL HE COME.

4. Affection to the souls of careless hearers, constrains me to apply this doctrine for a few moments to them. The ascension of the Son of God is a fact not more replete with triumph to his children, than with terror to his enemies. An enthroned Redeemer is the most important friend, but beyond comparison the most awful, irresistible adversary. "The Son of man shall hereafter come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him;" and what will be the effect upon an ungodly, impenitent world? "And the

kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, will hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and say to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" *The great day of his wrath is come.* As the messenger of the Lord of hosts, I beseech every secure, prayerless, Christless individual "that hath ears to hear, to hear this" message. **THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH WILL COME.** His day of grace has already come: It has continued long to many of you: Its cheering light has shone clearly around you: But it will not last *always*; it may not last *long*: There is a moment coming when your day of grace must close, and then naught but night, lonely, cheerless, eternal night.—The radiance of the day of grace, which is now shining mildly around you, will be succeeded by a fiery stream issuing from the mouth of the judge, and the soothing voice of mercy, which you have heard again, and again, shall give place to the thunder of his ire, which will shock your ears, and "rend the caul of your hearts." And I warn you beforehand that there is no wrath so insupportable as the wrath of the Lamb, of a neglected, insulted, indignant Saviour. The sentence, *depart from me, ye cursed*, will appear

sevenfold more awful when uttered by him who "came to seek and to save." The gloom of the bottomless pit will appear sevenfold more gloomy to the wretched inhabitants from the consideration that the door is locked upon them by the very hand which had opened a gate to glory, and been pressing them to enter in. The flames of hell will become sevenfold more intense and intolerable when blown up by one who had offered to quench them with his own blood. I have not language to express; I do believe that the angels of God have not language to express the amazement, the confusion, the horror which will cleave the damned multitude when the heavens shall reveal their Judge, and "all the people shall see his glory." Ye careless hearers, of whom "I travail as it were in birth again, until Christ be formed in you;" ye unconcerned young men and young women; ye thoughtless boys and girls, are these things real? Will the trump of God be blown? Will the great white throne be erected? Will the Ancient of days descend and sit upon it? "Will the books be opened" in which are written down all the years you have been spared in life; all the sabbaths you have enjoyed; all the sermons you have heard; all the instructions and admonitions, and entreaties, accompanied sometimes with tears, which you have had from me his unworthy servant? "Kiss then the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his

wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." *Blessed, thrice blessed are they that do his commandments; that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.—AMEN.*

SERMON V.

HEBREWS VII, 25.

He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

IN every science there are certain principles on which all the others not only intimately depend, but are immediately founded. The root supports the whole tree; from it all the branches, the least, and the most remote derive their nourishment and verdure, and even their life. It is the foundation which gives strength and stability to the whole superstructure; on it every material, in every part of the building, necessarily depends for solidity and support. In our holy religion also there is one doctrine which surpasses in importance all other doctrines; which constitutes the foundation of this sacred superstructure; with which all the other doctrines are intimately connected, and from which they all derive their consistence, and glory, and value. You have probably gone before me in re-

marking that the mediation of God the Son is this doctrine ; his substitution in the room of sinners, his satisfaction, and his constant, and prevailing intercession at the right hand of the uncreated Majesty. This doctrine is interwoven with every page of the bible. This formed the substance of each communication of the divine will whether immediately from God, or by the intervention of either angels or men ; whether this revelation was received before the law of Moses, or during the reign of the law, or under the dispensation of the gospel. Do we behold “the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,” and addressing our offending parents ? Jesus, and his sufferings, and the glory that should follow were the subjects of his conversation. *The seed of the woman*, that is, the Son of God assuming the nature of man, *shall bruise the head* of the serpent, shall defeat the prince of darkness, and demolish his kingdom in the world. This triumph the Saviour obtained partly in his life, by casting out devils from the bodies of the possessed, and completely upon his cross, when he “spoiled principalities, and powers,” and made a shew of them openly.” Do we see the Jewish high priest leading the victim to the altar, and with its blood making atonement for the iniquities of Israel ? In this solemn ceremony we have only a type of the more illustrious antitype ; we see Jesus as the Lamb of God bearing by imputation the sins of his

chosen, actually suffering as their substitute, and sponsor, and by "the once offering of himself, perfecting for ever them that are sanctified." Do we behold the high priest, with the blood of the sacrifice, entering the holiest of all; standing at the altar of incense with a censer in his hand, and making intercession in their behalf? In this sacred observance we have another type of the infinitely more illustrious antitype. We see Jesus, as the High Priest of our profession, entering, not the most holy place, but heaven itself; not with the blood of a mere animal as the sacrifice, but with his own blood; not on a particular day merely, but *for ever*; interceding not only for the little remnant of Israel, the offspring of Abraham, but for the countless millions of his redeemed. "For," as the apostle expresses it, "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Meditations on the ever-living, ever-loving Jesus, on his glory, his grace, his sacrifice, his righteousness, his intercession, are always in season with a christian, because these constitute the very essence of all his privileges and prospects: But they are peculiarly seasonable on the morning of a communion sabbath.—Amidst the various fears and anxieties, from the recollection of past failures, and the consciousness of present unworthiness, which perplex the soul in the prospect of a near approach to Je-

hovah, how reviving is the thought that we have an *advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; who is the propitiation for our sins ; one who knows our frames ; who sympathizes with us in every distress of whatever nature ; who possesses infinite, everlasting merit to expiate our offences, and wisdom to manage all our concerns in the higher sanctuary ; one also whose intercession in our behalf cannot possibly fail of success. May we all this day experience the sensible accomplishment of his promise, "because I live, ye shall live also : I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, even the Holy Ghost."*

Without making any artificial division of this subject, it is designed to consider the words as they stand arranged by the inspired preacher.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is represented as *living* : He ever *liveth*.

1. He *liveth* as God : he possesses an essential, underived, independent, eternal existence as the second Person in the Infinite Three. This life of the Son as God differs materially from the life of man, of angels, or any created order of being however exalted. It was derived from no other ; it depends on no other ; it knew no change, and it cannot possibly have an end. He is therefore called the King *Eternal*, that is, without beginning ; and *Immortal*, that is, not liable to dissolution. Again, he is represented as "the same yesterday," that is, from eterni-

ty past ; and “ to-day,” that is, through all the revolutions of time ; and “ forever,” amidst the ages of eternity to come. He was as really God, and considered in himself as ineffably, infinitely glorious when he lay a babe in the manger of Bethlehem, as when on Tabor “ his countenance shone as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light :” He was as really God, and as infinitely glorious, when led into the wilderness to be tempted of satan, or when strengthened in the garden by an angel, or when reviled, and condemned, and nailed to the tree, as he now is, although elevated to the throne, and crowned with all the honors of the heavenly world. Shall I illustrate this most important, precious truth by a similitude which has been used on a former occasion ? The sun is the same body in a cloudy day, although veiled in a great measure from our view ; it is as large and luminous in itself, as in the clear day ; and at midnight, when scarcely a solitary ray beams upon our quarter of the globe, as at mid-day, when he blazes forth in full-orbed majesty and glory. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ, considered in his Godhead, was *always* the same ; he was from everlasting to everlasting without any change. “ He is over all, God blessed for ever ;” his blessedness had no beginning, was subject to no abatement, and it shall never have an end. Contemplating the essential glories of Jesus, the royal preacher exclaims, “ thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : Thou, Lord, in the be-

ginning hast laid the foundation of the earth ; and the heavens are the works of thy hands : They shall perish, but thou remainest ; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment ;— but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.” Be fully persuaded, O christian, of the Deity of thy Saviour, and let thy soul exult in this persuasion. It was his Godhead supporting his manhood, which gave worth to his sacrifice, and rendered it a full and everlasting expiation for thy sins ; which gave efficacy to his obedience, and rendered it a complete, unalienable title to the inheritance of immortality ; and it is this, which renders every plea that he makes to the Father in thy name infinitely acceptable and successful. He is really and essentially Jehovah, and every part of his work, from its commencement to its consummation, is perfect as the perfections of his divinity could render it. Resting on him by a living faith, thou standest as a rock in the midst of the ocean ; the tempest may howl around thee ; the waves dash and threaten to overwhelm, but thou shalt remain unmoved and immoveable.

2. Our Lord Jesus Christ *liveth* as mediator for himself. As Immanuel, God in our nature, he is now exalted to the highest possible glory with the Father, and receives a liberal reward for that work which he accomplished in our world. Even while the Saviour tabernacled on earth, he enjoyed frequent assurances of his Father’s compla-

cency in him, and the fullest confidence of his own future exaltation in his presence.— And his work was no sooner finished, than the reward was liberally conferred upon him. “When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down for ever on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” There he *lives* enthroned ; he is fully possessed of “that glory which he had before the world was,” and as Mediator receives the highest expressions of honor not only from the Father, but from all the hosts of heaven. His body, which during its continuance on earth was subject to hunger, and thirst, and fatigue, and even to death itself ; which by exquisite, unceasing affliction was *marred*, and emaciated *more than any man*, is now raised to an immortal life ; it is completely and eternally freed from all the frailty and deformity of its humbled state, and by an intimate union to his divinity shines forth with a glory altogether inconceivable : This very body, however infirm or unsightly it appeared once, without *form, or comeliness, or beauty*, now sits “on the right hand of the majesty on high,” and is the medium through which the effulgence of his divine nature beams around, and irradiates the whole celestial world. This is the account given by an evangelist who received the revelation immediately from God. “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it ; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof : and the nations

of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it." His human soul, which was "oppressed and afflicted" on earth ; which was doomed to almost perpetual grief, while he witnessed the dishonors which were done to God, while he contemplated that wrath to which men were hurrying on through the power of unbelief, and was denied those manifestations of divine love which formed his chief consolation ; that soul now participates the most full, elevated joy. That assurance of future blessedness which he formerly expressed by David his type, is realized to him in a sense the most exalted. "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life ; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance." Those intimations of his Father's love which were withheld from him occasionally on earth, and peculiarly during the time of his agony upon the cross, are now enjoyed without interruption, and without measure. It is a source of the highest consolation to him that the sacrifice which he offered, and that righteousness which he introduced with so much sorrow and toil to himself, are accepted as a full reparation for all the injuries done to the law by the transgression of man : He feels ineffable delight, in seeing all the divine perfections shining with such lustre through the accomplishment of his undertaking ; in seeing the joy of angels promoted by the brighter discovery of the wisdom, and grace, and sovereignty of Jehovah ; and especially he feels unspeak-

able joy, in reflecting that through his finished salvation millions of the human family are, and millions more shall be raised from the lowest degradation in hell, to mansions of felicity and glory in heaven. We trust that the exalted Saviour is "rejoicing in spirit" this hour, while he beholds the "pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hand" in this assembly ; in witnessing some dear member refreshed with the assurance of the Father's love, and exulting in the hope of his glory ; in hearing some precious youth asking in sincerity of heart, "what have I to do any more with idols, with those sinful lusts by which I have been too long ensnared, or those empty, delusive pleasures to which I was formerly devoted ? I will hereafter be for the Lord, and not for another ; the love of a loving, bleeding, dying Saviour constrains me ; I am resolved from this moment throughout eternity to be his, only his."

Such is the nature of that *life* which Messiah now enjoys as Mediator for himself.— He is exalted "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." He sustains the dignified title, "Lord of hosts" or of armies, intimating that every species of being, rational or irrational, is included in his empire, and subject to his control : He is denominated "King of kings, and Lord of lords," to instruct us that those

who rule as kings or lords over others, are themselves subordinate to him as their Sovereign. How changed since he appeared in the *form of a servant*, and was vilified as the *Nazarene, a friend of publicans and sinners!* The man of sorrows is now full of joy, and has exchanged the loathsome manger for the right hand of the throne of God, and is there dwelling in light inaccessible. The hand which was transfixed with the nails, and fastened to the accursed tree, now holds the sceptre of universal dominion; and the head which was once mangled and tortured with the thorns, is now adorned with a crown of righteousness and glory: That face which was smitten with a reed, and marred more than any man, shines as the sun, and cheers all heaven with its lustre. Instead of the mockery of "Herod with his men of war who set him at naught, and the assaults of the infuriated mob who cried the "more vehemently, crucify him, crucify him;" he now receives, and will to all eternity be receiving the acclamation of ten thousand thousand saints, and ten thousand thousand angels, "Blessed be he that came in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." Every crown of every worshipper around the throne is laid at his feet; every knee voluntarily bows in submission before him; every bosom is transported with emotions of wonder, and gratitude, and joy; and every tongue of all the heavenly choir is loud in the confession

“that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Blessed Saviour, thou art worthy to receive all these ascriptions of “power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory,” from them and from us ; because “thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.”

3. The Lord Jesus Christ *liveth* in heaven as Mediator for his church, not only in the nature of his children, but in their name, and for their immediate profit. “The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.” Those mediatorial honors which he received from the Father upon entering the holy place, he dispensed among the celestial throng, consummating their glory and happiness, as the sun diffuses his rays enlightening and gladdening the whole system. He adorns them with white robes as an emblem of their purity ; puts palms into their hands, as a representation of their victory over all opposition “by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ;” he raises them to the same throne to which he is raised, and so far as their limited capacities are enlarged to receive, he makes them partakers of the same joys with himself. Altho’ I would not assert that the benefit of his chosen was the only object designed by our Saviour in returning to his Father, yet without doubt, it was a principal object. This truth so intimately connected with our privileges now, and our hopes for eternity, is frequently taught in the oracles of God. “Whither,”

says the apostle, speaking of the upper sanctuary, "whither the forerunner is *for us* entered:" Again he declares in the same epistle, "for Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God *for us*." Believer, however imperfect, or poor, or despised, or disconsolate thou art, Jesus has carried into the highest heavens thy very nature indissolubly united to his Deity, and thy name which is perhaps rarely mentioned by man, or mentioned only with contempt he bears upon his breast-plate as the high priest of our profession; this he holds forth to the acceptance of the Eternal Father, and all thy concerns, the most minute and the most important, he carefully manages. Jesus thy Lord ascended on high, and took his seat upon the throne not in a private, but in a public capacity; he entered the everlasting kingdom in the name and as the representative of all his followers, and his entrance was a pledge of their entrance. This most interesting truth was clearly asserted by our Redeemer to Mary, immediately after his resurrection, "go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God:" He affectionately recognises them as his brethren, partakers of the same nature, and heirs of the same kingdom in common with himself; he also instructs them that he was going to take his residence

with Jehovah not in the relation of a Father, and God to himself only, but also in the tender relation of a Father and God to them. "Let not your heart be troubled—In my Father's house are many mansions—I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." The Son of God thus *lives* in heaven as Mediator, for the advantage of his chosen: He is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body; he manages all the concerns of the whole society of the redeemed, whether collectively or individually considered; and in the most happy moment will secure their introduction, that they may behold that glory which he possesses for them.

Jesus the infinite Surety is represented as *ever living*.

1. This expresses that ardent, unceasing concern which he entertains for the interests of his people. His eyes are ever open to watch them by night, and by day: his heart is most intensely engaged for promoting their welfare, and in making all occurrences "work together for their good, and yield to them the peaceable fruits of righteousness." We may readily acknowledge that we are shamefully unmindful of him, and indifferent about the advancement of his glory in the earth. So occupied are we in the little pursuits, and so eager for the perishing honors of this world, that Jesus, and the interests of his kingdom

are rarely in our thoughts : We suffer hours and even days to pass away without an affectionate, melting contemplation of his grace, his promises, his covenant, and his great salvation : We are not zealous for the prosperity of his cause ; we do not love him ; we do not think of him ; we do not speak of him, and for him as we ought : But neither all this ingratitude on our part ; nor all this inattention to his interests, ever cools the ardor of his love to us, or relaxes for a moment his attention to our interests. Nay, so tender are the compassions of the exalted advocate to his people ; so unremitting is his attention to all their concerns that he appears both astonished and grieved when they indulge a jealous thought respecting him. “ Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God ? Hast thou not known ? hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary ? Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? yea, they may forget ; yet will I not forget thee : Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands, and thy walls are continually before me.” “ In all their afflictions he is afflicted :” Every cry for his aid, which they offer up by night or by day, enters his ears, and shall be heard in due time : Every accusation that is brought against them he instantly repels

by presenting that sacrifice, that divinely perfect sacrifice which he offered up in their room, and when on any occasion they are assailed either from earth or hell, he rises from his throne, and reaches forth his omnipotent arm for their defence and support. Thus Jesus their advocate *ever* liveth in the highest heavens to make intercession for them; he never ceases to watch over them, to sympathize with them, to pray for them, to protect them in all danger, until they are brought triumphantly to those regions, where there shall be "no more curse, neither sorrow, nor crying." When Peter was assailed by an unusually strong temptation Jesus "prayed for him, that his faith might not fail." When Stephen was called to resist even unto blood in the defence of the gospel, the heavens were opened, and the Son of man appeared "*standing* on the right hand of God." This exhibition of our Lord is very instructive, and expresses in a most interesting manner his compassion for his children in the hour of distress, and his solicitude for an honorable issue. He is ordinarily represented as *sitting* upon his throne, or *sitting* on the right hand of God, but in this instance he appears *standing*: His servant is now entering the fiery conflict; he encounters the rage of men infuriated and urged on by the powers of hell: the Redeemer is therefore anxious for the event; he rises from his seat in glory; he imparts a measure of strength proportioned to the trial; he inspires his

suffering servant with a confidence not to be shaken, and brings him off "more than a conqueror."

His *ever* living to make intercession expresses,

2. The perpetuity of his continuance in that capacity. The appearance of the Son of God as our advocate in the court of heaven is not confined to the present dispensation of his mediatorial kingdom, but will last throughout eternity to come. At the consummation of this world Messiah will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; he will present his spiritual offspring as *all righteous*, freely pardoned, and perfectly purified ; he will exhibit the mediatorial scheme as accomplished in the full salvation of all *the election of grace* ; and also in the utter subversion of the prince of darkness, and his dominion ; he will disclose the intricate, mysterious parts of his procedure, not merely to the satisfaction, but the admiration of every on-looker ; he will shew that all occurrences which related to the church in general, and to the particular believer, however adverse they appear at present, were ordered in infinite wisdom as to the time and manner. But this surrender of the kingdom on the part of Messiah relates only to its present form, that he may afterwards assume it in a manner more glorious, and unchanging. His kingdom is therefore called *an everlasting kingdom*, and heaven is particularly distinguished as *the everlasting kingdom*

of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; a kingdom which he purchased by the sacrifice of his cross, for which he sanctifies and prepares his subjects by the influences of his grace, and which in his capacity as Mediator he will administer for ever. The particular manner in which he will exercise his office as advocate in the perfection of the heavenly state we cannot comprehend at present. He will no longer intercede, "Father, forgive them," for his children will then be all righteous. He will no longer supplicate; "sanctify them through thy truth," for the vail of ordinances will be then removed, and they will all appear "faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy." He will no longer pray, "keep them from the evil" of the world, because they will be raised eternally beyond the reach of temptation or annoyance: He will not then demand as now, "I will that those also whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am," for their joys will be perfect in the full vision and fruition of God, the Father: Yet even in the heavenly state, the Son as Immanuel in his official character will be *for ever* demanding a continuation of this felicity, and will thus remain a bond of union, and medium of communion between Jehovah, and the redeemed. "He is made, or constituted a high priest FOR EVER."—"He shall sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be a Priest upon his throne:" He will not be a *Priest* to make atonement, because

he finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness by his decease at Jerusalem; but he will remain a *Priest* to intercede, and thereby secure their perpetuity in glory. He also appears as “a Lamb that had been slain,” and why should he retain for ever the marks of the cross unless these were to be exhibited as the procuring cause of the glory of his people?

He ever liveth *to make intercession for them.*

Various conjectures have been formed with respect to the particular manner in which our Lord carries on his work, as our Advocate. Some have supposed that he speaks with a real voice, and thus expresses his desire that such and such blessings may be communicated. It is the opinion of others that he merely presents the merit of his sacrifice, holding forth to the view of his righteous Father the marks of his crucifixion, and demanding on this account such mercies as the various circumstances of his children require. But the precise mode in which our Lord executes his office as intercessor is not revealed in the scriptures, and therefore it is unbecoming and unprofitable for us presumptuously to enquire. Here we must be contented with “seeing darkly as through a glass:” many things relative to the state of glory will remain involved in mystery while we continue upon earth.— We must put off this corruptible part and

enter within the veil, "before we shall know, even as also we are known." Yet all that is requisite for producing a solid, unshaken faith is clearly unfolded in the sacred oracles: Enough also of celestial glory beams through the medium of divine revelation to enliven our zeal, to enflame our love, to elevate our hopes, and inspire us with anxious desires to depart that we may see without a veil.

Three things however, with respect to the intercession of this "Priest upon his throne" may with safety be asserted.

1. That he intercedes in our own nature. This appears equally proper on his own account, and also for the greater happiness and glory of his people. With respect to the Son of God himself, it appears expedient that the same nature which had borne the cross on earth should wear the crown in heaven; that the same manhood which had stooped to humiliation and suffering, in order to procure the blessing, should afterwards have the honor of demanding and dispensing those blessings; that the self same nature of man which he had assumed, which had long been the subject of toil and grief, and of a death the most painful and reproachful, should participate the happiness and glory of administering that kingdom which he had the labor and expence of establishing. It seems no less expedient that this intercession be made in the human nature, with respect to them whom he represented in the covenant.

It will no doubt for ever excite their gratitude to behold the son, who was *very* God, the Father's Equal and Fellow, condescending to put on their nature, and appear in the likeness of sinful flesh;" it must for ever excite their wonder to contemplate that pre-eminence of glory to which their nature is exalted by its union to the Infinite Son; to see it exalted to the right hand of the Eternal Majesty, as the mirror by which the effulgence of the Godhead is reflected through all the heavenly world: It must for ever enhance in their esteem all the blessings of salvation, to receive them from the hands of that loving, condescending Jesus who had been slain for their redemption. This doctrine, which appears so important, is undeniably established by divine revelation. The same body of our Lord which was crucified, afterwards arose, and even with every mark of its crucifixion. We find him on one occasion, as a means of confirming the faith of his apostles, shewing them both in his hands and in his side the wounds which he had formerly received. We hear him at another interview, affectionately addressing them, "handle me and see," examine to your full satisfaction, not only for your own support in every storm of persecution which may await you, but for the confirmation of the faith of my followers in every age, "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And that very body in which our Saviour con-

versed with his disciples ascended in their view towards the highest heavens until a cloud received it out of their sight, and now united to his divinity appears in the presence of God for us. Stephen, when admitted to a vision of the celestial world, "saw the *Son of Man*, Messiah in the very nature of man, standing on the right hand of God; and John declares, "I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain." From this and other passages it is obvious that the Adorable Son not only appears in the body in which he suffered, but with the very marks of these sufferings. I have enlarged on this truth for the more abundant consolation of the heirs of promise. Amidst the diversified trials of the present state; that toil which we often feel in the labors of life, and even in the discharge of religious duty, or those exquisite pains with which the body is frequently afflicted, or the scorn which we experience from an ungodly world, or the encreasing infirmities of age, how reviving in either, or all these trials is the consideration that our nature, in the person of Emanuel, is now residing in the heaven of heavens; that it appears *there* as our Representative, and Forerunner, and that where the Head is exalted, all the living members shall be collected! "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

That in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.”

2. As the Son intercedes in our nature, all his pleas are founded on that sacrifice which he offered, and that satisfaction for transgression which he made upon earth. He now appears, and prevails as an advocate, because he was formerly made *a sin-offering for us*, and secured our reconciliation. “Without shedding of blood there is no remission,” and this High Priest of our profession demands no remission of sin for his people; no mortification of lust; no progress in sanctification; no blessing either of grace or glory only in virtue of that infinitely perfect righteousness which he finished upon the cross. This truth evidently appears from the history of the Jewish high priest, his type, under the former dispensation. “Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and shall bring the blood within the veil, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat.” Again, “but into the second service went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood which he offered for his own sins, and the sins of the people.” Contrasting Jesus the Son of God our High Priest with those of the order of Aaron, and shewing the excellence of the former beyond the latter the apostle declares, “neither by the blood of goats, nor calves, but by his own blood, he entered

in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Every accusation that he now answers as our representative; every indictment that he quashes; every benefit that he demands in our behalf, he presents to the uncreated Majesty his own obedience and sacrifice as the meritorious cause. He sprinkles with his own blood the throne of justice, and thus secures peace and reconciliation with a righteous God; and as the counterpart of this produces in the consciences of his children "a peace which passeth all understanding." He argues that every charge which can now be offered against them was formerly brought against him their Sponsor, and cannot therefore be with propriety renewed; that as a double payment cannot in justice be required of the same debt, nor a double satisfaction for the same offence, therefore there can be no condemnation to any whom he represented in the covenant. Sisters and brethren in Jesus Christ, what a living fountain of consolation is this "that we have an advocate with the Father," and that every plea which he makes is founded on an argument infinitely relevant at the court of heaven! "Seeing therefore we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God," who shall successfully lay any thing to our charge? Every curse which we had incurred was inflicted upon him the Surety interposing in our room; and every act of obedience which

could be required of us, he performed in his life, and with this atonement he has entered the holy place there to appear in the presence of God for us.

3. The intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ is always prevalent. It is of little moment to us in what manner he executes his office as advocate, whether by expressing his will in real words, or by holding forth the marks of his former sufferings. This is our confidence and joy, that he is ever successful. Even in his state of humiliation the divine Redeemer could appeal with full assurance, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me; and I knew that thou hearest me always." How much rather will he be heard when he has finished the work which was given him to do, and has attained the perfection of his glorified state! The most faithful and skilful advocate that ever appeared at a human bar may possibly fail of success. Although the cause of his client is just; the evidence clear and satisfactory; and his expectations most sanguine, he may be, and often is disappointed in the issue. Not so with him who interposes in our behalf at the right hand of Jehovah. No cause however obscure, or complicated, or seemingly desperate, in which he undertakes, can possibly be lost. No sinner of the human family, however discouraging his situation in point of former guilt or present unworthiness, who commits to this advocate the management of his concerns ever was, or ever shall be dis-

appointed in the end. No argument which he offers to the eternal Father was ever repelled as irrelevant. While Moses "lifted up his hand Israel prevailed," and much rather while Jesus the illustrious antitype holds up his hand, while he raises up his voice in behalf of his children he shall prevail, and they through him shall be heard. After the apostle had contemplated the dignity of Messiah's person, and pronounced him greater than Melchisedec, and more glorious than the angels; after he had contemplated the infinite, everlasting merit of his sacrifice "that by this one offering he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified," he draws this important conclusion, "wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Let us pause a moment, and for the encouragement of any doubting, disconsolate communicant reflect on this animating assurance, "He is able to save to the *uttermost*," in any conceivable emergence, in any possible extremity, those who humbly rely on his fullness, faithfulness, and mercy. Some christian present is probably disposed to consider his own situation as altogether singular. "There is a mystery of deceit, of enmity, of unbelief in my heart," he may be saying, "which was never felt in the heart of any other: I am afflicted with temptations more abominable and blasphemous, than were ever experienced by a mortal: I am tossed with wave af-

ter wave, and must be overwhelmed; and all my other afflictions are aggravated by this, that *my Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* I am afraid that *his mercy is clean gone for ever, and that his promise, with respect to me, doth fail for evermore.* No language can express the thousandth part of my perplexity and anguish." All this may be true, despondent believer, and yet thy condition is by no means desperate, nor even discouraging, because Jesus thine advocate saves to the *uttermost* them that come unto God by him. He is infinitely wise to see through all the peculiarities of thy case; he is infinitely compassionate to sympathize in all thy distresses; he is infinitely powerful to support thee in every discouragement, either inward or outward, and infinitely meritorious to prevail with the Father in thy behalf. However unworthy thou art, worthy, divinely worthy is the Lamb that was slain for whom thou shouldest be supported, and comforted. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge thy conscience from dead works," from every fear of wrath on account of transgression, and with this very blood Jesus has gone to the most holy place to intercede in thy name. Let not therefore thine heart be troubled, but honor thine Advocate by leaving thy case, with all its perplexities, to his wise and merciful management. He knows by experience the bitter-

ness of walking in darkness, and therefore most tenderly feels for thee in the hour of spiritual desertion. He knows by experience the fury of the great adversary, the terrors of *this roaring lion*, and will not leave thee to his rage. This High Priest of our profession is not only *faithful*, but *merciful*, and “in that he himself suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” With what tenderness does he declare, “I will not leave you comfortless : I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.”

This doctrine thus illustrated,

1. Affords a very animating view of the Redeemer’s love to his children ; of his constant, and ardent concern for their salvation. Their redemption from the curse, and all its consequences occupied his thoughts from eternity past. Ages before the world was created, or his chosen were called into being, he looked forward with compassion at their misery, and exulted in the prospect of restoring them.—“He rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men.” How fervent was his zeal, and how unwearied his labors in promoting their interests, while he *tabernacled* in the world ! He was *eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*. While he himself submitted to hunger, he miraculously supplied the wants of others : While he was beyond comparison a “man of sorrows,”

he tenderly sympathized with others in their affliction, and dried up the tears of the mourner. This life of suffering to himself, and of kindness to others, he concluded by "giving his life a ransom" for our iniquities. But even *here* the love of God our Saviour toward man did not cease. Having loved them without beginning, he loves them without abatement or end. Neither the treachery of one disciple in betraying him, nor of the other disciples in deserting him, in that hour when chiefly he required their sympathy, nor all the ignominy, nor agony of the cross chilled the ardor of his zeal in the advancement of their interests. Neither is his attention diverted from them a single moment by all the glories of the throne, or the acclamations of those exalted orders of being who there approach and adore him. Men, when suddenly elevated to high stations, often forget or despise their former associates. Being exalted above them, and rendered independent of them, they become regardless of their interests, and even disown any former acquaintance. But different is the conduct of the ever-loving and faithful advocate. He does not exceed us more in the elevation of his station, than in the depth of his condescension, and the ardor and immensity of his love. Although the Father has placed him on his right hand, and "thrones, and dominions, and principalities," as ministers of state, constantly attend him; yet he is not ashamed

to call you by the endearing appellation of "brethren, and sisters:" He looks through all the shining orders of angels, and beholds with a *piteous* eye his afflicted, dejected members upon earth. Could you draw aside the veil, and penetrate for a moment into the holy of holies, you might there see the dear Redeemer standing forth your Representative; clothed with your nature in a state of inconceivable glory; bearing your names upon his breast plate; managing all your concerns with unerring skill, and unwearied attention; asking for you remission amidst all your failures, support beneath the pressure of every cross, peace of mind amidst all your disquietudes, and victory over every adversary; preparing for you mansions of glory, and pleading that in your Father's good time you may be fitted for those mansions, and exalted actually to possess them.

2. This doctrine may inspire us with a becoming confidence, this day, in approaching the table of our Lord. It is an old proverb, which, although familiar, I will take the liberty of repeating, "they need not be afraid who have a friend at court;" and while Jesus is our advocate with Jehovah, we may draw near this sacred communion in the full assurance of being accepted. "He has made peace by the blood of his cross," and with this blood has entered the "holy of holies," there to appear in the presence of God for us. "Seeing then," beloved brethren, "that

we have a great high Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." The greater confidence that we exercise in discharging the duties of religion through faith in the mediation of our ascended Lord, the more acceptable and glorifying such services are, because we thus express more elevated thoughts of his atonement and intercession. Does a conviction of guilt agitate and discourage? Upon an impartial review of days, and months that are past, do we recollect numerous and shameful failures; vows that were deliberately made, and yet repeatedly broken; precious time misimproved; opportunities of promoting our own edification, or the edification of others neglected? Does this recollection of former imperfections rise up as an insurmountable barrier between thee, and the table of thy Lord? Remember, for thine encouragement, that thou hast "an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for thy sins." By a constant exhibition of his divinely meritorious blood before the throne, he answers every charge that is urged against thee, and then issues a new pardon in thy behalf. Let every intended communicant, raising his thoughts to the High priest of our profession, repeat that challenge of triumph, *who is he that condemneth?* "Who shall stagger my confidence in obeying the command of my dear Saviour, or receiving that provision which

his bounty is offering? Resting all my hopes for pardon and peace on that *plenteous redemption* which is in his blood, I will freely go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy; there my soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness." Is another discouraged from approaching through the prevalence of strong corruptions? "Dost thou find a law in thy members warring against the law of thy mind?" and the more anxious that thou art to attain a suitable frame in the solemnities of religion, does thy heart appear the more unmanageable, and prone to depart from the living God? All this *deceitfulness*, this *desperate wickedness*, of which thou art complaining, only furnishes a new errand to the ever-living, ever-prevailing Advocate; and it affords him a new opportunity of bringing glory to himself, by causing thee to "abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost." —*Sanctify them through thy truth* is his petition before the throne, and he is not only a Priest to demand this blessing, but a King, and therefore mighty to dispense it; to mortify each rising corruption; to subdue every adversary; to improve and perfect every grace, and to "present thee faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." He loved thee; insignificant, undeserving, debased as thou art in thine own estimation, and "gave himself for thee, that he might sanctify and cleanse thee with the washing of water by the word," and it is

his constant solicitude at the court above, that this with every other benefit of his purchase may be actually administered. Sooner therefore shall heaven and earth pass away, than a single mercy which he procured upon his cross, and now demands upon his throne, fail of its application. And the more frail thou art in thyself, the more languid seemingly thy love, the more wanton and wandering thy heart, the deeper will be thy debt, and the louder thy song *forever* to that Jesus who redeems, and sanctifies, and saves. "O thou of little faith, wherefore shouldest thou doubt?" Is not "the blood of the Lamb" meritorious "to cleanse thee from all sin?" Is not his righteousness "an everlasting righteousness," and therefore sufficient to cover all thy deformity? And is not his appearance with the Father an infallible security for the communication "of grace to help in the time of need?" Although you may look with shame upon your "idle schemes; your airy hopes; your groundless fears; your opportunities lost; admonitions slighted; blessings neglected; trifles admired, with innumerable other infirmities;" yet amidst all that humiliation and sorrow, which arise from this view, behold this great *High Priest who is over the house of God*, and then *draw near with true hearts*; hearts awed by his authority, constrained by his love, resting on his promises, and *rejoicing in the hope of his glory*; draw near to this feast of love by

the blood of Jesus, by that new and living way which he hath consecrated for us. How should the heirs of promise triumph in the offices of their redeeming Jehovah, and how cheerfully should they obey every command, with a confidence on the sufficiency of his covenant, and his infinite readiness to impart! Receive this day, in the ordinance of the supper, another pledge of his love, and another earnest of his final appearing. Yes, believing communicants, he who now lives to make intercession for you in heaven, will shortly come and translate you to *live* with him. Who knows but the Forerunner within the veil is saying on this occasion of some disconsolate guest, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom?" What heart does not bound with joy at the reviving prospect! Who would not unite in the ardent, elevated expostulation of the spouse, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether. Amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus."

SERMON VI.

2. TIMOTHY, IV. 7.

I have fought a good fight.

THE dying conversation even of ordinary men is in some degree impressive, and interesting. But the last sayings of those who have shone with eminent lustre on the theatre of life ; who have been distinguished as ornaments to the church, and benefactors to mankind, are heard with peculiar veneration and awe. Their maxims, founded on experience, drawn from careful observation of men and things, of causes with their train of consequences, are heard with a degree of reverence, are long recollected by their survivors, and carry with them nearly the sanction of a law. We expect to learn from them admonitions by which we may tread in the same path along which they walked, attain to the same eminence in usefulness, and experience, in the end of our journey, the same consolation and triumph. Thus all the sons of Jacob crowded around the bed of their dying father to hear his counsels, and to receive his blessing. When Moses, the servant of God, and deliverer of Israel, was admonished that he must go up to mount Nebo and die there, their tribes and officers stood around him, while his doctrine “dropped as the rain, and distilled upon them

as the dew ; as the small rain upon the grass, and as the showers that water the earth.” But no mere man ever shone with greater lustre than Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles ; none ever surpassed him in disinterested zeal for his God, in solicitude for the best interests of men, in exertions to answer the great end of his creation ; and perhaps the last sayings of none are more replete with dignity, with instruction, and consolation. These are contained in this chapter, which was obviously written in the prospect of a speedy dissolution. He charges Timothy his son and successor “ before God, and the Lord Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, to preach the word, to be instant in season, and out of season” in discharging the duties of his awful trust ; he forewarns him of the trials and discouragements which must be expected, that some will depart from the truth, “ and after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers having itching ears :” he then expresses his expectation of an immediate translation from this world to the next, and his resignation and joy in the prospect. “ I am now ready to be offered ; that same life which has been devoted to active service in promoting the kingdom of my Saviour and Lord ; which has been exhausted in discharging the duties of that ministry which was received from him, I can now cheerfully surrender at his call ; I could willingly pour forth as an offering to him, whose I am, and whose command I

desire to obey." There is no act of christian obedience more rational in itself, none more acceptable to Jehovah, than a readiness to make a delivery of our lives at what time, and in what circumstances he may please to require them. "I have fought a good fight."

Although these words may immediately refer to Paul as an officer in the christian church; although they may be designed to express his diligence in the work of the ministry, and that success with which his labors had been crowned, yet they are emphatically applicable to the spiritual life in general. There is a race which every believer must patiently run, if he would be a partaker of the prize: There is a warfare in which he must engage, in which he must constantly fight, if he would expect the crown of righteousness and glory in the latter end. As these words are applicable to the life of every believer, they must be considered as particularly seasonable for our meditation on a sacramental occasion. By approaching the table of our Lord, we make the most public profession of our attachment to his cause; we most formally, and openly enlist under his standard, and therefore it is naturally to be expected that our enemies will be most malignant in their opposition, that they will use every possible artifice to shake us from our confidence, to break the ranks of the soldiers of Jesus Christ, and spoil us of the honors of victory. As a means of animating you this day to reflect honor on the Captain of your salvation

by cheerfully obeying his call, and fighting his battles it is designed to enquire,

I. Why the christian's life in this world is pronounced a "warfare," or "fight?" and,

II. Why it is pronounced so emphatically "a good fight?" *I have fought a good fight.* While we attempt to discuss this subject in the most plain, familiar manner may "the Lord of hosts be with us," enlivening and encouraging us in his service, may "the God of Jacob be our refuge," protecting us from the fiery darts of our adversaries!

1. A "fight or warfare" necessarily implies an enemy to be encountered, and in this respect the christian life is properly compared to a warfare. To enumerate all the adversaries, which will assail us either secretly or openly, on the right hand and on the left, is beyond the ability of man. Opposition the most artful, unwearied, and obstinate must be expected, from our first avowal of the Lord Jesus as our captain, until our warfare is accomplished in our translation from this world. "It is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom," and expect the crown of eternal life. Remaining corruptions constitute a principal part of our spiritual foes. These are mentioned *first*, because, being an enemy within the camp, they are the most dangerous to our peace; they can make their attack with the greatest ease, and, by throwing open the fortress of the heart, expose us to invasion

and defeat from the adversary without. "I find a law in my members," was the complaint of a faithful veteran in the camp of Jesus, of one who had maintained a long and painful conflict in the spiritual warfare, "I find a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The children of God will readily acknowledge that they suffer incomparably more evil from unmortified corruption; that they are more frequently foiled, and defeated by a "heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," than from all the other adversaries to which they are exposed. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, so that we cannot do the things which we would." How often, by "the lust of the flesh," a fondness for carnal ease, are we kept from engaging with a becoming fervor in the duties of religion, or, by a desire of gratifying its dictates, are we seduced from the paths of righteousness, and tempted to shameful violations of the divine law! How often, by "the lust of the eye," by the false glare of this world, of its wealth or glory, are we charmed, and tempted to rejoice in it as our portion! we are kept from making those sacrifices for God, which his word enjoins, and the advancement of his cause requires. How of-

ten do we indulge "the pride of life," ascribing to ourselves, to our own prudence or excellence, any thing by which we are raised above others, rather than ascribing it to the sovereignty and distinguishing goodness of Jehovah! With what importunity, therefore, are we exhorted "to abstain from these fleshly lusts which war against the soul;" which are hostile to its progress in sanctification now, and its triumph and joy in the latter end! With what explicitness does our Master proclaim, "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself;" let him first crucify "the flesh with its affections and lusts:" This is the most painful, and important conflict in the christian warfare. But "we wrestle not merely with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world." Fallen angels, being the irreconcilable enemies of God, will exert all their malice against those who profess to be his followers. But their persecution of the christian is peculiarly vehement and unrelenting. Man, by first yielding to the temptations of Satan, by believing his suggestions rather than the divine declaration, went as it were into his camp, and threw himself on his protection: Therefore, when we abandon his standard, and return to our allegiance to the Eternal King, all his fury will be exhausted against us: Just as he who apostatizes from the cause of another, is held in greater abhorrence, and more unrelenting-

ly persecuted, than he who had never professed to be his friend. As the "Philistines were upon Sampson," so all the hosts of hell will be upon the christian soldier, as far as they are permitted : Sometimes as "angels of light" they will attempt to seduce and draw him aside from the holy commandment, and sometimes as "roaring lions they will go about him," endeavoring to terrify, and thus discourage him from persevering in his course. Permit me here to remark, for the consolation of any weak, despondent follower of Jesus, that these hosts of darkness, however malignant, are in chains; they were conquered and openly triumphed over by the Captain of our salvation upon his cross, and they can move against us only *when* he pleases, and *how far* he pleases; into every wound, which they inflict by their fiery darts, he pours the healing balm and tenderly binds it up; and all their malice will only tend to brighten the believer's crown, and swell his song of triumph to the great Deliverer.

2. In a warfare suitable weapons are requisite; and praise to our illustrious Lord, for the spiritual conflict implements of war are provided. He has furnished a piece of *armour* for every part of the body; an *armour* which, when managed in his strength and by his direction, will defend invulnerably against all the assaults of our enemies; nay, not sufficient merely to defend against their assaults, but to foil and put them to

flight. We have the *girdle of truth, the shield of faith, the breast-plate of righteousness, the sword of the spirit, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.* We are thus directed to “put on the whole armour of God that we may be able to stand, and to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one :” And clothed with this armour we are exhorted to “quit ourselves like men, and be strong ; to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.” The meaning of these passages is plainly this, that as our adversaries are numerous and powerful we should be always watchful and diligent ; we ought to aim at keeping all our graces in constant and vigorous exercise ; at cherishing a strong unshaken faith on our Lord Jesus Christ, on his *righteousness* as our robe for reconciliation and acceptance, on his *strength* for our support, on his promises for our consolation, and to entertain a full *hope* of future glory in his presence : We should be adding to our “faith virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and godliness, and charity.” Clad with this armour of righteousness, and strengthened with the constant supplies of grace from his omnipotent Lord the christian has nothing to fear ; he shall go on from victory to victory ; he shall subdue adversary after adversary, until his last foe is vanquished, and his crown infallibly secured. Through faith and the other graces of the Spirit, believers in former ages “subdued kingdoms, wrought

righteousness, and were more than conquerors."

3. In a warfare discouragements may be often expected ; the plans of the most experienced soldier are sometimes deranged, his resolution shaken, and the battle held in awful suspense. And all who are acquainted with the divine life will readily acknowledge that it is a scene of almost constant discouragement and perplexity. " Without are fightings," and within distracting fears while we continue on earth. When the believer looks around, and views the enemy which he opposes ; when he contrasts with their number his own impotence, the extreme deceitfulness of his own heart, and the vanity of his best resolutions, he often sickens and sinks at the prospect ; he considers the issue as awfully doubtful, or rather concludes that he must fall a prey to their fury. Who can conceive that perplexity of soul which he experiences when the light of his Father's countenance is withdrawn ; when his prayers are apparently *shut out* day after day ; when the promises become " as dry breasts," imparting neither consolation nor support ; when his iniquities pass in review before him without any freedom in pleading the blood of the covenant for pardon ; when he can scarcely notice one kindly emotion of faith, or love, or repentance, or any other grace ? He is ready then to pronounce his past experiences of the divine favor as mere deception, and imagines that his hopes " have

perished from the Lord." Such was the condition of David when he asks "hath God forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone for ever?" And of Asaph, when he concludes, "I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency, for all the day have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." Every mountain then rises to the view of the christian as absolutely insurmountable; every valley deepens and becomes an impassible gulph, and he is ready to sink the prey of abject despair. Job who, on one occasion exclaimed, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" who would willingly have marked the precious truth with a "pen of iron in the rock for ever," as an encouragement to all who should follow him in the faith of the gospel, on another occasion is filled with darkness and dismay; execrates the day in which he was born; wishes that the womb had been his grave, and that he had never seen the sun. Paul who, one moment, was in the *third heavens* as to clearness of vision; who tasted the joys, and saw the glories of the celestial state; who was confident that nothing could "separate him from the love of Jesus," complains again "I am carnal and sold under sin: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Thus as it is with two armies opposing each other with nearly equal advantages, is it between the christian's grace and corruption, while he remains in this world. There is a con-

stant, and seemingly doubtful conflict between hope and fear; between faith and unbelief; between love to his God and the prevalence of a frame carnal, earthly and sensual. The apostle in giving a history of his own exercises gives an epitome of the life of christians in all circumstances, "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed."

4. In a warfare, unremitting vigilance is necessary. The soldier who expects to keep the field, and obtain the victory must be constantly awake, and mark with unceasing attention every movement of the adversary. He may be furnished with the most suitable armour; he may be capable of wielding it in the most skilful manner; he may have been crowned with a series of successes, yet the moment he becomes inattentive or slothful, he puts all in jeopardy; he offers himself an easy prey to his antagonist. This is eminently true in the spiritual warfare; and it is an interesting fact that many who have attained to the first honors, "as good soldiers of Jesus Christ;" who have long and nobly maintained their ground against the *world*, the *flesh*, and the *devil*, yet afterwards by indulging a slothful, carnal frame, have instantly and shamefully fallen; have been driven back to their own mortification, and

the reproach of the christian name. We have humiliating examples of this truth in the history of Lot, of Noah, of David, of Solomon, of Peter, and many others. Their fall is recorded for our instruction and admonition; it teaches us, in a manner more impressive than precept can do, "not to be high minded, but fear; not to be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, and always abounding in the work of the Lord." And among all the duties which are enjoined upon the christian, none is enjoined more frequently, nor pressed by a greater variety of arguments, than *watchfulness*. We are exhorted to be "sober and vigilant," or watchful from this consideration, "that our adversary the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour: Not to sleep as do others, but to watch, and be sober: To put on," and consequently be always ready to manage, in opposition to our spiritual foes, "the breastplate of faith, and for a helmet the hope of salvation." And indeed when we consider the duties to be discharged; the enemies to be opposed, and the infinite interests depending, even the honor of our christian profession and the welfare of our souls for eternity, there is no time to be wasted in security or slumber. The same duty of vigilance, which is so frequently enforced by the apostles, is frequently enforced by our Saviour himself. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: What I say to one, I say to all, watch: Let your loins be girded,

and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that watch for their Lord.”— I would detain you on this particular, merely by adding that the more perilous the times are, and the darker the prospect, either to the church or the world, the more important does the duty of watchfulness become. That mariner would be considered as more than infatuated who would lie down to sleep just as the heavens were blackening over him, and the storm beginning to spend its fury.

Such are the reasons why the christian life may be compared to a *warfare*. It remains to enquire,

II. Why it is pronounced a *good warfare* or fight? This is an epithet frequently applied to it. The same apostle exhorts Timothy to fight the *good* fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life; and directs him how to war a *good warfare*,

It may be pronounced a *good* fight,

1. When we realize those reproaches, and miseries from which a conquest secures us. The soldier, in fighting for himself or his country, frequently takes into view what is depending on the issue of the war: he considers that with the loss of victory is connected the loss of property, of liberty, and perhaps of life: he reflects that the moment he is defeated he lies at the mercy of the conqueror; he may be treated with every species of insult, and scorn; he may be laid in chains, doomed to a dreary dungeon, or to death, as the pleasure of his enemy dictates:

and by these considerations he is actuated to nobler efforts in the contest. How important, therefore, must we consider the spiritual warfare, and with what holy zeal ought we to engage and persevere in it ! What reproach, and wretchedness unutterable do we escape by fighting the *good* fight of faith ! We are extricated from the servitude of sathan, who is the most intolerant and un pitying tyrant ; from being tortured with his iron chains, and led captive by him, insulted and oppressed at his pleasure : in fighting *this* good fight, we are secured from the reproach of being placed with this apostate spirit, in the hour of judgment, on the left hand of the Saviour ; of being there exhibited as spectacles of infamy and scorn to all holy intelligences in all parts of the divine dominions ; and, as the consummation both of our reproach and misery, of having that sentence passed upon us, “depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels ; of being then shut up in the prison of hell, and tormented in soul and body without interruption, or abatement, or end. Surely then it must be pronounced a *good*, a great, an infinitely important fight ; it must be considered unspeakably interesting by all who prefer liberty to bondage, pleasure to pain, glory to ignominy and insult, or the dignity of a freeman to the degradation of the slave. Compared with the loss of our souls, which must be lost without warring this *good* warfare, all that

we can lose in this present world is insignificant, as a single drop of water contrasted with the ocean, or a single particle of dust compared to the whole globe of the earth. The gloom of the most dreary prison is light when contrasted with the cheerless horrors of hell, where *darkness*, even the *blackness of darkness* reigns for ever : The bondage of the galley slave, of all who suffer from the oppression of man, is liberty when compared with the vassalage of Satan ; and all the pain which is undergone, or can be undergone in this world, whether in the soul or the body, is pleasure if contrasted with the torments of the damned. How reasonable, then, how important “to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ; to work out our salvation before the day pass as the chaff,” and our souls are lost irrecoverably !

It may be pronounced a *good* fight when we consider,

2. That all holy beings are anxious for our success, and ready to assist in maintaining the conflict. It is thought honorable and animating among men to fight under a distinguished officer, one who is celebrated for his rank, for his military skill, for his courage, whose arms are usually crowned with success, and especially when justice is obviously on his side. The inhabitants of Macedon deemed it their glory to appear under the standard of an Alexander. But what are all the heroes of ancient or modern times, christian, when compared with the

Captain of thy salvation ? That Jesus under whose banner thou art fighting is Jehovah ; he is “ King of kings, and Lord of lords ; he has righteousness as the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins : “ His wisdom cannot possibly err ; his arm is irresistible ; his plans of operation are never defeated, and he leads to victory in the end all who confide in him. Thy fellow servants and fellow soldiers, believer, are angels and arch angels ; the cherubim and the seraphim ; every order of exalted spirits who kept their *first estate*, and remained faithful to the Eternal King : They are all with you, while you are with their Lord ; they enrol in the records of heaven your names as the soldiers of Jesus Christ ; they fight your battles, aiding to crush your enemies as rebels against the throne of their Prince, and they are ready to offer you the crown as soon as the victory is obtained. Angels rejoice at the repentance of a sinner : they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who are heirs of salvation, and they convey their departing souls to the joys of their Lord.

This may be pronounced a *good* fight, because,

3. The victory is infallibly secured at last. The event of war among men is always deemed uncertain until it is actually brought to a conclusion. The ablest, the most experienced officer who engages may possibly be defeated : Although he enters the field

with every desirable advantage; although he has the most faithful soldiery under him, and arranges them with consummate skill; although he inspires them for action by every method which human ingenuity can devise; yet some occurrence, which he could neither foresee nor prevent, may derange his plans, and give the ascendancy to his adversary. "The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." But every soldier in the christian warfare will be a conqueror, nay, "more than a conqueror" at last. Their enemies are artful and powerful; the struggle is often painful, and to external appearances doubtful, and occasionally issues in their disadvantage; they are led captive sometimes by the allurements of the flesh, sometimes of the world, and again of their arch-adversary; but these defeats are of short duration: By new strength and courage communicated, they shall renew the warfare, and rise triumphant over all opposition. "Who shall, or who can separate us," fellow communicants, "from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" These comprehend almost every trial to which we are exposed in this militant state, every obstacle which lies in our path to victory. "Shall famine, or nakedness," all the hardships, or discouragements which may arise from poverty of outward condition? "Shall persecution, or sword, or peril," all the oppo-

sition which can be made against us either by the powers of earth or hell, and the dangers which may arise from it? "Shall tribulation, or distress," all the trials which may be inflicted by the immediate hand of our heavenly Father, and that sore anguish of soul which we feel under his chastising rod? Shall either, or all of these troubles separate us from the Saviour's love, or spoil us of our crown and kingdom? *Nay*, says the apostle; and *nay*, may every believer say for himself or herself, "in all these things I am more than a conqueror through him that loved me." Lift up your heads then, ye followers of the Lamb, ye soldiers in this good warfare, lift up your heads, for behold, your redemption draweth nigh; you may be weak in your own selves; your enemies may crowd thick around you, but you shall wade through their blood to the throne of glory. Your future triumph is as certain, as if the palm and the crown were this moment in your possession. Your salvation is as infallibly sure, as if you were already within the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem. Jesus your Captain has explicitly promised, and all his promises are yea and amen, unalterably confirmed in behalf of his chosen, "I will help; yea, I will strengthen: I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." And remember, for your consolation in all darkness, and distress, and despondency, that he is *able, infinitely able* to keep

you from falling, and to present you, however frail and foul you may appear now, to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

It is a good fight,

4. When we contemplate those endless, unutterable rewards and honors which are promised to fidelity in the Redeemer's cause. All that can be expressed, or imagined, nay, ten thousand times more than can be either expressed or imagined of glory and bliss, are held out as a prize at the end of this course, as a crown to the victorious candidate in this warfare. "Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." See our gracious Lord, in the hour of death, giving the angels charge over their souls to convey them to his kingdom, and with his tender hands laying their bodies in the grave, softened and perfumed with his own body. See him in the morning of the resurrection, standing in the midst of this victorious band, acknowledging their fidelity in his service, and then in person distributing among them rewards for their faith, and patience, and zeal. See him pointing to mansions, and kingdoms, and thrones as the gift of his Father's love, and the purchase of his own obedience and blood: See him then marching at the head of these ransomed tribes to take possession of this fair inhe-

ritance amidst the mingled shouts of men and angels, *grace, grace, unto it* : See every heart gladdened, and every countenance brightened under the full, eternal assurances of his love.

No doubt all these joys will be heightened for ever to the redeemed by a fresh recollection of what they were by nature, and what they must have remained without preventing mercy.. How must the worth of their liberty be enhanced, when contrasted with their former bondage to corruption and Satan ? How must the splendor of their mansions encrease, when they look down upon that prison of hell which they escaped, to which they were justly exposed both by nature and practice ? How must their crowns brighten, when they recollect the painful conflict which they were called to endure in obtaining them; the nameless discouragements and difficulties under which they labored upon earth ? How must their admiration of their Father's condescension and grace be excited, when they take a review of all those imperfections with which they were encompassed in their former state ; of the weakness of their faith, of their doubting the moment that the light of his countenance was withdrawn ; of their peevishness and repining under the little adversities of life, adversities which he inflicted in love, and assured them should issue in their profit ? But why do I attempt to utter joys which are absolutely unutterable, or to describe glories

which are utterly indescribable. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man to conceive those things which God hath prepared for them that love him." It is sufficient to animate all to engage, and to persevere in this warfare to be assured, that "he who overcometh shall inherit all things."

This doctrine thus illustrated, obviously suggests,

1. That since the christian life is a warfare, much peace and enjoyment are not to be expected in the present world. No man upon entering a military station, can rationally expect a life of ease and indulgence, he must anticipate hardship, fatigue, hunger, cold, disappointment and danger, as naturally arising from the course of life which he has chosen; if after a scene of toil, and exertion, and mortification by occasional defeats from the enemy, he is crowned with victory at last, his expectations are fully answered. Let the children of God aim at realizing these truths. Their habitual impression on the mind would tend to prepare for difficulty, and would fortify against a peevish, murmuring temper in the hour of trial. If our state in this world is militant, constant tranquility and ease are not to be looked for: If here we are engaged in a warfare, we must expect that the enemy will do all in his power to annoy and embarrass us: If he knows that we shall keep the field, and triumph in the end, in spite of opposition, he will exert

all his cunning and power to foil us, until the decisive battle is fought, and the warfare accomplished. How often are we forewarned that in the world we must have tribulation; that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecutions; that it is not merely through tribulation, but through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom? Are we not admonished to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day, and to do all to stand? Now, would we be commanded to put on this armour of righteousness, unless we should require it for resisting the enemy, or would we be admonished to do all to stand, unless the struggle between us and the enemy would be painful and obstinate? I have been the more minute in these observations, as a mean of impressing upon your souls and my own, that this world is not our heaven; that uninterrupted peace and consolation are not to be looked for on this side our Father's kingdom. We have enlisted under the Son of God as the Captain of salvation against a formidable foe, and we must expect occasionally to be called into action; we are furnished with an armour, and every part of it must be used, and used with skill and diligence against the world, the flesh and the devil. The very consideration that the apostle is so minute in his challenge, "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

plainly intimates that some of these trials must be encountered by all the followers of the Lamb ; and perhaps by some of his followers all of them are undergone. But as the Lord lives every obstacle which lies in their way they shall surmount ; every enemy, which may encounter, or annoy them, they shall finally overcome : Yes, believers, amidst all the discouragements of your warfare, remember, that “ if ye suffer with Jesus, ye shall also reign with him ; that your light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are working for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

2. Since we have by profession engaged in this warfare, an important duty is incumbent upon us this day, that is, to put honor upon our Prince by obeying his dying command. In attending the ordinance of the Lord’s supper we not only discharge a duty which we owe to our Captain, but we receive more strength for going on to fight the good fight of faith : We, on the one hand, give new pledges of our fidelity to our Prince, of our disinterested zeal in his cause, and in return, we receive new pledges of his love to us, and new vigor for meeting the common foes of our salvation : And no doubt on these occasions when we more visibly “ come out of the world ;” when we make a testimony so public of our attachment to our Master, of our resolution to follow him at all hazards, the adversary will be unusually malignant in opposing ; ;

he will be exerting all his virulence either to discourage from approaching, or preventing our peace and joy when seated at the table, yet our Master is eminently present to sympathize and support; the keener the conflict between his followers and their foes, the more anxious he is for the issue; the more solicitous that they may "quit themselves like men, and be strong;" that their conduct may be worthy of himself, and the cause in which they are employed. While therefore he expostulates, "eat, O friends, and drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved;" partake freely of this feast of my bounty; he silences every objection, which can arise from a consciousness of our unworthiness, by that assurance, "my grace is sufficient for you, and my strength is made perfect in weakness: Fear not for I am with you, be not dismayed for I am thy God; I will help, yea I will strengthen, yea I will uphold with the right hand of my righteousness: The mountains may depart, and the hills may be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith Jehovah, that hath mercy upon thee." Permit me to ask, intended communicants, have you deliberately embarked in that warfare which has been imperfectly explained? are you fully suited with Jesus Jehovah, the "Prince of the armies of the redeemed?" with his armour, with his righteousness, with his promises, with his covenant, with

his sceptre? and are you resolved, cordially resolved to follow him *wherever he goes*, and at all possible hazards? Are you suited with the company which are marshalled under this Captain of the Lord's hosts? are you desirous to associate with them as your fellow servants and fellow soldiers, to make them the companions of your choice, and to animate and assist them in their spiritual conflict? then for you this table is spread, to you this immortal provision is offered, and let nothing deter you from participating. It is equally your duty, and your privilege. No act of obedience which you can perform is more honoring or acceptable to your Lord, and no occasion is ordinarily more replete "with joy and peace" to the militant christian. While we have the example of his primitive followers, that they "remained stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and in breaking of bread," shewing forth the Lord's death in the institution of the supper, we have their testimony to the privileges there to be expected, "he brought us to his banqueting house, and his banner over us was love."

3. I have now a question to propose to this large assembly: Do you approve of that warfare which has been described? does it appear in your estimation emphatically a *good fight*, and are you disposed to engage in it? The banner of the cross is this moment waving in this sanctuary, are you ready to volunteer under its covert?

There can be no neutral character in this congregation ; you must be either the slaves of the "prince of darkness," bound fast in his iron chains, led captive by him at his pleasure, and dragged down at last with him to the prison of hell, or "the *soldiers* of Jesus the Lord of glory, and the Captain of salvation." *He that is not for the Son of God ;* who does not surrender himself exclusively to him, to be redeemed by him, and sanctified and saved ; to love him supremely, and serve him to the exclusion of all other Lords ; he, who is not thus for the Son of God, is really for belzebug, the foe of his government, and irreconcilable rebel to his crown. I also forewarn you that there is no alternative, you must either renounce your allegiance to those lords who now have dominion over you ; you must wage war "with the devil, the world, and the flesh," and come over to Jesus Christ, bow to his sceptre, put on his righteousness, throw yourselves upon his mercy, or at last be regarded as his foe, and crushed eternally beneath his omnipotent arm. The Lord Jesus *the Prince of peace*, in his tender compassion, bears long with sinners ; he has no pleasure in their death, but would rather that they return, and repent, and live ; he sends forth his ministers, as ambassadors, praying them to be reconciled to God, but these overtures of peace will not be always made ; the mediatorial scheme will soon be finished, and he, that is unreconciled *then*, must be unre-

reconciled *still*. Is it not amazing that a single sinner can remain unconcerned amidst such circumstances? What! he knows not the hour when the Saviour may lay aside the sceptre of mercy, to seize the rod of his indignation, and yet unconcerned? What! he knows not the moment when the voice of the Lamb, of Jesus the "Lamb of God," may be succeeded by "the roaring of the lion of the tribe of Judah," and yet unconcerned? What! he cannot tell the hour when he, who now sends forth his ministers to invite you, may call upon legions of angels to avenge his quarrel, and cut you off as incorrigible enemies, and yet unconcerned? Believe me, beloved brethren, when I declare, that while sitting alone in my study, I am often shocked in reflecting upon the stupidity, the more than brutal stupidity of men respecting their soul's salvation. Talk to them of the uncertainty of life, and they will assent to it; tell them that there is no peace to their consciences, no reconciliation with a righteous God, but through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and they will readily acquiesce; tell them that there is "an accepted time, a day of salvation," after which the hopes of the sinner must perish for ever, and they will apparently startle at the thought; remind them of an acquaintance or companion, who was suddenly cut off in his careless career, who "mourned at the last, saying, how have I hated instruction, and mine heart despised reproof!"

who was filled with awful remorse for the past, and anxiety about the future, and they tremble while they hear, yet do they not afterwards remain as unconcerned as if there was no avenging judge ; no compassionate Saviour ; no heaven for the believing and holy ; no hell for the impenitent and impure. I appeal to your own consciences, especially the consciences of precious youth, how often have you been startled perhaps by a dream of the night ; perhaps by an escape when you seemingly tottered on the very brink of eternity ; perhaps by the untimely end of some connexion ! Have you not resolved in the moment of alarm to alter your ways, and attend to the eternal interests of your souls ? but where are now the vows which were then made ? Were they not as “ the morning cloud, and the early dew that passeth away ? ” Have you not settled down more thoughtless of Jesus the friend of sinners ; more inattentive to prayer ; more unconcerned about your souls and eternity than before ? I ask you as rational, reflecting men, do you expect always to escape the arrest of death ? or will the day of grace for you alone be lengthened out for ever ? Or what advantage are you to expect by resisting the overtures of peace ? Rather than bow to the sceptre of mercy, which a forbearing God is extending, will you rush on the thick bosses of his buckler ? Rather than seek the smiles of his countenance, will you sink eternally under his frown ? Rather than com-

mence a warfare with corruption and an evil world, will you meet in battle array Almighty God armed with all the artillery of heaven? Rather than forego the momentary pleasures of earth, will you run the hazard of unending torments in hell? "Can you dwell with the devouring flame? Can you dwell with everlasting burnings? And remember that the longer a merciful Jehovah has borne with you, the more unexpected, and the more insupportable will be the shock of his arm when inflicted. The Lord God grant, in infinite mercy, that you may be enabled to fight the good fight of faith, and receive in the end the crown of eternal life. Thou blessed, blessed Saviour, look with a compassionate eye on this assembly, and *breathe on every heart*, commanding us *to receive the Holy Ghost*.—AMEN.

SERMON VII.

2. TIMOTHY IV. 7.

I have finished my course.

IN the Olympic games exercises of various kinds were introduced, adapted to the inclination and character of the persons immediately engaged. Sometimes they contended by wrestling and fighting, when a garland of leaves was presented to the suc-

cessful candidate. Sometimes they tried their activity by running a particular course prescribed, when a prize was suspended at the goal, and seized by the person who first finished the race. The apostle alludes to the former exercise in the preceding clause of this verse, and there is an obvious allusion to the latter in the words designed for our present consideration. Referring to these games, which were generally practised in those countries, he declares to Timothy his son, "I have fought a good fight;" I have, through the abundant grace of my Master, entered the lists; through his strength, communicated as circumstances required, I have encountered with unshaken fortitude every opposing enemy, and am now prepared to receive the palm and the crown: In this part of the verse he makes allusion to another practice, as generally known to those whom he addressed, "I have finished my course;" I entered the *race set before me* in the gospel; I have surmounted every obstacle which interposed in my way; I have gone over the whole ground laid out for me to run, and expect shortly to receive the prize of immortality.

It is not without some important reason, that the scriptures abound so much with allusions to practices which are common in the world. Almost every exercise in which we engage as men, thus becomes a monitor to us as christians, and is rendered a means of spiritual instruction. The allusion certain-

ly would not be made by the apostle to these races, unless the analogy between them and the christian life was evident and striking. I shall therefore aim, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, to shew why the life of a believer may be compared to a *race*. And may the spirit of our ascended Lord this day shine luminously on our path, and give us lively views of that glory which is reserved for the christian at the end of his course !

1. In a race a particular course is usually marked out, which all must enter who would reasonably expect the prize ; and it is therefore a very proper representation of the spiritual life. There is a path particularly prescribed, which all must enter who look for "glory, and honor, and immortality" at last. I have no doubt but many have anticipated me in pronouncing the Eternal Son, in his mediatorial character and offices, to be this path. "I am the door," is his own declaration, "by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved ; if he receives me by a living faith, and walks daily in me by exercising an entire reliance on me for life, and light, and support, he shall be saved ; he shall infallibly partake everlasting life. Again our Divine Redeemer asserts, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life ; no man cometh to the Father but by me ;" there is no possibility of an acceptable approach to an offended God ; there can be no comfortable fellowship with him, either in grace here, or

glory hereafter, but through my atonement, and righteousness, and intercession. This is a truth which ought never to be forgotten. As easily might Adam, after his exclusion from paradise, have wrested the sword from the hand of the cherub; have forced open the gates of the garden; have tasted the tree of life, and lived for ever, as fallen, guilty man can obtain access to Jehovah, or friendly intercourse with him, except through the mediation of Jesus. Be it known to all, therefore, that the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, in his various offices and relations, is the gate by which we must enter, the course which we must run if the prize of glory is finally expected. As a prophet, he reveals the will of God for our salvation; he unfolds fully to human view that scheme by which the Father is reconciled, and reconciles the sinner to himself, not imputing to him his trespasses; he has dissipated that midnight gloom which enveloped the grave, and "brought life and immortality clearly to light by his gospel." As a priest, he has actually opened the way to the holiest of all by the shedding of his own blood; he has repaired those injuries of the law which man could never have repaired; he has answered those demands of indignant justice which we could never have answered; he has "brought in everlasting righteousness," a righteousness infinitely meritorious in itself, and which reflects eternal honor on the divine perfections and go-

vernment ; he has thus removed those insurmountable obstacles which lay between us and our Father's house, and rendered the path open for our admission : As a king, he communicates strength to his children for their *race*, however arduous, or long ; he beats down before them every enemy that stands in their way, and attempts to retard their progress, and brings them with triumph to the end of their course. None who miss of Jesus "as the way" shall ever be admitted to the kingdom, and none who enter by this way can possibly come short of it. The whole safety and consolation of a believer depend on his adherence to this way, or a reliance on Jesus Jehovah in his covenant fulness. The moment that he quits hold of the Redeemer, by an active, appropriating faith, he is like a man in a race who wanders from the course prescribed to him, and either makes no progress, or none to advantage.

2. In a race it is proper to keep the body as light and unencumbered as possible. Here the resemblance between the common race and the spiritual life, is peculiarly striking. Every prudent man in entering upon a race will first be careful to strip off whatever might embarrass, or hinder ; he is thus prepared to perform his course both with greater ease, and expedition : and to this same duty the believer is often and earnestly urged. He is recommended to "lay aside every weight," whatever might en-

tangle his feet, encumber his body, and retard him in "pressing towards the mark for the prize of his high calling:" he is required to "crucify the flesh with the affections, and lusts;" to mortify every inordinate propensity to this world, and aim at setting his affections on things which are above. As a means of attaining to this selfdenial, this mortification to the world, the christian should often cherish in his mind impressions of the uncertainty of life, of the unsatisfying nature of all earthly joys, and of that solemn reckoning which shortly awaits him at the tribunal of his Judge: He ought to realize the incomparable excellence of the soul above the body, of things eternal above things temporal, and thus as much as possible keep his mind weaned from earth and its concerns. "Love not the world," is the divine injunction to all the children of the kingdom, "neither the things that are in the world;" do not permit them to occupy an undue share of your thoughts, and thus draw your hearts aside from God and his glory; "if any man love this world the love of the Father is not in him." We are again admonished, "if ye be risen with Christ" if you are as you profess *risen with Christ, born of his spirit, raised from the death of corruption to the life of holiness* and of glory, "seek those things which are above, where Jesus Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affections on things which are above, and not on things which are on

the earth." This is also the import of that parable delivered by our Lord with such solemnity to his apostles, "let your loins be girded about," as the man entering his race will carefully gird up his loins, as he will gather in his clothes which are loose, and bind up those which are long and entangling, "so let the loins of your mind be girded up," let every wandering thought be collected, and every wanton inclination crucified; "and your lights burning," all the graces of the spiritual life, your patience, your love, your joy, your hope shedding around their amiable lustre, "and you yourselves like unto men which wait for their Lord." And without all controversy, God might be more glorified; his cause more advanced; the righteous more encouraged and edified, our progress in our heavenly career more promoted, and our prize in the end more honorably won, was this solemn injunction more generally regarded. It is really to be deplored that professors appear so carnal; that they think so much, and talk so much, and toil so much about the present world, as if their portion was wholly in it.

3. In a race unremitting diligence is requisite: The attention of him who runs with a prospect of succeeding must be unvaryingly directed to the course which he pursues. How ridiculous, for instance, would the man appear who pretends to run, and yet is frequently loitering by the way, and permits himself to be diverted by

every little object which is presented to his view : Nay, diligence appears indispensably necessary for ensuring success in any undertaking, and in the various stations of human life. This is requisite for securing learning to the student, affluence to the husbandman, independence to the merchant ; and all the injunctions, and all the allusions of scripture instruct us that unceasing exertion is equally requisite in the spiritual life. Is it not compared to a *race*, intimating that we should keep loose from the world, and be eagerly pressing on to the end of our course ? Is it not compared to a *strait gate, and narrow way*, admonishing us that the entrance is arduous, and that a constant struggle is necessary if we expect to be making any considerable advances ? Is not the christian likened to a *soldier*, to shew us that he should be always clothed *with the armour of God*, and prepared to meet the foes of his salvation, whether they encounter him on the right hand, or on the left ? Is he not compared also to a *traveller* or *sojourner* to remind us that we should daily be going on in our spiritual course, and advancing nearer and nearer our celestial home ? We are thus solemnly urged to *give diligence*, nay, to *give all diligence to add to our faith virtue, and knowledge, and brotherly kindness, and charity*, just as the architect having begun a superstructure will be constantly adding to it, or the traveller will aim to advance a few paces more in his journey. Many consider-

ations might be mentioned, which ought to awaken the follower of Jesus to a holy earnestness in performing the duties of his calling. Human life is at best but very short, and its continuance to us is altogether uncertain, and yet a great work to be done. How many duties are incumbent upon us! duties which we owe to our Creator, our Redeemer, our generation, and to ourselves; to our bodies, keeping them in subjection, lest, after having preached or professed the gospel, we should be cast away, and to our souls, drawing them off from an ensnaring world, and lifting them to God as "our exceeding joy;" and yet how soon may the moment arrive when we must reckon for our discharge of all these duties, and according to our works be either acquitted or condemned! "Wherefore, holy brethren" and sisters, "seeing ye are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses," and urged to diligence by arguments so impressive, "be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit serving the Lord; lay aside every weight, and the sins which most easily beset you, and run with patience the race that is set before you:" Many days, and weeks, and months, and years of your time are already gone, occupy, with all diligence, and to the best advantage, the few hours for labor which yet remain.

4. In a *race* obstacles must be surmounted. No path can be conceived so smooth, but some impediments will be found to try

the patience, and perhaps in some measure retard the progress of him who attempts to run. More especially in a journey, which is a race continued, many inconveniences must be expected. The traveller is sometimes discouraged by mountains which he must ascend, or vallies over which he must pass ; his patience is also tried, sometimes by want of suitable accommodations, sometimes from intemperate heat, and again from pinching cold. It is scarcely necessary to mention that the believer's life may for this reason be compared to a race. "Ye have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, ye may receive the reward which God hath promised to them that love him." We scarcely attempt to advance a single step in our christian course, but some obstacle intervenes, or to speak in plainer language, there is not a duty in which we engage without experiencing opposition from an evil heart of unbelief. True it is, when man proceeded originally from the hand of his Creator, the path of the divine commandments was level and smooth ; no thorns sprung up to torture the traveller's foot ; no obstacles interrupted him in his career ; no enemy appeared either to annoy or impede him in his progress, but obedience to his Creator's will was performed aequally his duty, and glory, and delight. But sin has thrown innumerable impediments in our way both to discourage and retard. There is the enmity of the heart which often rises up in opposition

to God and his law, "so that the good which we would we do not." The flesh is fond of ease, and will not engage with becoming earnestness in the duties of religion; it recoils at the work of mortification and self-denial: the understanding is yet covered with darkness, and knows not the end of the divine dispensations; it frequently considers good, evil, and murmurs at those parts of the divine procedure which are most gracious, and really designed for our profit. An excessive attachment to this world, to its pleasures and gains, like a superfluous garment, often entangles the spiritual traveller, and greatly hinders him from "reaching forward to the prize of the high calling." Even David, "the man after God's own heart," complains, "innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities are more in number than the hairs upon my head;" and Paul the chief apostle mentions from bitter experience "I am carnal, sold under sin;" he adds, in the language of despondency, and almost of despair, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and, christian, let thy heart reply, doest thou not often experience a shameful reluctance towards duty? does not the flesh raise objections, and represent as unreasonable, or impracticable, or unnecessary, duties to which conscience admonishes as important? and after thou hast entered upon the duties of religion, in opposition to all the remonstrances of

the flesh, with what coldness are they performed, and what pretences does thy deceitful heart employ for hurrying them over! But thou mayest rejoice in the cheering truth, that thy progress towards the prize is, notwithstanding, infallibly secured. Thou shalt surmount every obstacle; thou shalt subdue every adversary, and finally reach the end of thy course. Thy opposers are many, but "the God of peace will bruise them under thy feet shortly;" thy corruptions are strong, thou mayest appear to thyself "black as the Etheopean, and spotted as the leopard, but it is the will of God, even thy sanctification," and he will ere long sanctify thee in soul, and body, and spirit; thy race may appear long, it may be planted with thorns, but "thou art kept by the power of God," and shalt therefore finish thy course with joy." "If need be, thou art in heaviness through manifold temptations," temptations from an evil heart, an alluring or opposing world, and sometimes from the frowns of thy heavenly Father; but all these temptations are permitted with this design, "that the trial of thy faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, may be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of Christ." All the difficulties of your race, and all the discouragements which you may experience in running it, will only excite a more elevated anthem of praise to that grace which

placed you in the paths of righteousness, and enabled you to persevere to the end.

5. In a race it is indispensably necessary that the person continues to the end. It is no matter how advantageously he sets out ; it is no matter with what ardor and activity he runs for a time ; should he afterwards leave the path prescribed, or cease to hold on, all his former exertions are vain, and his prospects of attaining the prize are utterly forfeited. This, dearly beloved brethren, is a very important, I may add, a very awful circumstance in which the christian life resembles a race. "He only who endures to the end shall be saved." We may enter the course marked out in the gospel, with every appearance of running well : We may assume the profession of religion, by connecting ourselves with the visible church : We may appear jealous for the Lord God of hosts, by doing what he requires, and avoiding what he forbids : We may be exemplary in our attention to the various ordinances of divine grace whether more private or public : We may be zealous in attempting to instruct the ignorant, awakening the indifferent, and convincing those who oppose themselves, but these attainments must issue without advantage unless we persevere in our diligence. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him ; he is not fit for the kingdom of heaven." The man or the woman who once made a profession of christianity and after-

wards abandons that profession, is like a blossom which opened fair, but withered and dropped off before the fruit was matured, or like a soldier who entered the field, and fought well for a season, but either turned traitor to his country, or yielded from the conflict before the battle was fully fought, or the victory won; or he may be compared to a person who offers to run a race, and actually enters the course laid out, but afterwards either stops, or turns aside, and thus the prize of glory is forfeited. And, alas, these examples of apostacy are not more mournful than common. Many hear the word joyfully for a season; they feel the ordinary operations of the Spirit; they ask the distinguishing privileges of the church; they are circumspect in their conversation, diligent in walking in all the ordinances of God; they practically say of the generation of the righteous, "whither thou goest, I will go, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God;" thus they enter with fair prospects of running well, and finally winning the prize, but afterwards fail; they become wearied with the length of the way, or feel discouraged with the difficulties which occur, and at last "turn aside from the holy commandment; they return," as it is expressed by a holy apostle, "they return like the dog to his vomit, or the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Is not this the truly awful situation of some who now hear me? Have

they not left off the duties of the closet to which they once attended? Is not one member of the family witness against another that the incense of prayer now rarely ascends, that the melody of praise is now rarely heard, and the scriptures rarely read, where the morning and evening sacrifice was once regularly offered up? and is not their seat now vacant at the table of the Lord? Bear with me, while I reason with such with all the tenderness of a friend, and with all the fidelity of an ambassador of Jesus. Can the end of continuing in such a course of apostacy be peace? Can you look with confidence and triumph on the face of the Son of God when he comes to judge the nations, and to judge you particularly? I ask, can you meet him with confidence and triumph after living and dying in the deliberate renunciation of his commandments? Is there no reality in that declaration of the Holy Ghost, "it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness"—never to have been baptized, never to have heard the Saviour's name, or enjoyed the offers of his salvation, "than after they had known it to turn aside from the holy commandment?" Is there nothing awful in that asseveration, "he that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of God." Consider not this admonition as harsh. The Lord God bears witness that I wrote it with emotions of unfeigned compassion to your souls, with

earnest and frequent prayer that although studied or spoken in weakness it might "become mighty through God" for reclaiming you. Willingly would I take you by the hand, and lead you hereafter in the paths of righteousness, hailing you as my joy, and crown, and glory at the appearing of our Lord. Did I see you tottering on the brink of a precipice, and hasten to your relief, I should certainly be acting the part of a friend: Did I find you asleep, while the house was in flames over your head, and aim at rousing and rescuing you from instant ruin, I should be acting the part of a friend, but I solemnly declare that in shewing the guilt of apostacy, the danger of apostacy, and attempting to reclaim you, I am shewing friendship ten thousand times purer and stronger. And I trust, with some portion of the spirit which actuated the apostle, I offer up his prayer in your behalf, *that the God of all grace, who hath called you externally to his eternal kingdom and glory, would make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you.*

6. In a race a prize is proposed at the end for him who successfully wins. This is a particular instance also in which the believer's life may be pronounced a *race*. "An exceeding, eternal weight of glory is reserved for each faithful follower of the Lamb. This is obviously suspended at the end of the course to animate the spiritual pilgrim amidst the discouragements of life. "Blessed is he that endureth temptation; for when,

he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Much toil is experienced in our journey to our Father's house : Many tedious days and months are appointed for us on earth, so that our hearts often fail, and we are almost tempted to abandon our hopes, and yield to despair. But in these moments of despondency lift up your eyes, and contemplate that *rest* which remains for the people of God. " To them who by patient continuing in well doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, he will render eternal life." Then, believer, in the bosom of thy God thou shalt enjoy a full, eternal repose from all the cares and vexations of this life : there shall be no complaint of want, " for thou shalt hunger no more, neither thirst any more : " there shall be no complaint of darkness, " for thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself." There shall be no lamentation after an absent Jesus, " for he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among the ransomed, and they shall see his face," and enjoy his smiles without a cloud : " there shall be no more sorrow, neither sighing, for these former things will be done away," and succeeded by *fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore*. Despondent believer, " run therefore with patience the race that is set before thee ; " be not disheartened by the difficulties of thy way, for soon, very soon thou shalt " finish thy course," and glory to God, thou shalt

finish it with exceeding joy ; when thou hast reached the end of thy race ; when thou hast obtained a full view of the prize ; when thou hast looked abroad through the heavenly city ? surveying its streets, its palaces, the inhabitants that walk there all clothed in white and carrying in their hands their golden harps ; when thou hast seen a crown reserved for thyself, and a seat with the Mediator upon his throne ready for thy reception ; when thou hast beheld all these things, what joy unutterable must transport thy soul ? What hallelujahs of praise burst from thy lips ? *Until this day of glory breaks, and all these present shadows of unbelief and sorrow flee away, turn, our beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.* Give us, this day in this sanctuary at thy holy table, some enlivening foretaste of those abundant joys, which may be expected at the end of our course. May we be *sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, as an earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession.*

There is one peculiar circumstance, in which the christian race, now described, differs from that in the Grecian games, which ought not to be overlooked. In the latter, of those who run only one could receive the prize ; the others, however carefully they enter the course prescribed, or zealously they press on, must be disappointed at last. “ Know ye not,” says the apostle, “ that they who run in a race, run all, but one re-

ceiveth the prize." Not so in the spiritual race; all who regularly enter, and follow the rule of the word, are certain of a reward. All who are enabled to enter this race by uniting with the Lord Jesus Christ shall be kept in it, and all who are kept in it shall be crowned with glory in the end. "In our Father's house are many mansions," one fitted for the accommodation of all "who overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." The least, the most despised, disconsolate member of the Living Redeemer shall not be forgotten in the hour of retribution.

Such is the nature of that course which the apostle was now *finishing*; it is the narrow, arduous way trodden by all who are admitted into the kingdom, and the Holy Ghost testifies, "there be few who find it." I would apply this doctrine by asking intended communicants, and this assembly in general, have you really entered this *race*? The man who runs with a reasonable expectation of securing the prize will be anxious to start *fair*: to enter with certainty the course which has been previously marked out. It has already been mentioned that Jesus, in his mediatorial character, is the way by which we must run in the spiritual race.—Have you actually closed with him? Are you fully reconciled to the plan of redemption through his cross; desirous to be *washed*, and *sanctified*, and *justified*, and at last glorified through the exceeding riches of his grace?

Do you recollect some important moment, some memorable occasion in your lives, when through a discovery of your guilt and wretchedness, you were driven to despair in yourselves, and constrained in agony of heart to entreat, *give me Jesus, or I perish* ; give me an interest in his salvation upon any terms? I cannot leave him without the blessing ; without peace to mine anxious, agonizing conscience through his *peace-speaking blood* ; “ I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge ” of this scheme ; I am ready to cast myself at his feet, and there remain an everlasting debtor to his free, sovereign mercy ; I would bathe in the fountain of his most precious blood for the forgiveness of all sin, and for the removal of all my pollutions ; I would put on his righteousness, his divinely perfect righteousness, as my only clothing and ornament ; this I now solemnly accept, and with it I would hereafter be adorned, instead of my own rotten, defiling rags. If you have any solicitude about your souls ; if all is not lost in the cares and pursuits of the present world, try yourselves impartially on this question. It is the root and the branch ; the beginning and ending of a sinner’s salvation, “ If ye believe not on me ye shall die in your sins : ” Nay, “ he that believeth not is condemned already ; ” whatever be his pretensions, whatever be his expectations, “ he is condemned already : ” his baptism, if he ever was baptized ; his prayers, if he offers any ; his

tears, if he has ever shed any ; his hearing the word of life, if he attends on it ; his hopes of glory, if he entertains any ; all these without faith in the Lord Jesus profit him nothing ; “ he is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Again, as the living God requires, are you endeavoring *to lay aside every weight, keeping in subjection the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life*, that you may run with greater expedition, and greater certainty of success the race that is set before you. It is not enquired whether you neglect the duties of your secular callings ; neither reason nor religion require inattention in this respect : They enjoin upon you “ to labor with your own hands, that you may have to give to those who need,” and commend the “ man who is diligent in business.” The question is, do you even in the prosecution of your worldly employments feel as those who “ are called out of the world,” and aim at living above it ? Looking upon your houses, and lands, and other earthly enjoyments as merely temporary comforts, designed only to accommodate in the journey of life, do you endeavor to keep your thoughts fixed upon God as your unchanging portion, and upon heaven as your everlasting home ? Are you desirous daily to make the advancement of his glory your highest end, and to aspire after the fellowship of his love as your chief attainment ? Amidst the reproaches of the world, do you

find support in the reflection, "thou Lord art a shield for me, my glory and the lifter up of mine head ; Jehovah is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? he is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Amidst all the changes of thine outward lot ; when the "fig-tree ceases to blossom, and the vine yields no fruit:" when there are *fightings without*, and *fears within*, do you find rest in God as your unchanging refuge and hope, saying with David, "my heart and my flesh fail ; but the Lord is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever ;" and with the prophet, "I will," notwithstanding all these vicissitudes, "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." When the world smiles upon you ; when your table is abundantly *covered* ; when your cup is *running over* and your earthly condition is in all respects prosperous, do you look above these enjoyments to those purer and more lasting pleasures which are at God's right hand, saying with the apostle, "I look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, and are eternal."

Again, as the man who is running a race often looks forward to the expected prize, and longs for the possession of it, are you frequently thinking of the future inheritance and eagerly longing to enjoy it? We are thus commanded "to gird up the loins of our mind ; to be sober, and hope unto the end for the grace that is to be brought unto

as at the revelation of Jesus Christ ; to be looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God." This anxious expectation of future glory, which is recommended as the christian's duty, he will cherish as his privilege. Thereby his nature is purified, and elevated above this polluted, polluting world, both in its smiles and frowns. In the full anticipation of celestial bliss, he remains unmoved by the trials of life as short in their duration, and he values its pleasures as earnest of better blessings in the life to come. This was the attainment of the great apostle, " I press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus my Lord : " Again he declares, " our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. " Beloved hearers, is this your habitual frame ? Are you occasionally desiring " to depart and be with Christ, which is far better ; " in whose presence alone perfection of holiness and happiness is to be expected ? The Holy Ghost, by whom the heirs of promise are regenerated and sanctified, is called *the Spirit of glory*, because he not only qualifies them for this glory, but makes them really long for the fruition of it. As it is natural for the heir to think frequently of the estate which he has in prospect, or for the traveller to think of his own home, to which he is journeying, or for the mariner to think of that haven to which he is destined, so it is natural for the

christian, under the exercise of grace, to think of heaven his home ; there are his Father, his dear Redeemer, his kindred, his crown, his kingdom, his inheritance ; and if we feel no desires after that consummation, it is an awful evidence that we are not candidates for it. I recollect either to have read or heard a very affecting anecdote respecting a nobleman in England. Shortly after his decease, an acquaintance, conversing about him, expressed a hope that he was in heaven. A pious servant, who overheard the conversation, replied, with a sigh, that he “ was afraid it was otherwise ;” remarking, that “ his master in the prospect of going to any place usually talked of it beforehand, and as he never heard him speaking of the heavenly country, he concluded he had not gone there.” — *Where the treasure is there the heart will be,* is the maxim of an unerring teacher ; and again, *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will be speaking.*

These are some of the dispositions wrought by the Spirit of life, on the subjects of his saving operations in former ages ; and if we are the subjects of the operations of the same Spirit, we must be acquainted in some degree with the same exercises. Shall I repeat them in your hearing, as certainty respecting your salvation is of infinitely greater importance to you than all other concerns ? All who are *running this race* have entered by Jesus the Mediator as the *door* ; they have fully acquiesced in the scheme of

redemption through his sacrifice ; they are confiding exclusively in him for pardon and glory ; they are endeavoring, through the constant supplies of his Spirit, to *lay aside every weight*, to subdue every fleshly appetite, and *run with patience the race which is set before them*: Feeling as strangers and sojourners" upon earth, they will have their conversation in heaven, and be longing for the possession of it as their only home. If any of you are altogether unacquainted with these exercises, I cannot flatter you as candidates for the *prize* of glory, but I cheerfully exhort you to *enter the race*. An open door is this day presented to you through the mediation of the Eternal Son, and, as his ambassador, I call upon you to come, and "so to run, that you may finally obtain." The course is clearly marked out ; the path is obvious and plain in the light of celestial truth ; it is unobstructed through *the rent veil of Messiah's flesh*, and a prize ineffably, infinitely great is held out for your encouragement. There is *life* for the *dead*, *liberty* for the *captive*, *rest* for the *weary*, a *refuge* for the *oppressed*, and a *palm* and a *crown* when your course is completed. The ministers of religion are ready, to pursue the allusion, they are ready at the commencement of the race to direct you to the proper path : nay, not only the ministers of religion, but holy angels are ready to hail your entrance in this career, to encourage and assist you in every step of your course, and to crown you

with immortal honors the moment you have reached the goal. "Halt no longer between two opinions, but choose this day whom you will serve:" Young man, young woman, do not insult the Saviour by a perpetual suspense between him and the prince of darkness, the arch-rival of his glory; but either come now and bow to his sceptre, or renounce at once all claim to his righteousness, all submission to his authority, all pretensions of gratitude for his dying love, all expectation of future felicity: Tell the Father, "that you despise his mercy in the provision of a Saviour; that you hold in defiance all the thunder of his wrath; that you have hardihood to leap into those flames which he has kindled for the ungodly:" Tell the Son, "that you are not affected by all the displays of his condescension and grace; that there is nothing in the poverty of the manger to move, nor in the agonies of the cross to melt you; and that you will not be lured by the splendors of all those thrones, those crowns, those kingdoms which he holds forth as the reward of his followers: Tell the Holy Ghost, that, even at the hazard of eternal burnings, you will resist his operations, that you despise that Jesus of whom it is his office and glory *to testify*, that you disregard all his influences either to seal, or sanctify, or save: Tell the ministers of the sanctuary, that you may attend on their administrations, that you may hear their voice, but you are regardless of their im-

portunity and tears, praying you in Christ's stead to be reconciled ; that you are willing to die as you lived, unrenewed, unreconciled, nay to go to hell, and there with rebel angels to wage eternal war against the Majesty in the heavens. I am confident that none, unless fully bereaved of the exercise of reason, would dare to cherish such a thought; their flesh would instantly startle at the suggestion ; and yet, alas, is it not practically the language of multitudes who sit under the dispensation of the word ? Can they not come to the place of public worship ; hear the message of a holy God delivered with plainness and earnestness, and then retire as unconcerned as if they had not a soul either to be saved or damned ; as if heaven had no charms, and hell no horrors, They are told, that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that faith is the gift of God, that he is both the "author and the finisher of this saving grace ;" but do they pray for it ? are they devoutly supplicating, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief ?" They are taught that "except they repent they must finally perish," but where is the evidence of this repentance, where is the pang felt, and where is the genial tear to be seen flowing ? Are they not taught, that "if any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ he must be anathema, maranatha," and that if they *love him* they must manifest it by *keeping his commandments* ? and yet how many among us are living in the wilful, habitual

“ neglect of his most solemn commandments? They tell us that they cannot *believe*; that they cannot *repent*; but do they with becoming earnestness use the means of *faith* and *repentance*? How many dear youth could I recount who are committed to my charge, whom I have aimed, although indeed with infinite imperfection, at warning, for ten, or twelve, or fourteen, or sixteen, or eighteen years, and they have never yet called upon me to express an anxiety about their souls; to ascertain what were satisfactory marks of being born of God, or to know what was the best remedy for a dull, deceitful, wicked heart? I can freely say, before angels and God, that the rare *moving of the waters*, the rare *shaking among the dry bones*, the little concern of sinners about their salvation, is the chief, it is comparatively the only burden of my soul; I am often disheartened from going around instructing and exhorting, by an affecting apprehension that both instruction and exhortation are ineffectual: I know that we are required to “sow beside all waters,” but what husbandman would not be discouraged in sowing year after year on the ground which presents neither the blade, nor the ear? Brethren, I would still hope that the “word of the Lord may have free course among us, and be glorified.” Who knows but while *Jesus of Nazareth is passing by* this day in the message of reconciliation, some *blind Bartimeus* may be restored to his sight: Hear the language

of one who had long been a persecutor, a blasphemer, an injurious person, but was happily brought to glory by that grace which he formerly despised. "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" permit me to add, that he has really come to this assembly; that he has come in his word, in his sacrament, by the ministry of his servants, by the operations of his spirit *to save you*, even the chiefest sinner among you. May he see among the youth of this congregation this day *the travail of his soul and be satisfied!* AMEN.

SERMON VIII.

2 TIMOTHY IV. 7.

I have kept the faith.

THE duties incumbent upon the redeemed of the Lord are both numerous and arduous. Some they owe immediately to God their Creator and Sovereign; some they owe to men as connected with them by the general bonds of nature; others they owe more immediately to the church of the living God; and all these duties we ought to discharge with equal conscientiousness, being enjoined by him who created and will finally judge us. These are expressed in

scripture by *running a race*; by *fighting the good fight of faith*; by *putting on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, meekness, long suffering*; by *remaining stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*. A variety of these duties were eminently exemplified in the life of the great apostle, and have been formerly illustrated on occasions of the same nature with the present. On one sacramental sabbath, we considered the christian life under the emblem of a *warfare* from these words, "I have fought a good fight;" on another we viewed it under the emblem of a *race*, from the apostle's declaration, "I have finished my course:" It is designed at present to consider the nature and necessity of *stedfastness* in the discharge of every duty, "I have kept the faith."

Faith in its usual signification implies a reliance on some testimony given, on some report which we have heard. Divine faith is thus a reliance on divine testimony; it is an assent of the understanding to the report of Jehovah concerning his Son Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, and a reliance upon him for pardon and salvation through his name. "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son;" saving faith therefore consists in embracing this record as a *faithful saying*, and *worthy of all acceptation*. Considered in this light, faith is a grace of which the Holy Ghost is the author; which terminates on Je-

sus with his salvation as its object and has everlasting life as its infallible end.

But the term faith as used in the present instance, admits of a more extensive signification, and may be considered as comprehending all that with which the faith of the righteous is concerned in their progress to their Father's kingdom; every thing upon which this grace centres for their daily remission, for their progressive sanctification, for their direction in the discharge of duty, for their support under every difficulty, until their faith is exchanged for vision and fruition.

In the more full consideration of this subject, it may not be improper to enquire into the import of that faith which we should aim at keeping, and also the advantages of steadfastness in this exercise—"I have kept the faith."

1. We ought carefully to keep in view the object of faith, "the Son of God as the Saviour of the world." That same principle which embraces him at first for peace of conscience, and acceptance with the Father ought constantly to rely upon him for progress in wisdom, and holiness, and comfort: Indeed our advancement in humility, in patience, in hope, and every grace of the spiritual life, will be in exact proportion to our reliance by faith on Jesus and his everlasting fulness. Without this dependance upon his offices and promises for the supply of every want, the soul of a christian can no

more abound in heavenly hope and joy, than a member of the human body can grow without union to the head, or the branch can flourish without deriving influences from the tree. This important truth, which is so frequently taught in the oracles of God, is exhibited with particular force in the following passage, "speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together—maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love." The great design of every ordinance is to bring us into a nearer relation to our Lord Jesus Christ, and a more habitual dependance upon his fulness. What are the promises but an exhibition of Jesus Jehovah with his divine sufficiency for the pardon of our offences, for the purification of our defilement, for our support under discouragement, and our triumph over all opposition. "Unto us are given exceeding great and precious promises that by them we might be partakers of a divine nature," and all these promises are *yea and amen in our Lord Jesus Christ to the glory of God the Father*. What is the ordinance of the supper, which we have the prospect of immediately celebrating, but a representation of the same Jesus to the faith of his children; an exhibition of him as the *Lamb of God* bearing the iniquities of his ransomed, suffering and bleeding in their covenant room, and making a full, an everlasting ex-

piation by the sacrifice of himself: In this same ordinance he is also exhibited as the *living bread*, giving life, and health, and vigour to all who feed upon him, and as the wine of everlasting consolation to the drooping, despondent soul. While he is the maker of this sacramental feast, appointing it for the display of his authority, and as the test of obedience to his subjects, he is himself the *matter of this* feast, the provision which is there set forth for the spiritual entertainment of his guests: While with the majesty of a Prince he commands, "do this in remembrance of me," with the bounty of a Saviour he declares, "I am the living bread; I am the bread of life; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." "Abide in me and I in you," is the injunction of your Lord Jesus Christ, and contains both our duty and safety, "he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." This habitual reliance on his atonement and intercession, is the very essence of a christian's life, comfort, and safety; this diffuses vigour through all his other graces, and excites to the cheerful obedience of every divine commandment: When the faith of a christian on the everlasting Surety is most lively, his love is most ardent, his joy will be most abundant, his heart will be most enlarged in the performance of every duty, and his hopes of future glory will be most uncloud-

ed. “Whom having not seen we love, and in whom although we see him not yet *believing* we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

2. We ought to *keep* or maintain the doctrines of faith. The great God our Saviour has delivered us a system of truth, or as it is expressed in scripture “*the proportion, the analogy* of faith; this we ought cordially to receive, and firmly to maintain, both from a respect for that authority which revealed it, and a concern for our own edification. There is probably more of religion in a cordial reception of every revealed truth, and an ardent attachment to it, than is generally imagined. As we ought to give the living God the homage of our lives by obeying whatever he commands, we ought to give with equal cheerfulness the homage of our understanding by believing whatever he reveals. We read thus of some who “received not the truth in the love of it that they might be saved,” and also of the redeemed, that they are “chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth:” It is a common, but very dangerous sentiment, that it is no matter what we believe if our outward behaviour is virtuous and regular: It is readily acknowledged that it is of little consequence what we believe unless our conversation is pure: “The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, to avoid every appearance of

evil." True it is, orthodoxy in the head will not justify pollution in the heart, or immorality in the life ; but it is equally true that morality in our conduct will not justify error in the head. Light or truth in the understanding, and holiness of conversation, should be intimately connected ; they should go hand in hand as shedding lustre upon each other : He who commands, "be ye holy for I am holy, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darknes," also commands "hold fast the form of sound words ; contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints ; be no more children, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but holding the truth in love grow up into him in all things." The great doctrines of divine revelation are as really connected together as different stones in the same arch, or as different members in the same body, and therefore to deny or slight any truth tends to destroy the beauty and perfection of the whole : And I believe we will generally notice that those who begin to slight one doctrine, afterwards proceed to trifle with another doctrine, until they make a complete shipwreck of their faith in a renunciation of all revealed truth. How affectionately therefore does Paul expostulate with Timothy, "continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them ; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures : " And in

his address to the Philippian church how earnestly does he admonish, "only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit with one mind," *striving together for the faith of the gospel*. It is worthy of notice, that the apostle here connects holiness of behaviour with this *bold, manly strife* for the truths of revelation. The health of the soul, and consequently the holiness of our lives depend as much on the doctrines which we believe, as the health and vigor of the body on the food which we eat. Indeed he who becomes indifferent about what he *believes*, will soon become indifferent about what he *practices*.

3. We ought to *keep* or maintain an open profession of the *faith*. Orthodoxy of principle will be of little advantage to ourselves, or others, unless we openly profess these principles, and walk worthy of our profession. The same authority of God, which binds us to receive all his *sayings as faithful and true*, also binds us ingenuously to confess them, by a uniform, unshaken attachment to his cause, in the face of the world; "to hold forth the word of life" by connecting ourselves with the visible church of Christ, and walking in all the institutions of his worship. An open profession of the gospel is as necessary for evincing the reality of our religion, as leaves, at the proper season, are necessary for shewing that the

tree is alive; or breath and motion are necessary for indicating the life of the human body. Can we imagine that love to God, a filial fear of his displeasure, or zeal for his glory prevails in the soul without a solicitude to obey his commandments, and walk in his ordinances? Will not the generous soldier burn with desire to execute the orders of his captain, or the loyal subject the requirements of his prince? Nay, the greater the danger is to which he is exposed, will not the soldier feel the more ambitious to be found at his post? and upon the same principle, when the love of Jesus glows in the heart, the individual will feel solicitous to live to his honor, and the greater the sacrifice may be to which the profession of his religion exposes him, the more zealous he will feel to maintain his profession, and appear openly on the side of his Lord. I recollect to have read, in the history of the persecutions in France, the account of a number who were doomed to suffer martyrdom for the sake of Jesus: Among others, a nobleman was called to seal with his blood the principles which he had professed: While the rest were carried in chains towards the place of execution, as a mark of respect for his rank he was permitted to walk at liberty. As they advanced, the noble sufferer, indignant at any appearance of distinction, exclaimed in a transport, "clap these chains upon me also, that I may become a knight of the same order with the

rest;" so when the christian sees others, on the morning of the sabbath, repairing to the sanctuary of his God, or rising on a sacramental occasion to approach the table of their Father, his soul will be ready to kindle with holy ardor; he will be secretly saying, whither thou goest I desire to go; the love of Jesus constrains me also to obey his dying command, and to follow him through glory and reproach. "As with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, with the tongue confession will be made unto salvation." The sacred historian therefore relates of Saul, after his conversion, that "he essayed to join himself to the disciples;" he embraced an early opportunity of uniting with the church by an open profession of religion: And John, in his Revelation, represents "the hundred and forty and four thousand; who stand upon mount Zion, as having their Father's name written upon their foreheads:" as the *forehead* is a prominent part of the human body, and most obvious to others, this expression indicates that their attachment to the Redeemer's cause was open and uniform; that they were ashamed neither of their master nor their hopes: They are also represented in the same chapter as "following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; as called and chosen and faithful." No truth in all the revelation of God is taught with greater precision than this, "that if we deny the Saviour *now*, he will deny us *hereafter*:" "If we are

ashamed of him before the world, he will be ashamed of us before his Father and the holy angels:" I appeal to your own candor, to your own sense of propriety, is it not reasonable that such should be the treatment of those who persevere either in neglecting or despising the Son of God? If we, amidst all his admonitions and entreaties, remain regardless of his interests, can we as rational beings expect that he will be mindful of ours? If we deliberately turn our back on his cause *now*, while the conflict between his friends and his foes continues, is it not to be expected that he will turn his back upon ours, when the struggle is brought to an issue, and the enemies of his government are completely vanquished? Can the soldier who wantonly abandons his post in the hour of peril; who contemns the orders of his captain, or the interests of his country when its rights are invaded, can such a soldier expect to divide the spoil, after the victory is obtained, and the enemy put to perpetual flight? Ponder these truths, ye who remain *at ease in Zion*; who have either neglected to profess in public the name of Jesus, or afterwards have renounced this profession: Deliberately "count the cost;" seriously reflect on the consequences of your conduct. Has not the Saviour explicitly admonished us, "whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he

cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." Ponder these things more especially, my beloved youth, before your hearts are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; before every holy impression is quenched by the pleasures and dissipations of the world. Permit me most affectionately to ask you, will there be nothing desirable in the smiles of Jesus in the hour of retribution? in the smiles of him, "at the brightness of whose coming the heavens and the earth will pass away?" whose voice more terrible than on Sinai will shake creation, and before the fervor of whose wrath "the elements will melt?"

4. We ought to *keep* or maintain constantly in view *the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls*. This is a part of the armor of God which we are required to put on, the proper management of which will tend much to the honor of our Lord, and to our own confidence and joy in the hour of trial. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous" in the present state; the hearts of the dearest children in the divine family "are in heaviness through manifold temptations." Through the derision and contempt of an ungodly world, or the hand of their heavenly Father *pressing sore* upon them, the faith of the strongest occasionally wavers; they become weary of the conflict, and are ready to sink down in despondency. Job, indulging the melancholy of his heart, declares, "though I speak, my grief is not assuaged ;

and though I forbear what am I eased? God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked: He breaketh me with breach upon breach; he runneth upon me like a giant:" And another complains, amidst the complicated evils of life, "my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as a hearth; I am like a pelican of the wilderness, I am like an owl of the desert, because of thine indignation and thy wrath, for thou hast lifted me up and cast me down again." But amidst all the discouragements, either outward or inward, to which he is exposed, how is the soul of the spiritual pilgrim supported by contemplating the *end of his faith*; when he looks forward to that perfection of holiness and bliss which shall then be enjoyed; when he considers the grave as a retreat for his body from every toil and affliction to which it is liable on earth; when he realizes that his soul will then ascend to be for ever with the Lord, and participate those "everlasting pleasures which are at his right hand; he may also look forward to the resurrection when these partners, which had been long separated, shall meet in circumstances of unutterable glory and joy, and be reunited without the least fear of separation for ever. As a full view of the shore, and the confidence of reaching it enable the mariner to submit with patience to the fury of the wind and waves; or as the expectation of the honors of victory re-

conciles the soldier to the fatigues and dangers of the field, so the prospect of that glory which is to be revealed will tend to support the christian amidst all the difficulties of his warfare. "Moses feared not the wrath of the king, for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible: He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, for he had respect to the recompence of the reward:" By the same faith Abraham cheerfully "went out not knowing whither he went, for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God: Others received joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a more enduring substance." With what patience may the christian submit to pain of body, to poverty of lot, to bereavement of friends, to darkness of mind, to derision from an evil world, when he looks by faith *within the veil*, and contemplates that land where neither sin nor sorrow will be permitted to enter; where their *sun* shall be obscured by no cloud, their *pleasure* interrupted by no pain, nor the *bloom* of life withered by the chilling frosts of death! While we are exhorted to put on "the whole armor of God, the sword of the Spirit, the shield of faith," it is added, "and for a helmet the hope of salvation; to be looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

It remains to consider,

2. The advantages which arise from steadfastness in *keeping the faith*.

1. Thereby we honor our Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the author and finisher of our salvation." The glory of a prince depends in some measure on the loyalty of his subjects, and that of a parent on the respectful, affectionate behaviour of his children; and the glory of Jesus, as the King of Zion, and head of the church, is promoted by the cheerful, uniform obedience of his professed followers. When they renounce their own imperfect performances, and rely on his righteousness as the only expiation of their guilt, and a full reparation to that law which they had injured: when they assent to all the doctrines of revelation upon his authority as their author, receiving them and rejoicing in them as "their heritage for ever:" when they "come out from the world," upon every proper occasion, refusing conformity to its evil practices, walking in the ordinances of Jesus, vindicating his truth, justifying his ways, and conducting agreeably to their profession, he is both honored and pleased; he beholds the great design of his substitution and sufferings fully accomplished in their salvation and his Father's glory. By giving credit to the holy scriptures as a "faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation," we honor Jesus as the Prophet of his church, because they "are all given by inspiration" of his Spirit: He is

not merely the object revealed in the living oracles, but he himself is the author who makes the revelation: By confiding in his spotless sacrifice for reconciliation with God, and peace to our own consciences, we give glory to him as the High Priest of our profession," because in this character "he purged our sins with his own blood:" When we visibly profess his religion by attending to all the institutions of his worship, whether more common or extraordinary, we ascribe honor to Jesus as our Sovereign and King; because in his royal capacity he appointed these ordinances, he appointed them as a display of his own authority over the church and as tests of obedience to his followers. "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love: Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Stedfastness in the faith conduces,

2. To our own peace and consolation of mind. Although there is no real merit in our discharge of the duties of religion, yet I am confident that none can enjoy true quietude in their consciences without some religion. A sense of our dependance upon Jehovah, and of our obligation to fear and love him, is interwoven with our very nature; it is indelibly enstamped upon the human mind, and we might as readily cease to exist as cease to feel this impression. The common sense of all mankind suggests that there is a God, and that as a Being infinitely great and good he ought both to be ador-

ed and loved. Through the force of this innate principle, every nation under heaven has had its worship either of one kind or another : They who enjoy nothing more than the light of reason have their particular forms of religion, and feel secretly impelled to observe them. And I am bold to affirm that no man under the clear light of revelation can feel satisfaction in his mind while his duty is neglected. Can a parent, whose family has been preserved, and fed, and clothed by the providence of God through the day, lie down at night in the utter neglect of his devotion without some pang of remorse ? The moral sense within must suggest to him that "if God be a Father he ought to be honored." Can any man see his neighbors thronging to the sanctuary on the morning of the sabbath, while he remains at home in idleness, or can he witness them rising from their seats and advancing to the table of the Lord, without feeling an inward uneasiness and compunction ? He must be conscious that obedience to our Creator, and Benefactor, and Redeemer is a *reasonable service*, and he finds a secret dissatisfaction with himself in refusing to perform this obedience. I can freely say, that in visiting the irreligious, when sick or dying, I have noticed that the omission of duty is usually the chief source of remorse and apprehension. They were perhaps intemperate in their lives ; they were perhaps unjust or oppressive in their dealings with

Others, but the recollection of having neglected the commands of him who created and must soon judge them, fills the soul with the most dreadful alarm and agitation. Our duty to the living God is written upon the first table of the law, as an admonition to us that it ought first to be performed, and therefore the wilful neglect of it must prove the pre-eminent source of remorse and disquietude. "But in keeping of his commandments there is great reward." The christian parent having aimed at instructing his offspring, and "bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; having offered his morning and evening devotion in the presence of his household; having sanctified the sabbath by spending it "in the public and private exercises of divine worship; having commemorated, as opportunity offers, the dying love of Jesus in the institution of the holy supper; the christian having devoutly performed these various duties feels a satisfaction in himself; although he is conscious of many imperfections, and is humbled on account of them, yet he finds in his own experience that the path of duty is the path of safety and comfort; he can look to the mercy of his Father, through the sacrifice and intercession of his "great High Priest," for the pardon of all his failures, and thus in the course of holy obedience enjoys a "peace which passeth all understanding;" a *peace* incomparably surpassing the pleasures of others either in

the acquisition of worldly gain, or the haunts of worldly gratification. "The work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of this righteousness is quietness and assurance for ever." *Great peace have they who love thy law*; "they are at peace with God by the blood of reconciliation; they are at peace with themselves by the answer of a good conscience; they are at peace with all men by the influence of the spirit of charity, and the whole creation is at peace with them, so that all things work together for their good."

3. The recollection that we have aimed at keeping the faith will tend to our composure and joy in a dying hour. Although, as we have already noticed, there is nothing meritorious in any services which we perform: After we have done all that we can "we are altogether unprofitable servants," yet the reflection that we endeavored to walk in the fear of the Lord and to act disinterestedly for him will be a source of consolation in the prospect of an appearance before his tribunal. Indeed the manner in which we have conducted towards the living God our Creator and Judge will be the only circumstance to interest the conscience in that solemn, decisive hour. In taking a review of our passage along the journey of life, it will appear of very inconsiderable importance whether our situation was elevated or obscure; whether our fortune was affluent or circumscribed; whether our habitation was magnificent or mean. These things,

compared with the discharge of our duty as rational and responsible beings, will seem insignificant as the little atom contrasted with a mountain or the globe. The great question which will then interest the conscience and the heart is this, "am I reconciled to God by the sacrifice of his dear Son? Have I followed him in the regeneration by an honest, open profession of his name? As a faithful steward have I endeavored to occupy with diligence the various talents committed to my trust, so that the Great Proprietor *at his coming may receive his own with usury?*" How explicit therefore is that admonition of the inspired preacher, "fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of man:" It is his duty and glory and interest: 'The recollection of having walked in his fear, and aimed at fidelity in performing the obligations incumbent upon us will inspire with confidence and joy when all the gain and grandeur of this world will appear lighter than chaff and more "empty than air." *A hope then opens to the view of the faithful followers of the Lamb which will never make ashamed, and an entrance is ministered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom.*

I cannot apply this subject in a manner more suitable for the present occasion than by addressing to you an admonition formerly given to the Corinthians, *examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith ; prove your own selves.* Do you really believe that the

“Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world?” and have you thankfully received, and are you exclusively resting upon him as your Saviour? A knowledge of the reality of our union to the Person of Jesus, and of our acceptance through his righteousness, is always interesting, but it is particularly interesting in the prospect of a near approach to Jehovah in the ordinance of the supper. Are you suited with that plan of restoring apostate man which sovereign love has devised, and as the chief of sinners are you resting all your hopes upon it for eternal life? To a suffering, bleeding Saviour are you frequently coming as guilty to be pardoned; as defiled to be washed from “all filthiness both of the flesh and spirit;” as poor to be enriched with those everlasting treasures which he possesses, and which he imparts to all his living members? *This faith* on the Son of God, of which the Holy Ghost is the author, and future glory the end, *worketh by love; it purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world.* Is your faith a living, powerful principle? Does it manifest its reality by producing hatred of sin, desires after holiness, love to God, longings after his fellowship, esteem for his image wherever you can discern it, and a real solicitude for the prosperity of his kingdom? “Is the world” in some measure “crucified to you and you to the world through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ?” Do you feel a growing indifference about its plea-

asures and pursuits, *counting* its gain as comparative loss, and its glory as disgrace for the *excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord?*"

Having thus laid a solid foundation for your hope by union to the Saviour, and redemption through his precious blood, aim daily at "growing up into him in all things." The more intimately that you hold communion with Jesus Jehovah, contemplating the dignity of his Person, deriving from his infinite fulness for the supply of every want, trusting upon him for new life in all your spiritual decays, the more peaceful will your consciences be, and the more holy and useful your lives. This habitual faith on the Son of God, and intimate fellowship with him is equally *his* glory and *your* privilege. It will impart life into all your graces; it will diffuse vigor through all your duties; it will enhance all your earthly enjoyments, and soften the edge of every affliction which may befall you. In his mediatorial fulness there is "grace to help in the time of need;" and this grace was communicated to him the living Head for the supply of his mystical members: And while you exercise a constant reliance on the Saviour's fulness, let his love constrain you to every act of evangelic obedience. Indeed, if you are habitually strong in his grace you will not, you cannot be irregular in his service, or indifferent about the concerns of his glory. The formal professor may appear inattentive to

the ordinances, or regardless about the interests of Jesus, but the real christian, holding communion with him in his offices, and receiving from him *grace for grace*, cannot be indifferent. We might as readily conceive a living tree to remain without leaves or blossoms under the fostering showers of spring, or a man to be shivering with cold beneath the full blaze of a summer sun, as to suppose that a christian should continue languid while he maintains fellowship with Him who is the fountain of perfection and love. Can I be inactive while by a lively faith I contemplate my Master "going about doing good, being eyes to the blind and feet to the lame?" Can I feel cold towards the sorrows and sufferings of others when I behold him weeping at the grave of Lazarus, and even working a miracle to supply the necessities of the hungry? Can I refuse a little silver or gold for promoting his cause, or ministering to the wants of his indigent followers, when I consider that he refused not even his blood to redeem me from wrath, and to procure a mansion of glory for my future accommodation? Contemplate, therefore, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich:" And in this contemplation of him, and reliance upon him, you will remain "stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in his work:" Your lives will be active and profitable, and death will prove your

unspeakable gain. You will then *rest from your labors, and your works will follow you*: They will *follow you*, not merely as evidences of the reality of your faith, but, through the riches of sovereign grace, will secure for you a “more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began; but is now made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. To God only wise be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever.—
AMEN.”

SERMON IX.

2 TIMOTHY, IV. 8.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.

THIS verse may be considered as a conclusion drawn from the verses which precede. In them the apostle takes a grateful review of his past life; of those duties which through the grace of his Master he had been enabled to discharge; of those

difficulties which he had overcome, and of that abundant success with which his labors in the gospel had been accompanied. "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." From this grateful review of the past he directs his eye to the prospect before him, and contemplates with transport those glories which he expected shortly to have in possession. *Henceforth*, as a reward, through abounding mercy, for those sacrifices which I have made, and those services which I have rendered as a follower and an apostle of the Lamb. The honors of the heavenly world are by no means distributed as a reward for any duties discharged, or sufferings endured for the name of Jesus; all the glory of the salvation of all who are saved, whatever be their diligence and disinterestedness in his cause, will be everlastingly ascribed to free, self-moving love. Yet the labors of the righteous "are not in vain in the Lord."— While their zeal for the divine glory reflects honor on the gospel, by evincing the excellence of its principles by its fruits; it also secures an abundant reward to themselves in the everlasting kingdom of their Lord. "They who sow plenteously" in this world, "will reap plenteously" of honor and happiness in the world to come. "To him that overcometh I will give to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne."

That reward, to which the apostle looked

forward in the prospect of his departure, is called a *crown*. In the Grecian games the successful candidate was publicly presented with a *garland* or *crown*, by spectators to whom was assigned the office of dispensing the rewards. And the person who once obtained this prize, or mark of distinction, was afterwards exempted from entering the contest. This crown, as given to the spiritual soldier, not only expresses the honors which await him at death, and for ever, but also intimates that "his warfare is accomplished," that the victory is completed, and that he is eternally relieved from all the toils and perils of this militant state. While the heirs of glory remain upon earth they are literally in a field of battle; they are exposed to frequent and painful assaults from foes both within and without; from an evil heart, from an alluring or opposing world, and the hosts of hell. "It is through much tribulation" that they must maintain their warfare, and press forward to the possession of their Father's kingdom. If the christian is in private life, he meets with many discouragements from the imperfection of his graces, from the strength of remaining corruption, and from the occasional absence of his *Comforter*: If the followers of Jesus are called by divine grace to the capacity of public teachers in the church, they not only experience all those tribulations which are common to their fellow christians in ordinary stations, but trials must be encoun-

tered which are peculiar to their vocation; They are often discouraged by an apprehension "that they labor in vain," when their prayers are apparently *shut out*; when the heavens over them become as brass, and all their preaching is like scattering seed upon the mountains or barren sand, without producing any visible fruit: And of all the difficulties to which the ambassadors of Jesus are exposed, a barren, unsuccessful ministry is the most insupportable. When they see little efficacy attending their administrations, either in the conversion of sinners, or the edification of saints, they are sometimes led to doubt whether they are really called to the ministry, or whether it is their master's pleasure that they should minister in such a place. To the conscientious, zealous herald of the gospel every cross appears light when he sees the Saviour honored, and his hearers saved through the instrumentality of his labors; and, on the other hand, every comfort loses its relish when the dews of the Holy Ghost are suspended. It was seemingly in deepest melancholy of heart that the prophet asks, "who hath believed our report?" and on another occasion he mentions, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nought and in vain." But whatever be the circumstances in which the follower of Jesus is placed, and whatever be the discouragements which he is called to endure, death is the conclusion of his conflict; then the last battle is fought,

the last foe is vanquished, the last groan is uttered, the last tear is tenderly wiped away, and the honors of victory secured. "Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a crown of life." They will then be hailed by their dear Saviour and captain with that honorable, animating plaudit, "well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord: You have followed me in the regeneration, and I now appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father also hath appointed unto me."

The honors conferred on the righteous in the final judgment and through eternity are represented by different images suited to the different relations in which they are considered. Their life on earth is sometimes viewed under the emblem of a *race*, and then their reward is pronounced a *prize*.—"So run that ye may obtain." They are frequently contemplated in the tender relation of children or heirs, and then the glory to which they shall be hereafter introduced is called an *inheritance*. "They are begotten again to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and unfading." So intimate is their relation to Jesus Jehovah, their Saviour and Prince, that they are considered "as one with him; as kings and priests to God even the Father," and then in accommodation to this title they appear as exalted to a *throne*, and possessed of a *kingdom*. "The throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, that is in the heavenly Jerusalem, and

his servants shall serve him: An entrance shall be ministered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." In the present passage, and many other instances, they are considered as encompassed with enemies; they are required, *as good soldiers*, to manifest fidelity to Jesus under whom they have rallied as their Captain, and then their reward is viewed under the emblem of a *palm* or a *crown*. "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." It is occasionally denominated a crown of *life*. This crown is to all who receive it a pledge of an immortal existence in the immediate presence, and full fruition of Jehovah. "They shall not be hurt of the second death." Their souls when separated from their bodies shall be introduced into the paradise above, and their bodies shall hereafter arise to die no more. "Their corruptible shall put on incorruption, and their mortal shall put on immortality. Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that cometh down from God out of heaven, and I will write upon him my new name." *I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God*; he shall be promoted to occupy an important and conspicuous station in the heavenly sanctuary; he shall be recognised as a son of the most high God, as

a citizen of the new Jerusalem ; he shall be entitled to an eternal residence, and to all the immunities which are connected with this distinguishing character.

That crown which is designated a crown of *life*, as an earnest of a life that shall never end, is also pronounced a crown of *glory*. "When the chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." The dignity to which the redeemed will be advanced at the last manifestation of our Lord, is beyond the conception of our contracted capacities at present. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when Christ shall appear we shall be like him." Being perfectly conformed in soul to the image of their Lord, and their bodies being fashioned like unto his glorious body, they shall be publicly acquitted from every charge, and marked with every distinction of honor ; they shall sit upon thrones during the process of the final judgment, and acquiesce in the righteousness of that sentence which shall be denounced against an unbelieving world ; nay, says the apostle, "know ye not that ye shall judge angels," apostate spirits that kept not their first estate : But their weight of glory will not only be exceeding, surpassing our present conception in its nature, but *eternal* in its duration. "This crown of glory shall never fade away." All the honors of this world are precarious in their tenure, and perishable

at best : The laurel or the palm which was assigned to the conqueror in the Olympic games soon withered and faded in its bloom. The most splendid crown which now adorns the most elevated monarch on earth will soon drop from his head, and go to the possession of another : But the christian's crown will be always flourishing, it will continue unfading in its lustres to the remotest ages of eternity. "I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

The apostle calls it in the present instance a crown of *righteousness* : Although the heirs of salvation were children of wrath by nature ; conceived in sin, involved in the curse of the broken covenant, and altogether without help or hope in themselves, yet all the blessings communicated to them either in grace or glory are communicated *justly* ; in a full consistence with the honors of the essential *righteousness* of God, because they are the fruits of the immaculate, eternal righteousness of the "Word made flesh." He suffered in his own person as their Sponsor all that the law had doomed them to suffer, and he obeyed all that the law required them to obey. "Grace now reigns through righteousness," consistently with Jehovah's righteousness, "unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." When the sinner is pardoned, when he is adopted and pronounced a child and an heir ; when he shall be glorified at last, exalted to a throne, and rewarded

with a crown, these different grades in their salvation will be acts of justice the most pure and unimpeachable. The righteousness of the infinite God will appear no less sovereign in advancing the redeemed rebel to glory than in confirming in glory Gabriel who had never rebelled: Because Jesus, standing in their federal room, had restored that inheritance which they had forfeited: "he suffered for them the just for the unjust: Him hath the Father set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness in the remission of sin; to declare I say at this time his righteousness that he might be just and the justifier of the ungodly who believe in his name." Rejoice, therefore, O christian, that the crown which is now laid up for thee is a crown of *righteousness*; it was procured for thee by the infinitely perfect righteousness of Jesus thy substitute, and the mercy of God, and his truth, righteousness and peace, all the perfections of Deity will cordially concur in placing it upon thy head: Thy salvation is of grace, of free, unsolicited, unmerited sovereign grace, but it is of grace without tarnishing in the least the honors of *justice*. The consummation of this work will shed equal glory on all the attributes of Divinity.

This crown of righteousness is *laid up*. In the games of which we have been speaking a garland or other badge of honor was laid aside and kept in reserve until the contest was decided when it was publicly a-

warded to him who obtained the victory. In allusion to this, the apostle says this crown of righteousness is *laid up for me*; it is not a matter of peradventure whether I shall receive it or not; the reward is secured to me, and to all who “fight the good fight.”

Their crown is *laid up*, infallibly secured in the purposes of Jehovah. The plan of our salvation lay open to the infinite mind from everlasting: the names and surnames of the heirs of immortality were particularly known; the time and circumstances of their being brought into the covenant, of their progress in grace, and of their translation to glory were unalterably fixed; the very limits of their inheritance in the heavenly Canaan were particularly described. “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning,” and certainly the scheme of human redemption, which is the work in which the honors of his government are most deeply interested. “In hopes,” was the exultation of one of the heirs of salvation, “in hopes of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” All that is accomplished for the election of grace, from the moment of their regeneration, to the moment of their glorification is precisely in conformity to an everlasting design, and is the gradual completion of this design. “He hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given

as in Christ Jesus before the world was." Believe, ye who are *fighting* from day to day *the good fight of faith*, and are expecting to "overcome by the blood of the Lamb," believe, and rejoice in the belief, that your crown is already *laid up*; it is kept carefully in reserve for you in the heavenly city; your mansion is now prepared and waiting for your reception; the very boundaries of your habitation are there prescribed, and when your minority is past the possession will be given to you. "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" it is the pleasure and purpose of your Father, of him who knows no change, who neither alters his plans, nor can possibly be defeated in their execution.

This crown is *laid up*, infallibly secured by the obedience and sacrifice of Jesus Jehovah in our nature. "I know my sheep," he declares. He knew for whom he was to suffer before his sufferings commenced: he voluntarily and positively undertook in the character of their Representative to obey whatever it was proper that they should obey, and undergo whatever measure of wrath they were liable to undergo. "He redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them; he was made sin, a sin offering for them that they might be made the righteousness of God in him." He thus tendered to his Father's justice the full price of their deliverance, and then re-

quired that they should be made free. We therefore hear him upon the cross exclaiming, "it is finished;" all the claims of the law are now answered; the condition of the redemption of my chosen is now fulfilled: And the apostle utters in holy triumph, "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again:" The pardon of a believing sinner, his complete, eternal exemption from the curse of the law is as certain through the substitution, and the vicarious sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the freedom of a debtor when his debt is actually paid and the bond which he had given is cancelled; and his translation to heaven is as certain as that of Adam had he fulfilled the condition of the covenant, because Christ the *second Adam* obeyed in his room.

This crown is *laid up*, infallibly secured by the appearance of Jesus our Advocate at the upper court. His business in heaven is to see that the blessings procured on the cross may be administered; it is to see that all which the Father had purposed relative to the calling of his people, their justification, their adoption, their sanctification, and their future happiness be really executed. "I go to prepare a place for you: I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, even the Holy Ghost. We are not to suppose from these expressions that there is any want of love in the Father,

or any want of attention to their interests. His love to them is infinite, and his solicitude for their welfare never ceases a single moment; "he who spared not his own Son, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" But it is the arrangement in the economy of our redemption that all the immunities of grace, both on earth and in heaven should be dispensed through the mediation of the Son. "He is the heir of all things;" the covenant with all its treasures are committed to him the trustee, and he imparts these benefits *when* and in *what measure* he pleases. We often entertain mistaken notions respecting our Lord Jesus Christ, and imagine that because he has left our world he has suspended his care for the welfare of his church. We thus measure "his way by our own ways," and suppose that he is limited to a particular place as we are. But this is a great mistake; he is as really present with his church on earth as with his church in heaven, only in a different respect. When he was on earth formerly with his body, he was present in heaven *spiritually*, affording to the blessed inhabitants ravishing displays of his glory, and now when he is in heaven with his body, he is present on earth by his spirit, giving light and life and consolation to his true church. Aaron the high priest could officiate only in one place at one time. When he left the outer court in the temple and entered the *holiest of all* his communion

with the congregation at large was necessarily suspended, until his actual return. But a personage infinitely more illustrious is the "High Priest of our profession:" Our Aaron is confined to no place, but is always present in all parts of his church; he is most intimately acquainted with all the circumstances of all his people; his body indeed is now in heaven, but his eyes are in every place beholding every thing that relates to his followers; he notices every sigh, he hears every groan, he is acquainted with every want, he sympathizes with them in all their afflictions. "O Israel, thou art not forgotten of me; I have graven thee on the palms of my hands and thy walls are continually before me. We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but he was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin;" and his acquaintance with thy situation, believer, and his concern for thy happiness is an additional security that thou shalt be saved; "that thou shalt be kept by the power of God," and crowned with glory in the end. "He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by him, because he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Thither the forerunner has for us entered," and there, glory to his name, we also shall be introduced "in our own order."

The apostle particularly claims these privileges for himself. This crown of righteousness is laid up *for me*. A particular

appropriation of Jesus the Mediator, and of immortal life through his name is equally our duty and privilege. "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son," and we are authorized to make the Son as the Father's gift our own by a living faith, and in receiving him we secure an interest in all the blessings of his covenant. Salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ is made over as a *gift* absolutely, unconditionally free, and it is the duty of every hearer of the gospel to accept this gift; to appropriate the Son of God in his atonement and righteousness as their own, and thus *make their calling and salvation sure*. Many perplex themselves respecting the doctrine of election: They know not whether they were eternally *predestinated to life*, and therefore doubt whether they have any right to believe on Jesus, or whether they can be saved through his mediation. Others, upon looking into their own hearts, do not discover satisfactory evidences of repentance, or love, or hope, and are therefore tempted to conclude that their situation is desperate. But we ought rather to come immediately to the Saviour, and receive him as freely offered in the promise for reconciliation and everlasting life. This application of him and his covenant mercies is the most sovereign antidote against all our doubts and disquietudes.— He is a *Sun* to enlighten: He is a *Physician* to heal: He is a *Priest* to pardon: He is a

King to mortify every lust, and subdue all the enemies with which we are encompassed, and he is *willing*, infinitely *willing* to communicate this free salvation to every sinner who applies to him. When the jailor was struck with a conviction of his guilt, and apprehension of his danger, the inspired preacher directed him *to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, with this promise *thou shalt be saved*. All other graces and an assurance of future glory will naturally grow out of this faith on the Saviour, as the leaves in spring will appear on the living tree, or as the waters naturally flow forth from the living fountain. "I know," says the apostle, "whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day:" And in his epistle to the Ephesians he asserts, "in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Were the professors of religion more exercised in closing with the Son of God by a rational, deliberate, and affectionate choice of him as their portion and joy, they would experience more peace in their consciences, more consolation in their hearts, more submission amidst the changes of life, and more patience in waiting "for the end of their faith," even their everlasting salvation.— "The God of hope fills his children with

all joy and peace in *believing*, and thus causes them to abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost.

This crown will be presented by *the Lord the righteous Judge*. The personage here mentioned is evidently Jesus the Mediator of the covenant. "All power in heaven and in earth, in the church triumphant and the church militant is now delegated to him. "He possesses authority over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as were given unto him," and the honor of presiding at the general judgment is reserved for him in his Mediatorial capacity. "The Lord God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead." Jesus the Mediator is here pronounced *Lord*.— This is a title of dignity and dominion, and may express either his essential kingdom as Jehovah, or that delegated authority which belongs to him in his mediatorial character. As God Creator he is literally *Lord of all*; he possesses a kingdom necessarily and independently: This power or authority appertained to him without any reference to his capacity in the economy of grace, and would have belonged to him had the plan of redemption never been devised. But the *lordship* or dominion here noticed is derived from the Father; it was conferred upon him as a reward for his humiliation

upon earth, and appertains to him as *King of Zion*, "and head over all things to the church his body." This Lord Jesus will then officiate as Judge. It will be no inconsiderable aggravation of the misery of the damned, whether angels or men, that their sentence is to be pronounced by that Saviour whom they had formerly neglected or despised. How must evil angels stand mortified and confounded when they see, "high and lifted up," one whom they had so often tempted and derided upon earth? when they behold the manger exchanged for the throne; apparent poverty for the actual possession of all things; "a visage once marred more than any man" now surpassing the lustre of the meridian sun; and the scorn and insults of the multitude succeeded by the smiles of his holy Father, and the acclamations and adorations of all the angels of light? Instead of "falling down to worship them," as with an infernal impudence they had proposed, he is now exalted to judge them; with his lips he is shortly to utter their doom, and with his arm to crush them as apostates from his government, and the irreconcilable foes of his glory. How must it increase the torment and horror of reprobate men that their sentence is to be pronounced by him whose favor they might have enjoyed? that they must be damned by that Jesus who had come to redeem them, and adjudged to hell by him who had offered to quench its flames.

with his own blood; who had wept for them, and suffered for them, and died for them; who had by his ambassadors besought them in instances without number to "be reconciled unto God?" Now they must be separated from him never to see his countenance, never to hear his voice as a Saviour, but to sink for ever under his avenging arm as a Judge. On the other hand, it will be no inconsiderable source of exultation to the righteous to receive their crown from the hand of him who had done and endured so much for them on earth. What joy unutterable will fill their hearts and sparkle in their eyes when they see the once despised Saviour now invested with all power; the "man of sorrows" crowned with ineffable joy? him who was once abandoned by men now encircled with ten thousand angels? And it will add inconceivably to the transports of that vision that they shall fear no separation, nor interruption for ever.— "He that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them, and they shall see his face."

The person by whom these honors will be dispensed is entitled the *righteous* Judge. He is infinitely qualified for the discharge of the important trust, and all his decisions on that occasion will be agreeable to the eternal laws of rectitude. The earthly judge who aims at integrity in his procedure is often deceived: the evidence is perhaps obscure or contradictory: he cannot be acquainted with every circumstance connect-

ed with the trial on which he is called to decide; he is often liable to imposition by false testimony; or by prejudices and partialities which are almost irresistible, he may be drawn aside from the path of uprightness: But the Lord Jesus Christ is a Judge unimpeachably just; he cannot possibly deceive, or be deceived; he is infinitely exempt from mistake either by accident or intention. "All things are naked and open" to his omniscient eye; he is perfectly acquainted with every circumstance attending every transaction whether of man or angel, and is therefore qualified for giving the most righteous decision: "He will render to every man," to every angel, to every rational being "according to his works." After the great transactions of that day are closed; after the assembled worlds have been adjudged to an unalterable destiny, all heaven will shout forth that ascription, "just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints: Even the inhabitants of hell, although reluctantly, must assent to the justice of his procedure.

Your attention is now invited to the *time* when these honors shall be conferred on the just. "Which the Lord the righteous Judge will give me at *that day*." The day of general judgment is emphatically called *that day*, as if there was no other day; that day for which all other days are now revolving, and at the arrival of which the revolution of days shall cease for ever; *that day* in

which the Judge will disclose the transactions of all the days which had passed before it, will disclose these transactions to the ineffable joy of his friends, and the indescribable dismay and horror of his foes ; *that day* for which the souls of the faithful had anxiously waited that their redemption might be accomplished, and at the dawn of which all their hopes will be realized, and every cloud dissipated by the full orb'd splendors of the Sun of righteousness. That period is sometimes distinguished as the *day of Jesus Christ*. The son of Mary, who had long appeared without "comeliness or form," will then be exhibited in the grandeur of the Son of God, and will irradiate creation with his glory. He will then unfold to the view of his Father, and of unnumbered millions of attending spectators the whole mediatorial scheme ; he will amply reward all the prayers and tears and toils of his servants, and will heap insupportable wrath upon the enemies of his cause. Jesus Christ on *that day* will appear the supreme, the only actor in the great drama then exhibited. Here man is seemingly the chief agent on the theatre. The history of the world is little else than a history of human intrigue, and oppression, and corruption: We see empires occasionally rising and towering for a time through the ambition of some, and these empires again agitated and torn asunder by the ambition of others. But at that memorable day, of which the apostle speaks, all the agency of mortals

will be suspended, and Jesus Christ will step forth, and judge rulers and ruled, the oppressor and the oppressed "according to their works." Cæsar must then appear at the bar no less than the lowest soldier who contributed to fill up his ranks, and the monarch who once glittered upon the throne, with the meanest peasant who belonged to his dominions. It is sometimes denominated the *day of God*. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the *day of God*." It is highly probable that each Person in the adorable Three will then give a luminous exhibition of his existence and personality. The glory of each divine Person will distinctly dart forth to the view of all who surround the great white throne.— This display will be made to the confusion of the atheist who denied the being of God; of the Arian who denied the essential Deity of the Son and Spirit of God. Every knee will then willingly or unwillingly bow in homage to the Son and the Holy Ghost no less than to the Father. And God, Jehovah subsisting in three equal persons, and these three equal persons, subsisting in one Jehovah, will be all in all.

I shall now conclude this doctrine with the following inference, that a great degree of assurance relative to salvation may be attained in the present life. The profes-

sors of religion too generally content themselves in a state of uncertainty: They attend the various means of grace; they are perhaps exemplary in their lives, and would tremble at the thought of expecting salvation by any other scheme than through the mediation of the Son of God: Yet they appear to consider it an attainment too great to claim Jesus as their portion, or heaven as their eternal home: This state of uncertainty is most dangerous in itself, it is dishonoring to God, and usually arises from our own indolence. The very consideration that we are commanded to "examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, and prove our own selves" plainly intimates that a degree of certainty may be attained.— Would the living God require us to *prove our own selves*, unless there were marks by which our true character may be known; by which we might ascertain whether we have "passed from death to life?" Would he command us "to give diligence," yea, "all diligence to make our calling and election sure," unless this assurance was attainable? Besides, did not believers, even under the former dispensation, when the light was less clear, and the influences of the Spirit communicated in less measure, entertain and express a full confidence of salvation? Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but he was strong in the faith, giving glory to God, believing that what he had spoken he was able also to per-

form." The same triumphs of faith were frequently experienced and uttered by the venerable Job. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold him." The language of Isaiah was no less confident and strong: "The Lord Jehovah is my strength, and my song; he also is become my salvation." Wherefore, doubting, disconsolate follower of Jesus, awake to a becoming earnestness in *proving thine own work*, in making clear thy title to pardon now, and to salvation in the end. The command of God authorizes thee to aspire after this *full assurance of hope*, and his promise encourages thee to expect that it shall be attained. "Then shall we know him if we follow on to know the Lord: They that wait upon Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up on the wings" of faith, and hope, and heavenly joy; "they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Art thou still tempted to object, "this certainty of future glory is a blessing unutterably great? I would feel regardless of poverty, or affliction, or all contempt from the world, was I only assured that Jesus was my Beloved and Friend, and that heaven was my rightful inheritance." But I have long been seeking after this assurance of salvation; I have sought it in the word of promise, in the ordinary exercises of the sanctuary, and at the table of the Lord, yet without any comfortable issue. My bright-

est hopes are still clouded, and my soul is often dejected through fears that I have no more than a name to live." Recollect, ye who are filled with these melancholy apprehensions, that a full assurance of an interest in the covenant is not to be expected at first. Sometimes indeed the light of heaven beams bright upon the soul at its first conversion, "filling it with all joy and peace in believing." Such was the attainment of Zaccheus, to whom the Saviour declares, "to-day is salvation come to this house;" and of the Ethiopian eunuch, "who from the hour of his conversion went on his way rejoicing:" yet this is not the ordinary method of the Holy Ghost with the subjects of his grace. The full blaze of noon does not burst forth at once upon the natural world; there is first a dawn which is merely perceptible; the light is scarcely discernible for the darkness which remains; this is afterwards succeeded by the gradual increase of light, until at length the day appears in all its splendors. So it is usually in the spiritual world. The rising of the "sun of righteousness" upon the soul is gradual; the evidences of justification through the blood of Jesus become more satisfactory by a progressive work of sanctification; the happy subjects of the saving change become more assured of this change by their delight in God, by their desires after holiness, by their esteem of Jesus Christ, by their joy in the promises, also by comparing their fears, and hopes, and

other exercises with the experiences of the righteous recorded in scripture. The individual thus concludes that he is sanctified by the same Spirit and an heir of the same glory. Permit me to remark again, that although Jehovah in sovereignty may depart from his ordinary method and give immediately to the believer the full confidence of hope, it is not his ordinary plan; this assurance is usually to be expected in a course of humble, holy walking with him in the ordinances of his own appointment. The babe in Christ, by the use of *the sincere milk of the word* and other instituted means, grows up to the stature and strength of a perfect man.

Ye who have "tasted that the Lord Jesus is gracious;" and are now rejoicing in him as your shield, and righteousness, and glory, testify your gratitude to his love this day by a cheerful approach to his table. "He remembered you in your low estate," and, amidst poverty the most abject, persecution the most unrelenting, sufferings the most exquisite and complicated, and a death lingering and painful in the extreme, he promoted your interests, let your grateful hearts be stirred up in holy admiration of his love, and manifest these kindly emotions by a public profession of his name. "What hath Jehovah the Saviour wrought" for you and me in redeeming from such a weight of wrath, in giving the prospect of such an elevation in bliss, and accomplishing both at an infinite expence to himself? Truly I am lost

in the contemplation of favor so pure, so disinterested, and astonishing: love which glowed in the bosom of the Surety without the least abatement amidst all the sufferings which heaven, and earth, and hell inflicted upon him. Eternity itself will be short enough to recount the wonders of his condescension and grace. And recollect, communicant, while sitting at his table and feasting on this spiritual provision which his bounty is affording, that the Saviour who remembered thee on earth now remembers thee in heaven. He not only rejoices in the prospect of thy salvation, but is ardently engaged in promoting it. Formerly he furnished a title to the *incorruptible inheritance* by his vicarious death, and now he is arranging the inheritance and preparing it for thine actual enjoyment. "Let not thine heart be troubled. In thy Father's house are many mansions," and Jesus the forerunner is "gone to prepare a place for thee:" He is gone also to secure all that assurance of the Father's love, all that peace of conscience, and that measure of joy in the Holy Ghost which are most suited to thy circumstances in this imperfect, militant state. "I will not leave you comfortless: Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," were the parting promises of our Lord to his apostles, and the author of these promises "is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." He is equally true to his own word and attentive to the concerns of his

children in all circumstances and ages. May you all rest in the comfortable assurances of his love; may you walk in the cheering light of his countenance; and “when the chief Shepherd shall appear, may you receive a crown of righteousness and glory that fadeth not away.”

SERMON X.

2 TIMOTHY IV, 8.

All them also that love his appearing.

PAUL, the inspired author of this epistle, occupied a station peculiarly exalted among the followers of the Lamb. He was possessed of natural powers surpassing those of his fellow apostles; he had received a more than ordinary measure of the Divine Spirit in his illuminating and sanctifying influences, and all these endowments both natural and gracious were eminently devoted to the advancement of his Master's kingdom. None who are acquainted with the history of his ministry, of his *travels*, of his *watchings*, of his *fastings*, of his *perils* whether by sea or land, will charge him with the least ostentation, or arrogance, when he asserts, “I labored more abundantly than they all: I have whereof I might glory in

Jesus Christ in things pertaining to God: I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." The christian of common stature in the divine life is therefore sometimes tempted to say, "the assurance of future salvation might be expected by a Paul; one who had done so much, and endured so much in the cause of his Master; one who had walked so intimately with his God, and received so many and tender expressions of his love: No wonder that he could exult, in the prospect of his dissolution, "I am now ready to be offered: I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day:" This language of confidence and joy is becoming the lips of the chief apostle, but it would be the most inexcusable presumption in me: So inferior are my attainments, and so unprofitable has been my life that I may justly be considered the *least* of all, and the *servant* of all: If I ever should be honored with a station at the right hand of the Judge, it must be the most remote; If I ever am invited to inherit the kingdom prepared for the righteous, I must be the last to enter: If I ever do occupy a mansion in the region of glory, it must be the most obscure in all the heavenly palace: I can only expect to stand afar off and hear the hosannas, and witness the happiness and glory

of the rest." Christian, amidst those reflections, listen to the declaration of the apostle, "not for me only is this crown laid up, and these glories reserved, but for all them also that love his appearing." None who improve by a living faith the infinite Jesus, and his everlasting righteousness, can possibly perish, nor shall one of them fail of that kingdom which was prepared of the Father. The lowest, the weakest member in his family will as infallibly be saved as an Enoch, or an Abraham, or a Paul. The title of any to the inheritance of heaven does not depend on what they may do or suffer, but what was done or suffered by Jesus Jehovah their substitute. Their security for the kingdom is not founded on the degree of their graces, or the lively exercise of these graces, but on the reality of their grace.—Where faith is implanted in the heart, although it be imperceptible as "a grain of mustard-seed," it shall be preserved, and improved, and crowned with eternal life in the end. There may be different grades in glory hereafter, as there are different degrees in grace here, yet all who are *justified* shall be *glorified*. Every vessel that was *chosen* from eternity, and *sanctified* in time, shall be placed near to *that river which proceeds out of the throne of the Lamb*, and from its *living, everflowing waters* be filled through eternity to come. Each heir of salvation "shall be perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God for ever." **A crown**

of righteousness is laid up for all them also *that love his appearing.*

Different manifestations of the Son are spoken of in the sacred volume. He appeared in *the fulness of time* when, agreeably to ancient prophecy and promise, he assumed the nature of man, and began to suffer as *a ransom for the sins of many.* The apostle thus declares, “but now once in the end of the world he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” He is also represented as *coming* when he interposes by any signal dispensation of his providence whether in mercy or judgment. We hear him thus declaring to his disciples, in the days of his personal ministry upon earth, “there shall be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man *coming* in his kingdom;” *coming* visibly in the extension of his church by the abundant out-pouring of his Spirit, and the general diffusion of his gospel. But the manifestation of the Son of God at the end of this world is emphatically called his *appearing.* It will be the last; the most public; the most interesting; the most glorious. He will then *come not to minister, but to be ministered unto*; not to be judged, but to judge; not to be arraigned before the bar of another, but to arraign before his own bar all the kindreds of the human kind, and not the nations of mankind merely, but the myriads of revolting, reprobate angels. “Behold he cometh, and every eye shall see him.”

Men may shut their eyes against him when he is now revealed in the amiable, endearing character of a Saviour, but they must behold him when exhibited in the grandeur of the judge, in the unveiled effulgence of "his own glory, of his Father's glory, and with the holy angels." As every eye shall see him, every knee shall do him homage either voluntarily, or reluctantly. No longer will *Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mock him*: No longer will the impious, infuriated Jews offer him a reed, a mock emblem of royalty, or in derision set a crown of thorns upon his head, because his head shall wear the real crown, and his hand hold the sceptre of universal, everlasting dominion: No longer will the multitude in the madness of their rage cry out, *let him be crucified*, for while all the hosts of the redeemed will shout in transports of joy, "lo! this is our God; we have waited for him; he will save us;" the damned throng, amazed and confounded, "will call to the mountains and rocks to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Again, "when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats."

Contemplations on the second appearing

of our Lord can never be unseasonable either for the sinner or saint, because it is an event which we all shall realize, and by which our state for eternity will be unalterably fixed. These eyes must behold the throne erected, and the Judge descending. These ears must hear an unchanging sentence either of approbation, or of exclusion from his gracious presence. But reflections on the second coming of our Lord are more especially seasonable on the present occasion. We have now assembled to commemorate his dying love in the ordinance of the supper : In this holy communion, our faith should be employed in contemplating not merely the past, but the future ; we should alternately recollect that “decease which was accomplished at Jerusalem,” that dreary night when he was delivered for our offences, and by the blood of his cross secured the complete, eternal remission of our sins ; and again be looking forward to that brighter morning when the heavens shall reveal him to complete the mediatorial scheme, and perfect the redemption of his church. “As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come ; till he appears the second time to be “glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe.”

May a ray of his glory dart upon and cheer our hearts, while I attempt in the simplicity of his gospel,

I. To shew the import of the exercise *looking for*, or *loving* his appearing—and,

II. Why the believer may reasonably look or long for this event.

1. This exercise implies a firm belief that the Son of God will appear. We cannot rejoice in the prospect of any event without a persuasion that it will certainly take place, and there is no article of our religion more clearly revealed in the scriptures, nor more frequently recommended to the consideration of the christian, than the future manifestation of his Lord. Reason itself suggests that there should be a general judgment of the world; that the friends of God might be publicly acquitted from every charge that is falsely brought against them, and that they should be honorably rewarded for all those services which they render to his cause. Reason also suggests it to be proper that those who wilfully oppose his kingdom on earth, should be publicly convicted of their impiety, and be exposed as monuments of reproach and punishment. Our own consciences frequently admonish us of a judgment to come. Why this remorse for the past, and this anxiety about the future, which we so frequently feel? Why the operations of a secret principle, excusing us when we do right, and sternly accusing us when we do wrong? These are solemn presages of a future retribution: They are the voice of conscience, which erects its tribunal in the heart as a

counterpart to the tribunal of the great Judge, and by which this monitor within anticipates the decisions of the final day.— But the general judgment which reason suggests as *proper*, and conscience forebodes as *probable*, the bible establishes as undeniably certain. “Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied—behold, “the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,” or angels, “to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds.” “I beheld,” says Daniel, alluding to the same occasion, “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit—his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set and the books were opened.” This event, which was predicted in the Old Testament, is taught with evidence still more luminous in the New. “He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead.” This day *is appointed*; although it is a secret to us, it is known to the Eternal mind, and unalterably determined: There was a period appointed for the manifestation of Messiah in the flesh as the Saviour of the world; there is a period fixed with

equal precision for his revelation as its Judge: Then having closed the mediatorial work, he will dispense rewards to his friends, and take vengeance on those who do *not obey his gospel*. But this event, which is taught as a truth interesting to all, is brought home more immediately to the conscience of each individual in the following passage. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." How interesting the fact, and with what precision is it taught! "Every one must receive the things done in his body." All distinction of character arising from rank, or fortune, or occupation, will then be done away. The rich will no longer have any ascendancy over the poor: The pastor must mingle with those who are now the people of his charge: The master will sink to a level with his servant; and he who now sits in judgment upon others must himself come down to be judged. The faith of the christian ought often to be directed to that certain, solemn event: He should aim at living under habitual impressions of that hour when he must appear before the bar of his Judge, give an account of his stewardship, and receive according to his works. Looking forward to that occasion, the apostle declares, "with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment—but he that judgeth me is the

Lord. Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart." The more duly we realize this appearing of our Lord, the more regardless we will become either of the applause, or censure of the world. "It is a very small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment;" his approbation cannot materially profit, neither can his reproach materially injure me; there is a bar more awful before which I expect to be summoned; a balance infinitely impartial, and eternally decisive in which all my actions must be weighed: "He that judgeth me is the Lord."

2. The exercise, "loving the appearing of our Lord," implies a real concern to be prepared for that event. The criminal who is arraigned before a human bar, and is conscious of having committed the offence charged against him cannot long for the hour of trial. Each anticipation of the time when his judge will ascend the bench; when the evidences will be adduced, and the indictment substantiated fills him with emotions of terror, not of joy: Neither can the sinner, chargeable with all the guilt of his nature, and life; without God, without Jesus, and without hope of future happiness, long for the manifestation of his Lord: His conscience startles with secret horror at each anticipation of the hour of his coming, and he aims at burying the thought in

the pursuits, or pleasures, or company of the world. In order therefore to love the second appearing of our Lord, and look forward with joy to that period, we must be prepared by faith in the blood of atonement, by repentance towards God," and by holiness of heart and of life. And to all such the prospect of his manifestation may be a source of the most refined, exquisite joy. The christian, living by faith upon the infinitely blessed Jesus, brought near to God by the application of his atoning sacrifice, clothed with his righteousness, and adorned with his image, does not merely believe it as a matter of faith, but exults in it as the consummation of all his hopes. *Then* he will actually receive that prize for which he had eagerly run; he will enjoy that inheritance which he had long and anxiously expected, and put on that crown for which he had fought "against the devil, the world, and the flesh." How elevated, in the prospect of this glorious event, were the views of the apostle? Borne on the wings of a lively faith and hope, his soul appears altogether transported beyond this world while his body remained in it. "I am now ready to be offered;" I have nothing to do but to die, when the message is delivered; "I know whom I have believed," and resting on Jesus, as "the Captain of my salvation," I hope to rise victorious over death and the grave: "The sting of death is sin," but that is extracted by my glorious, infinite substi-

tute, "who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; who was delivered for my offences, and rose again" as the pledge of my resurrection; "and the strength of sin is the law," which is armed with vengeance against every transgressor, but this law both in its precept and penalty was magnified by another in my room: "thanks be to God who now giveth me the victory," a complete, eternal victory over the law, and sin, and death, and the grave "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. This exercise implies a patient waiting for the manifestation of our Lord. There are many occurrences which try the faith and patience of a christian while he continues in this world. Owing sometimes to exquisite affliction in his body; or reproach heaped upon his character by false friends, or open, unfeeling adversaries; the imperfections which mark his best services here; the little progress which he makes in holiness amidst all the means which he enjoys; and especially the hidings of his Father's countenance, he becomes weary of this world and longs to depart. He finds from painful experience that the present life is little else than a succession of disappointments, and vexation; that every cup presented for our enjoyment is mingled with some bitter ingredient; that our most gilded prospects are merely visionary, and mock our expectations. Thus, through the rage of remaining corruption, or the want of spiritual support, or outward disappointment, and per-

secution, the christian is sometimes tempted presumptuously to ask, " why does my Lord delay his coming? Why am I detained so long in this theatre of vanity and sorrow, where my sun is often clouded, and I am doomed to darkness and doubt? O that I had the wings of a dove, I would fly far hence, even to yonder regions where sorrow and sighing shall be no more." But this peevishness of temper, and this impatience amidst the trials of life arise from enmity of heart against God, and a distrust of his providence. The exercise of ardent love to our Lord Jesus Christ, and of faith on his promises will constrain us to wait with submission and patience the time of his manifestation. All the afflictions of whatever nature which the righteous endure upon earth are appointed by their faithful, compassionate Lord; they are arranged by wisdom which cannot err, and by a love infinitely surpassing the love of friend to friend; they are not continued a moment longer than is requisite; they are all designed to prepare them for a more welcome reception of their Saviour when he appears, and add to their felicity in his presence. Are the redeemed infirm or afflicted in body now? all these infirmities and afflictions will heighten the enjoyments of that region where the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick; where there shall be no more disease, nor death, but their present frail, vile bodies " shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body," and

flourish in immortal youth. Is their divine Comforter rarely enjoyed? and when they do behold him through the medium of ordinances, is it but *in part*, and only for a moment? This very circumstance will enhance inconceivably the joys of that hour when they shall "see him face to face; when he shall reveal himself to them in all his grace, in all his glory, and never depart from their view. Are they surrounded by enemies here, by those who are apparently irreconcilable, and delight in torturing their feelings? This trial, however painful, will add to the pleasures of that society where harmony uninterrupted will everlastingly reign; where every bosom will burn with the purest flame of love not only to Jehovah the fountain of love, but to all around; where there shall be one throne which all the nations of the saved shall encircle; one object which all behold, even "the Lamb in the midst of it," and one song in which every heart and every voice will be united.— Learn, therefore, ye redeemed of the Lord, learn "in whatsoever state you are, therein to be contented;" learn to wait, and to wait with a holy submission for the *coming* of your Lord. However numerous, or painful, or protracted thine afflictions may be, thou hast the promise and oath of thy God in covenant that thou shalt be supported under them, that thou shalt be relieved from them, and that they shall ultimately issue in thy good. Although *the vision* of thy Lord

may tarry long, wait for it, and wait with a suitable resignation to his righteous pleasure. Does the dutiful scholar leave to the discretion of his teacher when to advance him from a lower to a higher class in the seminary? Does an affectionate son submit to the pleasure of his father when to give him the full possession of the inheritance promised him? and wilt not thou leave to the wisdom, and the will of thy Father the moment of thy translation from earth to heaven?

4. This exercise implies an earnest desire for the revelation of our Lord. Submission to the divine will as to the time and circumstances of our departure is by no means inconsistent with an unfeigned, ardent solicitude for the arrival of that time; and although the prospect of a little usefulness in the church, or in society, and particularly an acquiescence in the will of our Father may reconcile us to remain longer on earth, yet to live from day to day without lifting up our thoughts to the heavenly city, or feeling any earnest desires for the fruition of those pure, everlasting pleasures which are there to be expected, argues a disposition both carnal and earthly. Is not our treasure in heaven? Are not our dearest relations *there*, our Father, our elder Brother, angels, our fellow-servants, patriarchs and prophets, and apostles with a large proportion of our dear companions who died in the Lord? and shall not we long to be there?

Have we for many years been carrying on a painful, doubtful warfare with corruption and the world? and shall we not wish to be crowned with the honors of victory? Have we been so long enveloped with the shadows of earth, walking in darkness with scarcely a ray of light? and shall we not be looking out for the morning of glory which shall never be succeeded by night, nor obscured by any clouds? Have we been so often deceived by the empty, unsatisfying pleasures of time, and yet not desire with holy importunity the sublime substantial joys of eternity? Who would not exchange the cistern for those *living fountains* which shall always flow, and yet be always full? Moses earnestly longed for a view of the natural Canaan, which was merely a type; his spirit was moved with ardent desires to see “that goodly mountain even Lebanon;” to behold with his own eyes the land promised to the fathers, and towards which their faith and hopes had been so long directed? Was he thus anxious for attaining the shadow, and can we be indifferent about the substance, the Canaan of eternal rest? Shall we feel no desires to see those *trees of righteousness* which flourish in perpetual verdure; to drink of *that pure river of life* which flows out from the throne of God and waters and refreshes the whole paradise above? More especially, shall we not long to see Jesus *the desire of all nations*, of whom Enoch, only the seventh from Adam, prophesied; whose glory

Isaiah saw, and mentioned with rapture ; on whom the hearts of the faithful in all ages have fastened as their Beloved and Friend ; who is the wonder of angels, and the glory of heaven ? Surely, brethren ; it is our reproach, our unutterable reproach that we are so prone to this world with its pleasures and pursuits. The night is far spent, awake from your slumbers and “ be looking and longing for the coming of this day of God.”

To inquire why the christian may reasonably long for the approach of that day was our second proposition.

1. He may reasonably long for that day because his happiness and glory will then be promoted in the resurrection of his body. Although the believer's death is disarmed of its sting, stripped of all its terrors in the death of Jesus Jehovah his covenant Head, yet it is a consequence of transgression, and therefore constitutes a part of his humiliation. In this event the tender relation between the soul and the body is dissolved, and those partners which had been intimately united, and endeared to each other by many considerations are then doomed to a long, and painful separation : The body, which had been formed for perpetual exertion in the service of its Creator, is consigned the grave, there to languish joyless and inactive. But at the *second appearing* of our Lord the trumpet shall sound ; the ashes which had slumbered for ages shall be re-animated ; every particle shall be care-

fully collected, and the body, redeemed from the inactivity, the corruption of the grave, shall be re-united to the soul never to be separated. Then, and not till then will the christian's felicity, and glory be consummated. True it is, the soul when translated to heaven at death becomes ineffably blessed in the full fruition of its God ; it participates all that happiness which the unembodied spirit is capable of participating, but the soul is only a part of the human person, and therefore neither its dignity nor joy can be complete while in a state of separation from the body. The spirit from the hour of death until that of the resurrection must be considered as in a widowed state, and is not perfected either in glory or bliss until its reunion with its former companion the body. " We ourselves, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the REDEMPTION of our bodies." Redemption will then be consummated in its largest extent with respect to its heirs, when their souls are not only conformed to the image of the first born, and arrayed in the immaculate, unfading robes of his righteousness, but their very bodies are raised up to an immortal life ; when they are both delivered from the bondage of corruption ; when they are brought to a union intimate and indissolvable, and rendered capable of eternally contributing to the perfection of each other. With what

rapture ineffable did the apostle look forward to that event ; how anxiously did he long for its approach ? “ If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead,” that is, participate all that plenitude of glory and bliss, which may then be expected, and shall then be realized. *For this corruptible shall then put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.*

2. The christian may reasonably long for the appearing of his Lord, because he will then be honorably acquitted from every charge that is now brought against him, and be amply rewarded for his services in the cause of his Master. Innumerable accusations are *laid in* against the righteous in the present life. The law occasionally arraigns them before its bar, compares their imperfect obedience with its rigorous requirements, utters its denunciation against the least defect, and sends them away disconsolate : The world often arraigns them before its bar, misconstrues their best intentions, misrepresents their actions, pronounces their sincerity to be mere hypocrisy, their experiences as mere delusion, passes sentence upon them as a generation of deceivers, and sends them away disconsolate : The great accuser arraigns them before his bar ; he charges them with falling short of the purity of the divine law in every service ; he represents Jehovah as *a hard Master*, unwilling to pardon sin, or bear with their infirmities ; he often shakes them from their

confidence by suggesting to them that their hopes must be disappointed at last, and thus sends them away disconsolate. But every charge that is, or possibly can be urged against them will then be answered by the adorable Judge who had undertaken in their room ; every indictment he will for ever quash by an exhibition of that infinitely meritorious sacrifice which he once offered up in their nature and name. He will put to silence every challenge of the law, of a censorious world, of the Great Accuser, by declaring that that "decease which was accomplished at Jerusalem" was accomplished for them in particular : He will publicly announce to all spectators that he as their Surety endured the curse, and that was a sufficient reason why they should be delivered from the curse ; that he sustained the wrath of his righteous Father, and therefore this wrath ought not to be inflicted on them ; that he in the capacity of a substitute really *died*, and therefore it was a matter of unquestionable right that they should *live* and *live* for ever. No longer, disquieted believer, will thy peace be disturbed, or thy hopes clouded by accusations of any nature from any quarter. The sacrifice of Jehovah thy Redeemer will be admitted as an ample plea for thy deliverance from hell, and his righteousness, wrought out in thy nature and in thy covenant-room, will be acknowledged as a full title to all the immunities and glories of heaven. None shall hence-

forth lay any thing to their charge, because "the Lord the righteous Judge" shall openly acquit them in virtue of his own perfect righteousness exhibited in their behalf.

Nay, the Son of God in the character of a judge will not only acquit his ransomed from every accusation, but will honorably acknowledge and reward their performances. However imperfect their services may be in themselves, or insignificant they appear in the estimation of others, yet as done by faith in his promises, out of gratitude to his love, and zeal for his glory they are precious in his view, and shall be fully remunerated at last. "Them that honor me, I will honor." "Blessed are they which do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Not a tear which now flows for their sins, or the iniquities of others, shall be then forgotten. Not a prayer which they offer up for blessings on themselves, or the spread of the gospel through the world, shall remain unrewarded; and your very *confession* of him this day *before men* shall receive in return his *confession* of you in the presence of his Father, and the holy angels. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment," an emblem of purity and victory, "and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

3. The christian may reasonably *long* for the second *appearing* of his Lord, because he will then be admitted to the full enjoyment of all that blessedness which the gospel reveals, and his hopes anticipate. Here he is a pilgrim, and stranger, but then he will reach his everlasting home : Here he is indeed an heir, yet he is only in a state of minority, but then he will be admitted to possess all those privileges which are connected with his adoption into the family of God : Here, like a soldier in the field of battle, he is surrounded by legions of enemies, fiercely assailed, and often overcome, but then he will receive the palm and the crown. No sooner will the judgment be finished, and the damned consigned to their own place, than all the multitude of the redeemed will accompany their Lord with that invitation in his lips, "come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. YE BLESSED. There is a meaning in this expression the ten thousandth part of which cannot be conceived until *our Lord appear*, and the glories of heaven are disclosed. The soul was indeed blessed in the enjoyment of its God since its dissolution from the body, but these joys are inconceivably augmented by its union to its former partner the body. Every sense of the *outward man* will serve as an inlet of happiness and glory to the experience of the *inward man*. What joy indescribable must trans-

port the spirit when it looks abroad and, through the medium of the bodily eyes, beholds the light of the celestial world, one serene, unclouded, eternal day, of which the splendors of the meridian sun are scarcely a semblance: When it sees the bodies of the just seated in their mansions around, all luminous; shining like so many stars and suns in the kingdom of their Father; especially, when it looks toward the throne, and sees exalted to the midst of it that Jesus who undertook for sinners, and gave his life as the price of their redemption; that Jesus of whom they had often read in the scriptures; of whom they had heard in the sanctuary; whom they had often sought in the devotions of the closet; whose absence they had deplored as their greatest misery; and the pledges of whose love they had esteemed as the crown of all their joys; when they see him face to face in the full confidence that they shall go no more out.—What joy must transport the soul when it hears, through the medium of the bodily ears, ten thousand thousand saints, and ten thousand thousand angels mingling their hearts, and their voices in the sweetest harmony without one jarring note, without one discordant string! We are often elevated while we attend the worship of the sanctuary on earth, when we hear the followers of the Lamb chanting forth the praises of creating and redeeming love; but what must be our emotions when we enter the sanctuary a-

bove, when we hear the voices not of a single society, but of all the redeemed from all countries, and ages; of Enoch "who walked with God;" of David "the sweet singer of Israel;" of Apollos the eloquent preacher of righteousness; of these with unnumbered millions all striking their golden harps, and saying with loud voices, voices improved and refined to the uttermost, "salvation to him that sitteth on the throne, even to the Lamb for ever and ever!" Peter thought it good to remain on the mount with Moses, and Elias, where he might see their glory and hear their conversation. We often feel happy in the fellowship of our friends, of those in whose sincerity we may confide, and by whose discourse we may be entertained, or edified; what then must be the advantage, and what the delight of the heavenly world, when we shall sit down not with a few, but with all the prophets, and apostles, and martyrs of our Lord; when each will feel the most unlimited confidence in the friendship of the other; and when it will be the glory, and felicity of each to contribute to the glory, and felicity of the whole.

Brethren, are these things so? Are such glories reserved in the celestial world? Will they be disclosed at the manifestation of our Lord? Who that loves the Saviour would not long for his manifestation? Who that has tasted of the pledge does not earnestly aspire after the full possession?

Permit me to apply this subject by asking this large assembly, are you prepared to stand before the Son of Man? Suppose that the hour of retribution was now come; that the "white throne" was erected; that the Judge in his uncreated effulgence was descending; that the trump of God was blown, and the nations summoned to appear before him; are you ready for these interesting, awful events? Are you born of his Spirit? Are you living daily by faith on his covenant, and righteousness, and promises? Are you emptied of self, of your own strength as weakness, your own wisdom as folly, your own righteousness as guilt, glorying in Jesus as your salvation, and hope, and thus prepared to receive the summons with confidence and joy? Alas, are there not some of you; are there not many of you who have rarely reflected on these realities? Amidst your eager solicitude about this world and its concerns, you have neglected making preparation for the next. You have rarely employed an evening; nay, may I not add, you have rarely occupied an hour in serious reflection about the soul, the precious soul that never dies; that must shortly plunge into a world unknown, a world of bliss or torment, of glory or reproach. You have rarely thought "of a judgment to come," when you must stand in the presence of an impartial God, give an account of all the deeds you have done, of all the instructions you have heard, of all the opportuni-

ties for promoting your own salvation, or the salvation of others which you have enjoyed, and then, according "to your words and works," be adjudged either to heaven or hell. Brethren, do you believe that it is "appointed for all men once to die, and after death the judgment?" is it not folly, is it not madness in the extreme to live unprepared for death, and judgment? You know not the day, nor the place, nor the manner of your departure, and be admonished this hour that as you live you will probably die; and as you die you must remain for ever. "Where the tree falleth, there it shall lie." The moment of your dissolution determines your destiny beyond the peradventure of a change. The soul once damned shall never be redeemed: The flames of hell, once kindled around you, are never to be quenched: The tormenting worm once envenomed will give no respite; and the door of the bottomless pit once locked upon you shall never be opened more. "The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Shall I be pronounced your enemy, because I thus plainly address and admonish you? Certainly not. I only aim at convincing you of your disease, while there is a *balm* in the

gospel, and a *Physician* to administer it ; I would point out to you the gathering storm, while there is a *covert* within view ; a *covert* into which you may enter, and be eternally safe : I would shew you the *avenger* who pursues, who is thirsting for your blood, while the door of *the city of refuge* is yet open for your admission.

Will you listen to the counsels of a friend ? Are you sensible of your danger, and resolved to turn your attention to the great interests of eternity ? Would you acquaint now yourselves with God, and be at peace, thereby stand unruffled amidst all the terror, and all the grandeur of the judgment-day ? Are such your resolutions, I congratulate you on this auspicious occasion, and assure you in my Master's name that all things are ready on the part of heaven to complete a negociation. The everlasting Father is ready : He reaches forth the olive branch of peace, and proclaims, " I, even I, am he that blotteth out your transgressions for mine own name's sake ;" " I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ;" Nay, for your more abundant encouragement he has confirmed this truth by the solemnity of his oath, " as I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but would that he turn from his wicked ways, and live : turn ye, turn ye, why will you die, O house of Israel ?" *Why will you die, O inhabitants of Salem ?* Are not the mercies of Jehovah, as free to par-

don you, as for the pardon of others? Is not the door of hope as wide for your admission, as for the admission of all the millions who have entered before you? Does not the laver of Calvary roll plenteously in the channel of the gospel, is it not as divinely meritorious for the remission of your crimes, as those of Manasseh the murderer, or a blaspheming, persecuting Saul? Is not that garment of salvation, which the expiring Surety pronounced *finished*, brought as near in the promise, and tendered as freely to you, as to others who have put it on? "There is no condemnation to any who are in Christ Jesus," and not a sinner who applies to him will be rejected. It is your duty, your interest, your honor to improve the offered redemption, and to improve it without the delay of another moment. "Behold! now is the accepted time; behold! now is the day of salvation." *To day* you have heard his voice through the medium of a feeble, most unworthy ambassador; to day you have seen in symbol his body which was broken, and his blood which flowed for the remission of sin; *harden not your hearts.*

2. We learn from this doctrine the character of those who may worthily participate the ordinance of the supper. They are such and only such as "love the appearing of our Lord:" Who live as *strangers* and *sojourners* upon earth, and are looking and longing for his approach as the consummation of all their hopes. The provision of

ferred on this table is *the children's bread*, and therefore none but they who are adopted into the divine family, who claim God as their Father, and heaven as their home, have a right to it, or can be profited by it. Ye who have entered the temple this day with the design of commemorating the Saviour's death in the institution of the supper, turn your eyes upon your own hearts, and impartially examine your real character. Are you the "circumcision who rejoice in Christ Jesus, and count all things but loss for the excellency of his knowledge?" Is it your unfeigned desire in the discharge of this duty, and of all other duties to be strong *only* in his strength; to be wise *only* in his wisdom; to be righteous *only* in his righteousness imputed; to be holy *only* in his holiness imparted; to become nothing that Jesus may be all in every part of your salvation? Do you aim daily "to live by the faith of the Son of God," bringing every offence which might ruffle the peace of your consciences to his atoning blood for pardon; every lust to be subdued by his all-conquering power; every grace to be cherished and invigorated by the influences of his Spirit; every want to be supplied from his everlasting fulness; every care whether temporal or spiritual to Him as *caring for you*, and every tear to be wiped away by his compassionate hand? Amidst your conflict with corruption, with a *heart desperately wicked* are you looking forward with holy impor-

tunity for that hour when you shall be presented before him *without spot, and blameless* ; when you shall love with an ardor inconceivably greater, and serve without a wandering thought for ever ? Amidst the vanity of worldly enjoyments ; the vexation of worldly pursuits ; the delusion of worldly prospects, do you “ joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ ” as your unchanging, all-satisfying portion ; and are you waiting with *earnest expectation* for the time when you shall see the King in his perfect beauty in the heavenly state ; when your eyes shall be feasted in contemplating those worlds of bliss and glory which shall then open to your view ? “ Do you *indeed* love him who first loved you ? ” Do you feel yourselves unspeakably obligated to that dear Redeemer who hath done so much, and suffered so much for your salvation ? and would you now express this heart-felt obligation to your precious Lord, your gratitude for his goodness, your respect for his command, by receiving the symbols of his body and blood ? Are you ready in simplicity and sincerity of soul to declare, “ the love of Christ constraineth us : ” We desire *to do this*, to attend to this ordinance, *in remembrance* of Him who was not unmindful of us ; *who thought upon us in our low, helpless, hopeless estate*, and we look forward to a long eternity when, with understandings more enlightened, hearts more expanded, an eloquence more expressive and eleva-

ted, we shall admire and “shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.” If such be your exercises, and such your desires even in the lowest degree, then with freedom I invite you to this banquet of love. Here is *living bread* for those who *hunger—after righteousness*; bread to satisfy, and strengthen for enduring the toils and dangers of the wilderness: Here is “wine that maketh glad the heart;” wine to cheer the drooping pilgrim until he reaches the Canaan of everlasting rest. “In this mountain is the Lord of hosts making” *for us* “a feast of fat things; a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.”

Shall I again exhort all to look frequently for this *appearing* of their Lord, and to aim at constant preparation for it. This anticipation of his approach, and of the privileges then to be expected will be a great means of promoting our consolation and peace. “We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Who, as he approaches the harbour after a tedious, tempestuous voyage; or who that is within view of his own home after a fatiguing, and dangerous journey; or what heir, who is just receiving into possession an estate which had been long in expectation, does not feel sensations of joy? And can the christian remain unmoved, unrelated in the near prospect of attaining *eternal life*; that perfection of purity and joy

for which he had frequently prayed, and for which he had been eagerly looking, and longing? There their day knows no night; their song is liable to no interruption; their vision is darkened by no veil; their sun obscured by no cloud; their strength is subject to no decay; their love to no languor, and their happiness to no end. And yet, fellow christians, how transporting is the thought that this plenitude of bliss will soon, very soon be ours in actual, eternal possession? "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive, and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort your own hearts, comfort one another with these words."

"Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace," prepare each of you for meeting the Saviour with triumph *at his appearing and kingdom.* AMEN.

SERMON XI.



EPHESIANS 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.

“THE principalities and powers” mentioned in this place, are probably the angels “who kept their first estate:” Various titles are ascribed to this celestial hierarchy as expressing either the original excellence of their nature, or pointing out those exalted stations in which they are called to act. It is the opinion of some that these dignified titles are given to the angels because of their important agency in the government of this world. Some have even conjectured that particular countries, or nations are committed immediately to the superintendence of particular angels under God the Supreme Ruler of all. Michael is therefore called *the prince* of Israel, and Luke the evangelist mentions that “a vision appeared to Paul in the night, a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, come over to Macedonia and help us.” By this man some learned commentators understand the angel who superintended the region of Macedonia, and now appeared in the form of a man. Whether this conjecture be

strictly correct I shall not offer to determine, yet it is highly probable that individuals, and cities, and nations are often indebted to angels, under God, for their protection in danger. Daniel pronounces Michael "one of the chief princes," and also "the great prince that standeth for the children of Israel," the church of the living God; and John, in the revelation which was given him, "beheld seven angels standing before God, and to them were given seven trumpets," foretelling events which would occur in different periods of time until the end of the world. These holy spirits are frequently employed for the protection of the heirs of promise in the hour of danger, and consolation to them in circumstances of distress.— "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him; and delivereth them." "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation?" On the other hand, remaining perfectly loyal to their adorable sovereign, and inspired with a burning zeal for his glory, they stand always ready to cut off the enemies of his government. An angel of the Lord "smote king Herod because he gave not God the glory." An angel "troubled the host of the Egyptians" in their pursuit of the Israelites; and by an angel of the Lord the whole Assyrian army was destroyed in one night. These exalted spirits are also represented as coming with the great Judge at the consumma-

tion of all things; as sounding the alarm of his approach; as collecting "his elect from the four winds of heaven," and assisting in the general judgment.

But although these titles of authority may be assigned to the heavenly host, because of their agency in the government of the church, and the world, they are more probably designed to express that superiority of station which a part of them sustains over the rest. No doubt can be entertained, but a variety of rank was originally established, and still exists among this higher order of intelligences. Among the spirits who fell, there is mentioned a "prince of devils, the prince of darkness," and the "prince of the power of the air." These and other passages plainly intimate that among the inhabitants of heaven who rebelled, one stood in rank superior to the rest, and probably was instrumental in seducing them to revolt: And among those of the celestial hierarchy who remained faithful to their Sovereign, and opposed the rebellion of their compeers, we read of Michael *the arch-angel*, and of Gabriel *who stands before God*. This latter seraph appears to occupy a station near to the throne of the Eternal Prince, and probably through him orders are issued forth to be executed by others of inferior rank. We are also informed by John in his revelation, that "there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon

fought and his angels." It is therefore evident that particular angels among those who sinned, and among those who sinned not, were invested with authority over the rest. Whether this distinction of rank proceeded from any difference of intellectual endowments among these hosts of heaven, or whether it depended on the mere sovereignty of Jehovah, is a question on which the scriptures are silent. The Lord God, as Creator and Disposer of all beings, both rational and irrational, does according to HIS WILL: He, as an adorable Sovereign, promotes whom he pleases, either among angels or men: He possessed an unquestionable right to perform his will in their creation at first, and he possesses the same right to consult his pleasure in their future disposition and government.

These principalities and powers are "in heavenly places." A pure, perfect spirit enjoys heaven wherever he is, because he enjoys the favor of Jehovah, "which is life." Gabriel is in the presence of God, is favored with the most satisfactory, elevating assurances of his good will, whether he appears to Zacharias in the temple foretelling the birth of a son, or on the plains of Bethlehem announcing to the shepherds the nativity of our Lord, or whether he is employed to strengthen the Saviour in his agony, or is sent forth to minister to some heir of salvation. Yet there is a place in the universe consecrated as the more immediate residence

of the blessed. This is called in scripture the "throne of God; the city of the living God; the palace of the King; the highest heavens; the third heavens, and the heaven of heavens." This, which is designed to be the temple of the King Eternal, and for the accommodation of his loyal subjects, is no doubt garnished in a manner the most sumptuous and splendid. There Jehovah sits enthroned in light ineffable, diffusing a perpetual stream of joy and glory, among all the favored inhabitants; there Jesus resides in the full display of his mediatorial honors, the object of adoration and praise to all the extatic hosts: there dwell that "innumerable company of angels" who kept their first estate, unless when sent abroad on messages of love to the righteous, or of indignation to the unrighteous; there dwell also "the spirits of just men made perfect," with the body of Enoch, of Elijah, of Moses who probably ascended from Tabor the mount of transfiguration, and of that cloud of witnesses who arose to attest the death, and resurrection of our Lord.

But it may not be improper to notice that these principalities and powers are not always stationed in the upper court, in this heaven of heavens. The Lord God "maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." As pure, unembodied substances, unretarded in their progress by matter, they fly with inconceivable activity from place to place in his vast dominions to

execute his commands, and perform his purposes. They are one moment encamped around a particular believer, shielding him from dangers unseen to which he is exposed: At another moment they hover around the bed of an afflicted saint sympathizing, supporting, aiding towards the restoration of his body to health, or waiting to conduct his departing spirit to the regions of bliss: Again, they are sent abroad to fight the battles of the Lord against the enemies of his church. They are this day thronging this sanctuary to witness the order and exercises of the worshippers. They feel a joy ineffable while they behold the lively frames of some, their faith strengthened, their repentance renewed while they look on Jesus whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, their love kindling and rising into a flame; and they weep, if angels can weep, while they notice the indifference, impenitence of others. No doubt the host of God is this moment hovering around the sacramental table, gazing upon the symbols of the body of *our* Saviour, and *their* Lord; admiring and adoring "this mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh," and bleeding and dying for the redemption of sinners. These *principalities and powers* are thus sent forth, or kept immediately before the throne as the pleasure of their Sovereign may dictate or the interests of his glory require.

To these exalted intelligences "are made

known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."

By the *church* here mentioned, we are more properly to understand the New Testament dispensation. The apostle therefore mentions with particular emphasis that *now*, that is, under the present economy of mercy. The light is much clearer under it, than under any former dispensation; the mysteries of divine grace are more fully disclosed, and the perfections of God which shine in the plan of our redemption now appear both to angels and men, with a more astonishing and commanding glory. Since the actual appearance of the Son of God in the flesh, and the removal of sin by the sacrifice of himself, "the light of the moon is become as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven fold as the light of seven days." That morning which dawned upon the world shortly after the apostacy of man; which gradually increased in lustre during the age of patriarchs and prophets, has now nearly attained its meridian splendors. So that to principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, and to all intelligent spectators in every part of the divine dominion the mysteries of the cross are more fully unfolded under the present, than any preceding dispensation.

But the term *church* may with propriety be considered in a sense more extensive, and as comprehending all the most interesting discoveries of the scheme of redemp-

tion which from age to age have been made to our world ; those various periods at which these celestial spirits were admitted to more elevated views of the divine perfections which shine forth in this plan.

When the apostle speaks of the *manifest wisdom of God* as particularly applied to these exalted spectators, we must not understand this to the exclusion of his other attributes, because the recovery of man, through the cross of his co-eternal Son, is a scheme in which they are all concentrated, and brought most luminously to view. In some parts of the natural world we are led to admire one attribute of the Divine Author, and in others another attribute. We discern a high display of his power in giving, instantaneously, existence to this astonishing fabric : We admire that wisdom which arranged so nicely its various parts, and rendered each conducive to the perfection of the whole ; we admire that bounty which is never exhausted, but supplies from age to age the necessities of every thing that lives. In some occurrences of divine providence justice appears awful, and in others mercy appears obvious and amiable ; but in the restoration of man, through the mediation of the Son of God, all these perfections shine forth with a lustre unparalleled, and each reflects light and glory on the other. Yet there is no perfection of God which inspired men more frequently celebrate, as displayed in this plan, than his wisdom.—

“ We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery: We preach Christ crucified to—them who are called the wisdom of God; O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” This is an attribute which the holy angels as on-lookers particularly discern and adore.

In the more full discussion of these words, we are naturally led to inquire what parts of this scheme particularly exhibit the glory of Jehovah’s wisdom—and,

II. At what periods of the church the glory of this wisdom shone forth to the astonishment of angels, and all the hosts of heaven.

1. This wisdom is evidently and eminently displayed in the constitution of Messiah’s person by whom, as the great Agent, our redemption was accomplished. “ In the Word made flesh, Immanuel, God with us,” are united two natures essentially and infinitely different. The constitution of the human frame is justly considered as affording a bright display of the Creator’s wisdom; the union of two substances widely different, a material body with an immaterial, immortal spirit; the intimacy of this relation so that they act and re-act upon each other, and necessarily participate in the joys and afflictions of each other. While the inspired David contemplated his own frame; matter moulded and wrought up into a fabric so exquisite as the body, the seeing eye, the hearing ear, and expressive countenance;

when he contemplated the nicer and nobler structure of the soul, formed for the enjoyment of its God, and capable of endless progress in wisdom and happiness, he exclaims in holy surprise, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made. "How passing wonder;" how surpassing all created conception must the Person of the Son of God be considered! What opposites there meet, and become intimately and indissolvably united! He is the Creator, and yet a creature; a feeble babe, and yet *the mighty God*; a child of yesterday, and yet the *Father of eternity*; in the form of a servant, and the likeness of men, and yet *God over all*; acquainted with grief, and yet *blessed for ever*; nursed by the arms of a mortal, and yet wielding with his own arms the elements of nature, and *upholding all things*; nearly related to man, being actually a partaker of our nature, and yet *the Father's Equal and Fellow*; without comeliness, or beauty, or form, and yet "the brightness of Jehovah's glory, and the express image of his Person;" subject to earthly parents, and yet greater than the princes of the earth; "King of kings and Lord of lords." Such is our Immanuel by whom the church is redeemed; and no wonder that angels desire to look into the ineffably mysterious constitution of his Person, and while they look behold in it the manifold wisdom of God. And I feel constrained to remark that it is owing to the extreme blindness of the human understanding, and the

desperate depravity of the heart that this mystery is so little admired and adored in our world. We discern wisdom in the other parts of the divine workmanship ; we discern it in forming the smallest insect which moves on the earth, and the least atom which floats in the air, and regard with indifference, or contempt, the Person of Immanuel, which in the estimation of every holy, intelligent on-looker is the "chief of the ways of God." "Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect ;" on whose understandings the Holy Ghost has shed the rays of spiritual light, "yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought : Which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." But as Christ crucified was to thousands, when he lived in person upon earth, "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence," so he is to many at present, notwithstanding the additional evidence which he gave of his Messiahship by his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension on high. Yet however uninteresting to some, it has not failed to excite the wonder and gratitude of others. "Without all controversy, great is the mystery of godliness," and in the train of mysteries which are brought to view in the gospel, this, is mentioned as the first in importance and glory ; "God was manifested in the flesh." "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bring

forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel." This same mystery has excited wonder in heaven nearly six thousand years past, and with praises to the Author and Subject of it, the arches of heaven will resound throughout eternity to come.

2. To "principalities and powers" this wisdom of God is displayed in securing glory to himself while he announces good will to revolting, ruined man. A prince may freely pardon the rebel, or a judge dismiss the criminal from an indictment which has been proved against him, but the majesty of the law must suffer, and other subjects may be imboldened to transgress. They are led to suspect that the law is inexpedient in itself, or that the sanction annexed to it was unduly severe, or that the prince was either unable or afraid to inflict the penalty on those who transgressed. But in this the wisdom of Jehovah shines unparalleled in that he fully vindicates the glory of the law; shews that it is *holy* and *just* and *good*, and at the same time freely forgives the offender. The nature of the law appears more expedient, and its sanction more awful than if the transgressor had suffered in his own person the literal execution of the threatening, and yet this transgressor is restored, not merely to the immunities of a subject, but the more exalted privileges of a son and heir. *Grace now reigns through*, in a perfect consistence with *righteousness*. The great God is *just* in the very act of *justifying*

the ungodly who believe in Jesus Christ. The remission of the rebel, his reconciliation to the favor and confidence of his Prince is as eminently an act of justice as of mercy ; it is perfectly consistent with, and tends to reflect glory on each divine perfection. Here is a display of wisdom which excites the astonishment of angels now, and must command *their* admiration and *ours* for ever.— The government of God is rendered more glorious, sin exhibited in a light more odious, more enormously evil by the disobedience of man, and yet myriads of revolting men raised to mansions of bliss, and soaring even beyond the angels who *kept their first estate.* O what must be the emotions of “principalities and powers” while they contemplate Him whom the Father “set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,” magnifying the law by his own vicarious obedience, and making it honorable while he announces the jubilee of release to those who had wantonly transgressed and degraded it. With what extatic hearts and elevated voices must they raise that song which shall never, never end ; “O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways are past finding out : For of him, and through him, and to him are all things ; to whom be glory and dominion for ever.”

3. To “principalities and powers” the wisdom of God appeared illustrious in bring-

ing the greatest good out of sin the greatest evil ; in overruling it to the greater advancement of his own glory, and the more exalted privileges of man who had been tempted to rebel. No doubt the spirits of darkness were filled with malignant triumph at the apostacy of our family ; they probably erected their standard, and raised the shout of victory, concluding that the field was their own ; they beheld this earth, which was designed as the theatre of obedience polluted and degraded by transgression ; they saw the divine image, which had been enstamped upon our nature and which constituted the fairest part of this lower world, sullied and effaced by sin ; they beheld the law, which was in itself holy and just, trampled under foot, and man, who was formed for the service of his Creator, now in the act of open hostility ; they probably concluded that this earth, which was designed as the residence of holy beings, was now connected as a province with hell, and that the purposes of Jehovah in the creation of this world were defeated. But divine wisdom interposes, and the apostacy of man is overruled to an issue directly the opposite and infinitely glorious. This earth, which had been polluted by the sin of man, is purged by the obedience of his co-eternal Son ; it is more honored by the personal residence and immaculate obedience of the divine Redeemer, than by the obedience of myriads of finite beings for ever ; our nature is restored to a dignity much greater

than was lost by transgression; redeemed men are reinstated in the favor of their sovereign, and there secured from the possibility of future apostacy, and those many mansions in heaven which had been emptied by the revolt of angels, are replenished by the millions of ransomed men; and new displays of the wisdom, and sovereignty, and justice, and forbearance of Jehovah are afforded to all rational spectators in all parts of his dominions. "I come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin reigned unto death, grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

From this very imperfect view of the manifold wisdom of God, which is made known to angels through the medium of the cross, we proceed,

II. To inquire at what periods of the church the glory of this wisdom most illustriously shone forth.

1. This wisdom was made known, to the astonishment "of those principalities and powers," at the proclamation of the first promise in Paradise. It has been conjectured by some that even previous to the creation of this earth Jehovah intimated to the angels the future revolt of man, his design to restore a portion of the human family by the substitution of his own Son, and that this respect to our nature offended the angels, and occasioned their rebellion. As our

knowledge of the heavenly hosts is derived only from revelation, and as the scriptures do not support this conjecture, we shall pass it over without any remark.—But we may venture to assert, that events so interesting as the apostacy of man through the temptation of a fallen spirit, and our restoration through the interposition of the eternal Son, would be very early intimated to the angels of light. As the Lord God designed the redemption of sinners through the sufferings of Jesus Christ to be the brightest display of his own perfections, he would probably disclose it without delay for exciting the wonder and joy of these “principalities and powers in heavenly places.” Perhaps it was their knowledge that this earth was afterwards to become the scene of transactions thus sublime which constrained these sons of God to shout for joy when its foundation was laid. We find, therefore, that after the expulsion of Adam from Paradise, which he had forfeited by disobedience, a “cherub with a flaming sword” was stationed to “keep the way of the tree of life.” This is a circumstance particularly instructive, and interesting. This minister of justice had already learned that a “new and living way to the holiest of all” was opened up in the counsels of heaven, and he occupies this post with his sword in his hand to enforce it: He there stands to instruct our parents that reconciliation by the covenant of works was altogether impossible; that “the

tree of life" had lost its efficacy for giving life, and therefore in vain would they partake of its fruits ; that there was no salvation but by faith in that *seed* which had been already revealed, and was afterwards to be borne.

This knowledge in the mysteries of redemption must have gradually increased to the angels during the progress of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensation : this scheme became more fully unfolded to them by the institution of sacrifices ; by the erection of the tabernacle and temple ; by the successive prophecies which were delivered during a period of nearly four thousand years ; by the various washings and ceremonies that were in use under the legal economy. By every new revelation that was made, and by every new mode of worship which was introduced these "principalities and powers" obtained more distinct, and enlarged views of the divine wisdom which appears in this plan. To shew the deep interest which they feel in the scheme of redemption, we find them standing on each end of the mercy-seat as an emblem of their searching into its mysteries : They aided in conducting the church through the wilderness ; they attended in dispensing the law from mount Sinai, for it was delivered, says Stephen, "by the disposition of angels ;" they appeared to Daniel foretelling the incarnation of our Lord, and his actually "finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making

reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness."

But to these "thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers" this "manifold wisdom" shone forth with still brighter glory,

3. When Messiah actually assumed the human nature, and appeared in our world: These first born sons of God were seemingly all admiration, all ecstasy on this important occasion. Gabriel, who had foretold to Zachariah the birth of John his illustrious forerunner, now appears to the shepherds and announces the birth of his more illustrious Successor. Having hailed the appearance of the "morning star," he hails with still greater transports of joy the approach of the rising Sun. "Behold," he declares to the shepherds, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people: For unto you is born, this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." But the principalities and powers could not remain in their "heavenly places" at a period so interesting. They drop their crowns; they start from their mansions; they hasten down to the plains of Bethlehem to unite in the contemplation of this mystery, and swell the anthem of praise. "For suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards man." Although these created spi-

rits had been long acquainted with this mystery of godliness, "God to be manifested in the flesh," yet how must they have kindled with new transports of wonder and joy at the view of this mystery actually accomplished? What amazement unutterable must have seized them when they behold now lying in a manger Him who had lately lain in the bosom of the Father, and had been "daily his delight;" wrapped in "swaddling clothes" Him who had formerly been clothed with "light as with a garment," and had irradiated all heaven with his glory; not born of an earthly princess; but descended from an obscure, despised virgin; not dazzling the spectators with the rays of his divinity, but appearing "without comeliness or form." Although their eloquence was that of heaven, yet they want language to express their emotions, and therefore sing in simple strains, "glory to God in the highest;" of all the displays of his perfections this is the most commanding; here is wisdom; here is sovereignty; here is condescension; here is love without a parallel; without even a comparison in all the transactions of God.

Throughout the whole course of our Redeemer's ministry upon earth, these angels of God attended as anxious spectators, and from all the doctrines of his mouth, from all the miracles of his hand, from his patience amidst complicated sufferings, from his forbearance towards those who insulted him,

from his ardent zeal in performing the will of his Father, they were constantly acquiring new discoveries of the nature and glory of this plan. But the last scene of Messiah's suffering was the most distressing, the most insupportable to him, and must therefore have filled with the most profound astonishment surrounding angels. When the Son of God, as our representative and sponsor, stood trembling in the garden ; when, through the exquisiteness of inward agony, the blood was pressed through all the pores of his body ; when the plaintive exclamation was extorted from his mouth, " my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and recoiling nature began to expostulate, " O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," how must these heavenly choirs have been lost in amazement, and laying aside their harps silently admired and adored ? What high proofs did they then receive not only of the *manifold wisdom*, but also of the awful, inexorable justice of Jehovah ? Angels, therefore, who sung praises at his birth ; who ministered to him in the wilderness, appeared *strengthening* him in the garden : They afterwards appeared at his sepulchre to aid and attest his resurrection from the dead ; they arose with him when he ascended on high, and opened wide the gates of glory for his admission ; with joy ineffable they conducted him to the right hand of the Father, and through him, as " the Lamb in the midst of the throne," they are

now learning, and will be for ever learning the manifold wisdom and searchless sovereignty of God.

1. May not this subject inspire us with the most elevated thoughts of the scheme of redemption, and excite us to the profound contemplation of its mysteries? We usually form our estimate of any work from its nature, from the character of the persons concerned in its execution, and the consequences probably resulting from it. In all these respects, the recovery of man, through the intervention of the eternal Son as Mediator, is infinitely interesting and worthy of our most ardent research and profound veneration. The stage on which it is transacted is this world: The personages immediately engaged in it are the co-equal, co-eternal Three, Father, Son and Spirit, all concurring, concurring and co-operating; drawing the outlines from eternity past, gradually filling them up by all their operations through every successive period of time, and finishing the draught throughout the ages of eternity to come. For to this work every prophecy and promise, in whatever age it was delivered, immediately pointed, and to this every event in divine providence, either directly or indirectly, is rendered subservient.—The onlookers are all the hosts of heaven, *angels, and thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers.* To them is “made known by the church,” where this scheme is disclosed, “the manifold wis-

dom of God." Surely that work must be stupendous which these superior orders of beings value so highly ; into which they inquire so eagerly, and in the success of which they feel so deeply interested. The result of this plan, with respect to Jehovah, is the highest conceivable manifestation of his glory ; the majesty of his law vindicated ; the rigor of his justice displayed ; the honors of his government supported ; the treasures of his mercy unlocked, and poured forth in abundance upon our world ; sin appearing more odious, righteousness more amiable, and thus the order of the universe more established. The issue, with respect to man, is the recovery of millions from the lowest depths of guilt, and reproach, and wretchedness, to the utmost elevation of holiness, and honor, and bliss. "The law entered that the offence might abound ; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one ; much more they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one man, Jesus Christ." Turn aside then, O brethren, and behold this "great sight, this wisdom of God in a mystery," into which the angels desire to look ; in the contemplation of which they feel honored, and delighted, and profited. And while you "behold in this glass the glory of the Lord," may you be "changed into his image," inflamed with his love, and filled with his consolations.

2. We are encouraged from this doctrine to persevere in our attachment to the gospel of the Son of God ; to consider the open profession of his name, and support of his cause as equally our duty and glory.— Many appear to imagine that religion is beneath their attention ; that the study of its mysteries, or regard for its institutions is fitted rather for those who have nothing else to engage their attention, or that it is suited for those in the lower walks of life, whose birth is more mean, whose understandings are naturally contracted, and whose education is more common.—Under this impression, those particularly in the higher stations of life often look upon our holy religion with indifference, or contempt. Such conduct is as impious, as the principle from which it proceeds is erroneous and dangerous. The angels, certainly, are not mean in their origin or situation. They were formed before us in order of time, and are stationed above us by the appointment of their Creator. They are incomparably our superiors in point of age, of intellectual capacities, and their advantages for improving those capacities. They do not “ excel us in strength ” more than in wisdom, in a profound, comprehensive knowledge of the divine perfections as exhibited both in creation, and redemption, yet they are still eager to “ learn ” and even to “ learn by the church, by that gospel of reconciliation which is there unfolded. To these “ princi-

palities and powers in heavenly places are made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. In their origin, in their rank, in strength, in age, in experience, in attainments both of wisdom and purity, they stand far above prophets, or apostles, or ordinary ministers of the cross, yet they deem it no degradation to attend as scholars upon these, and from them "as stewards of the mysteries, and manifold grace of God," to receive new instructions. Since angels are our companions in the study and admiration of the gospel and its doctrines, we need not feel mortified although men may stand aloof, and be ashamed to confess it.—Compared with "principalities and powers in heavenly places, the wisest among men are mere fools, and the most mighty are contemptible, and mean. Nay, brethren, to be ashamed of our Lord Jesus Christ, of his gospel, of his people, of his ordinances, is really to be ashamed of our glory, because his assumption of our nature into an intimate union with his divine; his suffering in our room, and for our advantage, was the highest conceivable honor which could be conferred upon us.—Through this scheme, men, who were a "little lower than angels" by birth, and degraded far below them by transgression, are exalted much above them in honor and happiness. "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," worthy not only of our belief, but our boasting and rejoicing "that Jesus Christ came into

the world to save sinners." Nay, brethren, to be ashamed of the Saviour, and his cross, is to be ashamed of that in which patriarchs, and prophets, and holy men have gloried since the foundation of the world. "They inquired, and searched diligently—what the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

3. We may infer from this doctrine that indolence, or indifference in man is altogether inexcuseable, when "principalities and powers" are so eager, and unwearied in exploring the mysteries of redeeming grace. They are not so immediately concerned in this scheme as we are. They have no guilt to be pardoned, "for they kept their first estate," and performed with sinless perfection their Creator's will: They have no pollutions to be washed away, for they appear "without spot before the throne of God." They have immediate access to his presence, and enjoy the uninterrupted expressions of his love, and therefore do not require a Mediator to introduce them. Besides, "these thrones, and dominions, and principalities" do not behold the *Word* manifested in their nature, or expiating with his blood the crimes of their revolting tribes.—"God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell," and is reserving them in everlasting chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day." Yet "these

sons of God," cordially acquiesce in his procedure ; they revere his justice in executing vengeance on fallen angels ; they adore his sovereignty in shewing mercy to fallen man ; they admire his wisdom in effecting our recovery in a consistence with the glory of all his perfections. They rejoice when a sinner repenteth, and they all go forth either alone or in bands to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation. Were pure, unembodied spirits visible to the eye of flesh, we might see these hosts of God now thronging our assembly, and devoutly witnessing the solemnities of our worship.

" Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," how pleasing is the reflection that we are not alone in doing homage to the Son of God, the Saviour of the world ; in expressing our admiration at his love, and our obedience to his command ! " All the angels of God worship him," and exult when we unite in offering him the same reasonable service.—While we are approaching the sacred festival, that memorial of his dying love, a multitude of this seraphic host attend us on the right hand and on the left : While we are receiving, with a firm faith and ardent love, the bread and the wine, and in them a crucified Redeemer as our portion and glory, they exult that he did not come in vain, nor bleed, nor die in vain ; they congratulate him, and rejoice with each other that their Lord sees in our salva-

tion "the travail of his soul, and is satisfied :"
 While over the symbols of his body and blood we renew the dedication of our all to be for him, and subservient to the advancement of his glory, both here and hereafter, they fall before the throne, and exclaim, "thou art worthy to receive" this ascription of honor, and thanksgiving, "for thou wast slain and hast redeemed them to God by thy blood." Fellow christians, is not the thought transporting, that these very angels, "who excel in strength," who are exalted in station, who are immaculate in purity, who do the divine commandments, will be our companions for ever in contemplating, and loving, and serving the glorified Jesus? No doubt they anxiously wait for the period when our minority shall be past, and we shall attain to "the stature of perfect men ;" when this contraction of mind shall be done away, and our souls shall expand to comprehend more fully the unsearchable riches of his grace ; when our affections, which are often chilled and frozen in this distant, dreary region, shall be melted under the full beams of the Sun of righteousness ; when we shall see as they see ; love as they love ; serve as they serve ; enjoy as they enjoy, and tune our harps to the same elevated notes with them. "And I beheld," says John, "and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders." The communion of saints and angels is intimate now, but it

will be inconceivably more intimate and endearing hereafter, when we, who are as yet babes in understanding; who think, and speak, and act as children, shall become "equal to the angels;" when we shall enter, to go no more out, the same palace of the King eternal, and surround the same throne.—"And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands: Saying with a loud voice—blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Bear with me while I admonish you again, that since angels are so eager in exploring the wonders of redeeming love, so ardent in their expressions of gratitude, we ought not to remain uninterested; we in whose nature the Saviour appeared, whose "sorrows he carried," and for whose redemption he was slain. Aspire with a holy diligence at knowing him more perfectly, and loving him more ardently. "He is fairer than the children of men; yea, he is altogether lovely." There is a preciousness in his person, in his offices, in his promises, in his character, in his covenant, which after the most diligent, successful research of time and eternity cannot either be uttered or conceived. Let every thing therefore which reveals or recommends the lovely, loving Saviour, his word, his ordinances, his sacraments, his sabbaths, his ministers, his children as bearing his image, be precious in your esteem. Re-

joy particularly in the return of our communion sabbath, and remember, brethren and sisters, that it is no ordinary day of rest; therefore we ought not to feel satisfied with the ordinary exercises of admiration, or gratitude, or joy. We not merely commemorate the resurrection of our dear Redeemer, but that *decease* which preceded *his* resurrection, and procured *our own*: That death in which our victorious Lord conferred honor on the law of his Father by bearing its penalty, invaded in the "greatness of his strength" the empire of hell, seized those "principalities and powers" which had combined against his glory, and our happiness, "spoiled" them of their "lawful captives," chained them to the wheels of his chariot, and although his apparel was red with his own blood which flowed in the arduous conflict, he came forth "mighty to save." These are the great events exhibited for our contemplation in the ordinance of the supper, of which we ought to entertain a mournful, grateful recollection. While we reflect with joy on Messiah's triumph over sin, and satan, and death, and hell, our joy ought to be mingled with sorrow, and our glorying with humiliation, when we realize the amazing expence at which the victory was obtained. While we rejoice that he conquered, let us remember that in conquering he *died*; while "he put away sin" it was by the "sacrifice of HIMSELF," by bearing those sins in his own body

upon the tree ; while “ he redeemed us from the curse of the law,” it was by being made “ a curse for us ;” while “ he spoiled principalities and powers,” our confederated, implacable enemies, it was upon a *cross* that the battle was fought, and the victory won : These are truths not forgotten in heaven, and they ought not to be forgotten or contemplated with indifference upon earth. But I conclude, that you may enjoy an opportunity of *seeing*, and *handling*, and *tasting*, in the institution of the supper, that crucified Saviour who has been set before you in the message of reconciliation. May he who was “ seen of angels ;” whom they saw in Bethlehem, in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross, in the tomb, as he ascended, as he sits enthroned in the heaven of heavens, be seen and enjoyed by you “ in the breaking of bread.” While you are receiving the symbols, may the heart of every communicant glow with his love, and may each of you be saying in holy exultation, “ my Lord, and my God.” “ Whom having not seen I love : in whom, although I see him not, yet believing I rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.”

“ Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength ; that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word : Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts ; ye ministers of his that do his pleasure : Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominions : Bless the Lord, O my soul.”—
AMEN.

THE GOSPEL DESIGNED FOR ALL NATIONS:

**A
SERMON,**

**PREACHED BEFORE THE
NORTHERN MISSIONARY SOCIETY
IN THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,
AT THEIR FIRST ANNUAL MEETING
IN TROY, FEBRUARY 8.**

**AND BY PARTICULAR REQUEST, IN ALBANY, MARCH 6, 1798,
AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY.**

*And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his
name among all nations.... LUKE, XXIV, 47,*

SERMON XII.

MARK XVI. 15.

And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

THE general diffusion of the gospel among the nations, is an event frequently predicted, and absolutely promised in the oracles of God. With all that majesty which so eminently characterizes the poetry of the East, with a fervor of style expressive of the ecstasy of their souls, and with a confidence peculiar to inspiration, did the Jewish prophets foretel the wider extension, and increasing glories of Messiah's reign.—Not confining themselves to a particular age, or to the posterity of Abraham, they embraced in their rapturous view, all periods of time, and all the kindreds of the nations.—“It is a light thing,” says the evangelic Isaiah, personating the everlasting Father, in his address to the Son as our Surety, “it is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation to the end of the earth.” With equal transports of gratitude, and admiration, and joy, did he anticipate the period when “Jehovah should be one, and his name one, throughout the

world ;” when the light of the knowledge of his glory, long imprisoned, by the partition wall, within the limits of Palestine, should burst beyond its narrow boundaries, kindle farther and wider, and illumine with its radiance the remotest corners of the earth.

But, beloved in the Lord, more glorious things are reserved for us. Those events which to Enoch, to Abraham, to Isaiah, were only in prospect, we contemplate as fully realized and accomplished. The day of the Son of Man they beheld *afar off*. Elevated on the mount of inspiration, their eyes caught a few solitary rays refracted over the horizon, and feebly gilding the general gloom. But lo ! upon us the Sun of righteousness has actually arisen. On yonder skies we behold him irresistably ascending amidst clouds of opposition, until he blazes in all the grandeur of meridian glory. Jesus, the great angel of the covenant ; Jesus, the glorious antitype of the Levitical economy ; Jesus, “ the desire of all nations, ” foreseen by the eye, and foretold by the lip of ancient prophecy, has descended from heaven and tabernacled in our world. In his birth, in his life, his death, his resurrection and ascension, he amply confirmed the truth of his mission, and evinced himself to be the Messiah promised to the fathers. As a proof that he was the *Mighty God* announced by Isaiah, he produced miracles the most astonishing, causing “ the blind to see, ” “ the deaf to hear, ” “ the lame to walk, ”

“the dead to rise :” as a proof that the gates of paradise were re-opened for us, and the holiest of all made accessible by him, as “the way, the truth and the life,” “the veil of the temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom :” as a proof that he was the Saviour, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, the wall of partition, separating between the tribes of Abraham and of Adam, is cloven to the ground, the ensign of the cross waves aloft to the nations, and the sovereign command is issued forth, “go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

The great object of this society is to combine our efforts for promoting the more general diffusion of the gospel, and, however unworthy a member, I cheerfully seize this opportunity for stirring up your souls, and my own, ardently to persevere in the important design. To all who have embarked in the missionary cause, and are duly impressed with the magnitude of the enterprise, the following queries must appear highly momentous :—What are the peculiar principles of that gospel which we are commanded to preach? What is the extent of our commission? What is our obligation to prosecute the undertaking? Three queries which are obviously suggested in the text, and pertinent to the present occasion.

I. What are the peculiar principles of that gospel which we are commanded to preach? It is unnecessary to enlarge, before

this intelligent audience, on the different significations of the term *gospel*, as employed in scripture. Sometimes, it is understood in a strict, limited sense, and simply imports an assemblage of absolute, unconditional promises ; it is merely a declaration of Jehovah's love to our perishing world ; and literally signifies "*good tidings of great joy.*" Sometimes it must be understood in a sense more general, and comprehends the whole system of revelation.—The latter is obviously its meaning in the passage submitted to consideration. To preach the gospel, therefore, is to unfold the various doctrines of revelation, according to their separate importance, and their intimate connexion with each other. In discharging this duty with fidelity, it is required,

1. That we proclaim the apostacy of all mankind, and the ruin which necessarily succeeds, in consequence of their apostacy. The universal corruption of human nature is at once an essential and obvious principle of our holy religion. In the light of revelation, we behold the human family as "all gone aside ;" as "altogether become filthy ;" as "alienated from the life of God ;" and "dead in trespasses and sins." These, and similar expressions, do not import the suspension of natural life, but they express that state of guilt and condemnation in which we are born : they also teach us that the energies of spiritual life are totally destroyed ; that communion with God, the

fountain of rational felicity, is wholly interrupted : that we are disqualified for, and invincibly opposed unto all that is morally or spiritually good. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." This corruption of our nature was sensibly felt, and often deplored, by the more contemplative among the heathen. The passions of pride, envy and revenge, which broke forth in acts of injustice, oppression and violence ; not to mention war, which frequently desolated nations, and drenched the earth with the blood of its inhabitants, were to them awful proofs that mankind had fallen from their primitive purity. But although the fact, that our race had degenerated, was undeniable, yet the cause, by unenlightened reason, neither was nor could be discovered.* This interesting information, it was reserved for the gospel to afford.—With the lamp of revelation in our hand, we are conducted up those deadly streams to the apostacy of our first parents, as the source of our corruption and woe. "By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The doctrine of our federal representation in the first Adam, and our condemnation through his fall, however mortifying to the

* See Halyburton's *Insufficiency of Nat. Rel.* chap. 9.

pride or offensive to the wisdom of this world, constitutes an important part of the counsel of God. It has uniformly been considered as an essential doctrine of the gospel, and as such has been publicly avowed, and faithfully defended by all,† in every age, whose profession has reflected honor on the christian name, or whose labors have promoted the advantage of the christian cause. Whoever thou art, child of Adam, whatever be thy external condition, however elevated in rank, or affluent in fortune, thou art by nature a child of wrath, an heir of hell. "There is none righteous, no not one. What thing soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law ; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

But are we called to mourn as those who have no hope ? Are we doomed to the melancholy task of contemplating the ruin of mankind, without any prospect of a recov-

† For a short, yet satisfactory, vindication of the divine procedure, in the appointment of Adam as our federal head, and imputing his transgression to our account, I refer the reader to "Meditations on the Lord's Prayer ; by Lord Chief Justice Hale :—" A defence so candid, and avowed by a person of his acknowledged integrity and literary eminence, carries with it double weight, and demands at least serious reflection, from those who wantonly reject, as irrational, the venerable doctrines of Christianity. He was no *priest*, who ought, as they suppose, to "tremble when their citadel is assailed ;" but a lay-man ; and consequently no farther interested in the vindication of this doctrine, than he felt concerned for the support of truth, and the welfare of mankind. He was no implicit believer, who tamely resigns the exercise of judgment, and receives his principles from parental or priestly authority ; but a philosopher, a friend to free inquiry, an eminent statesman, and a civilian little inferior to any that ever adorned the bench of his country.

ery? No. Glory to God; although we have destroyed ourselves, in Jehovah is our help. In his wisdom he contrived, in his power he executed, and in his grace he has revealed a method for our reconciliation, a method by which he can be "just, and the justifier of the ungodly."

This is another doctrine of divine revelation which it is our duty and glory to proclaim. The scriptures represent all the adorable Persons of the Godhead as equally concerned, and sustaining their respective capacities, in the economy of our redemption. Moved by pure, unmerited mercy, the Father from eternity made a sovereign and absolute choice of a portion of our family, whom he predestinated to glory. These he gave as an inheritance to his eternal Son, becoming their surety and representative in the covenant of grace. There appears to have been a transaction awfully solemn, between Jehovah the Father and his Son at the concertion of this wondrous plan, in a formal surrender of the elect by the former, and their cordial reception by the latter.— "I know my sheep," says the Divine Redeemer, "and am known of mine:" "My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all." Do any ask, what was the cause of this choice? I reply, sovereignty was exclusively the cause. Sovereignty was the cause why men were chosen in preference to angels. Sovereignty was the cause why one man was chosen in preference to another.

All the grace manifested to the people of God in time, as their pardon, their conversion, their adoption into the divine family, their perseverance in holiness, and final introduction to glory, is a consequence of their being chosen in eternity. These blessings are so many rivulets of salvation, flowing from electing love, as their benign, everlasting source.—Art thou, believer, highly favored above the rest of the world? From a state of condemnation and wrath, hast thou obtained peace and reconciliation? Once a stranger and foreigner, art thou now constituted a child of God, an heir of glory, and sweetly inboldened by the Spirit of adoption to cry, *Abba Father*? Instead of that consciousness of guilt, those forebodings of destruction, which, like arrows of the Almighty, shot through and drank up thy very spirit, art thou occasionally refreshed with the smiles of his countenance, with blessed foretastes of those joys unutterable and full of glory, which are at his right hand? Thus thou art distinguished, being “chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Not thine own excellence, but thy Father’s good pleasure, was the moving cause. “He hath saved, and called thee with a holy calling, not according to thy works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given in Christ Jesus, before the world began.”

I have neither time nor inclination, at present, to notice the various objections.

which have been occasionally urged against this scriptural doctrine. The two following, however, so frequently proposed, we cannot pass altogether unnoticed.

The doctrine of election has been represented as militating against the freedom of human agency ; as hampering the gospel-call, and rendering the sinner's acquiescence therein, unwarrantable and presumptuous. This objection, however, does not really exist in the doctrine, but is created by the ignorance or intentional misrepresentation of its opposers. Salvation is not offered to any as *predestinated*, nor refused to any as *passed by*. Were these the terms upon which the gospel offer was made, there might be some foundation for the cavil.—The sinner, in the language of despair, might reply, “ I possess no evidences of being chosen from eternity, and, therefore, am unwarranted to accept of the remedy proposed.” On the contrary, Jesus, with his unsearchable riches, is tendered to each bearer of the gospel individually ; he is offered to all indiscriminately ; to all, without any exceptions arising from age, rank, condition or moral character. The invitation of the gospel is as absolute, as unhampered, as if the decree of election did not exist. Since, therefore, salvation is offered to all without exception, the refusal of any to acquiesce cannot arise from the consideration that he is not elected, for this is unknown to him ; but must spring from the enmity of his heart

against the gospel. His incapacity for believing proceeds not from his being passed by, but from that loss of moral principle and power which he sustained by the fall.

Another objection not less triumphantly urged is, that the belief of absolute predestination leads to the rejection, or at least neglect, of the ordinance of religion, and thus imboldens to continue in sin. "The purpose of God," it is argued, "is unalterable; his will is irresistible; such as are elected must necessarily be saved independently of means, while the damnation of the rest is unavoidable." These principles, "that the purpose of God is unalterable, his will irresistible; that the elect, and they only will be saved," we readily acknowledge; but the inference, "that therefore the means of grace are superseded," we deny, as both unscriptural and dangerous. It cannot consistently be maintained that this doctrine discountenances the use of means, because the decree of election is not presented unto us as the rule of our duty, but the authority of God, speaking in his word. *There* he commands us "to give diligence to make our calling and election sure;" to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling." But let us appeal to facts, and ascertain whether the cautious preaching of this truth be attended with this effect. Where are the sanctuaries of public worship generally most crowded? Where do the hearers hang in trembling attention upon the lips of

the speaker? Where are their hearts apparently solemnized? Where is every inferior thought seemingly absorbed in concern about the weightier interests of eternity? In those places, I am bold to affirm, where this and the other peculiar doctrines of the gospel, are faithfully and judiciously taught. "I am sorry," says an eminently faithful, and successful servant of the cross, "that this doctrine of election is so rarely taught; and I am sure that it is not only the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, but that the work of the gospel, in the conversion of sinners and in the edification of saints, did prosper more when such doctrine was more commonly taught than now."*

It is absurd to assert, "that if elected we shall be saved, therefore, means are superseded," because we are appointed to holiness as an indispensable pre-requisite to glory. Duty and privilege, the means and the end, are connected in the counsel of God. We are indeed "chosen" absolutely "to salvation;" but no less absolutely "to sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth."

In conformity to that eternal transaction, by which the Son of God was ordained the Mediator of the covenant, he in the fulness of time, assuming the manhood into a personal union with his divinity, appeared in our world, and by obeying the precept and

* Traill's Sermons, vol. 2. page 32.

undergoing the penalty of the law, "brought in everlasting righteousness." This, my brethren, is the substance and glory of the gospel; that Jehovah the Son, coequal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the divine Essence, assumed the character of Jesus; that he was invested with our nature; that he was substituted in our federal room; that he sustained by imputation our iniquities, and by the effusion of his blood made an actual and ample expiation for sin; these are the principles which render the gospel a scheme worthy of God, wondrous to angels, and pacifying to the awakened conscience. To reveal Jesus in his person, his offices, his relations, and the salvation which he bestows, is the chief design of christianity. Do we search the scriptures? "They testify of Christ." Do we consult the prophets? "To him they all bear witness." "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." Do we meditate on the promises? They are "all yea and amen" in our Lord Jesus Christ. Do we contemplate the Levitical law in its complicated mysterious structure, its rites, and ceremonies, and sacrifices? "The law is a school-master, leading us to Christ."

In relation to the Son of God, there are two principles peculiarly prominent in the living oracles, and which ought to be avowed *first of all* in every discourse, whether at home or among the heathen.

1. His necessary, uncreated, underived

divinity. The Godhead of Messiah may be pronounced the corner-stone upon which the fabric of redemption is founded. Without this the gospel ceases to afford consolation to ourselves, and by the savages, to whom we are attempting to proclaim it, cannot be received as a "joyful sound." The sentiment may be unpopular; it may be branded as illiberal, yet, supported by the word of God, I feel imboldened to utter it, that the prince of darkness is as worthy of our communion, and our countenance, as the man who persists deliberately, wilfully, and avowedly, to deny the Deity of our Lord. Thou art the *Son of God*—thou art the *Holy One of God*, are the confessions of Beelzebub to the glory of Jesus. True it is, devils are his obstinate enemies, and implacably they resist the progress of his kingdom; yet, in *our* opposition to him, there is a colouring of malignity with which these apostate spirits cannot possibly be charged. They never opposed him as *their* Saviour; as clothed with *their* nature, and appearing exclusively for the purpose of *their* redemption. The finite mind cannot expand to conceive the complicated blasphemies, which are necessarily involved in the denial of this doctrine. It not only charges the Father with inconsistency, who, upon bringing his first begotten into the world, says, "let all the angels of God worship him:" it not only charges the Son with presumption, "who thought it no robbery to

be equal with God:" it not only gives the Holy Ghost the lie, who has afforded the most pointed testimonies to the Saviour's Godhead: it not only charges the angels with idolatry, who ascribe with a loud voice, "salvation to him who sitteth upon the throne;" but it infuses the wormwood of perdition into the sweetest cup of christian consolation. Expunge from the sacred page that single truth, that Jesus our surety is Jehovah the Eternal, and you rob christianity of the brightest jewel that adorns her crown: you rob the christian of his comfort in life, of his triumph in death, and of his confidence at the tribunal; our preaching becomes vain, thy faith, O believer, also is vain, yea, and we "are found false witnesses of God." The Deity and atonement of our Lord stand and fall together. Could any, but he who is infinite in his nature, communicate infinite merit to his undertaking? Could a being who is not almighty in power, sustain the shock of almighty wrath, and by one offering of himself, expiate the guilt, not only of millions of persons, but also of millions of transgressions in the same persons, which are all infinite in malignity? Then might this hand grasp the ocean, or this arm wield the elements of nature. "The temporary sufferings of him who was Eternal, could alone be a full compensation for the eternal sufferings of those who are temporary." Rejoice, O christian, in the divinity of thy Redeemer. This is the name

by which he is called, "the Lord our righteousness." He is distinguished with every name, and perfection, and honor, and operation of God. He, who suffered as our Substitute, is the Father's "Equal," and "Fellow," the "brightness of his glory," and the "express image of his person."—"By him all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him."

With the essential Deity of the Son of God we ought to connect,

2. His substitution in our covenant room, as a leading doctrine of our religion. He uniformly acted in a public capacity, as the federal Head of an elected world. All that he did, or endured, bore an immediate relation to his people. Each instance of suffering that he underwent, from the blood of his circumcision to the blood of his cross, is imputed to their account, and secures their redemption from wrath. Each act of obedience, which he performed, from his assumption of our nature till, at death, he exclaimed "it is finished," is charged to them, and constitutes their title to glory. To assert that the Redeemer stood in any other capacity; that he suffered merely as a pattern of patience, as an example of heroism, or a martyr to the truth, is literally to make his cross of none effect. It is to degrade the oracles of God to a level with the alco-

ran of Mahommed, or the shaster of the Bramin. With equal propriety we might be directed to *believe* in Paul, or Peter, or Apollos, for salvation, as in the Son of God ; for they, during their lives, were noble advocates for the truth, and at last sealed with the blood of martyrdom the doctrines they had taught. But the reality of his substitution in our covenant room, of his vicarious sufferings, and of our acceptance through a vicarious righteousness, are taught as clearly in the scriptures as language can express them. "He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification." He "bare our sins in his own body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness." There was an actual interchange of condition between Messiah, and his ransomed. Their transgressions were really accounted to him, and constituted the procuring cause of his condemnation and sufferings. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:" "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows : " On the other hand, his righteousness is imputed unto them, and procures their justification and peace : "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus : whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins."

For the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the Godhead, is reserved the application of the purchased redemption. His office in

the economy of grace is not less important, nor less clearly pointed out than those of the Father and of the Son. By his almighty energies he raises from the death of sin, and imparts to the soul principles of life immortal and divine. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." He is exclusively the efficient in the regeneration, and sanctification of the soul. The children of the kingdom are therefore represented as being "born of God; born of the Spirit; begotten again to a lively hope, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." It would be equally unnecessary and unseasonable to notice the varied objections, which the pretended friends and avowed enemies of the cross have alternately adduced against this principle of the gospel. Sufficient it is for the modest inquirers after truth, that thus hath Jehovah revealed; and had he not designed that this doctrine should be both believed and professed, he would not have taught it with such precision by the lips of his apostles and prophets. All the characters by which man is represented in his natural condition, and the official titles by which the divine Spirit is designated, concur to render this truth unquestionable. Why is the former pronounced to be "without strength," to be dead in trespasses and sins," unless to shew that as readily might the breathless corpse imbibe the energies of life, and start from the tomb vigorous and healthful, as the sinner, independently of divine

aid, put forth any spiritual exercise or act? Why is the change effected by the first communication of gracious principles, called a "new birth," a "new man," a "regeneration," unless to manifest that as we are not the cause of our natural, we neither are, nor can be the cause of our spiritual existence? Why is the Spirit Jehovah entitled the *Spirit of faith, of love, of patience, of repentance*, unless to prove that by his agency upon the heart these graces are produced and perfected? "By grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God." With the rod of revelation the minister of the gospel may smite the rock of the human heart, but the power of God only can make the waters of repentance to flow forth. Like the prophet, we may descend into the valley of vision; with deep concern we may contemplate the "dry bones" scattered around; travailing as in birth for their re-animation, we may cry, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord;" but the energizing breath of God must breathe upon them before the "shaking" will take place; "before bone will come to his bone, and sinew to his sinew, in the new creation."

We might enumerate a variety of other truths which constitute an essential part of the gospel; but we proceed to the

II. Second inquiry, which is the extent of our commission.

This is written in terms the most compre-

hensive, the most unlimited, and is addressed "to every creature."

1. It respects sinners indiscriminately who hear the word of reconciliation; persons of every character and condition. No exception is made in the everlasting gospel; no terms are introduced to hamper the general call, or discourage the sinner from complying; no qualifications are specified, as repentance for former sins, or reformation of conduct, as prerequisite to our acceptance of the great salvation. Jesus with the boundless plenitude of his covenant, with his blood to atone, his righteousness to justify, his grace to sanctify and qualify for glory, is proposed unconditionally. In my Master's name, and by his divine appointment, I offer to each individual within these walls a free salvation. Are you diseased? Jesus, whom I proclaim, is an infinite *physician*. Are you defiled? He is made of God *sanctification*. Are you spiritually naked, stript of that attire of innocence which once adorned our nature? He has a "robe of righteousness" and "garments of salvation" to bestow. Are you impotent, and unable to believe? He is the "author and finisher of our faith." Unable to repent? "He is exalted to give repentance and remission." Are you dead in trespasses and sins? Jesus, whom I proclaim, "is the resurrection and the life." The very dead he makes to hear his voice and live. Let not the recollection of former crimes, of deliberately persever-

ing in sin, of wilfully rejecting the invitations of the gospel, or resisting the monitions of the Holy Ghost, discourage you from accepting the offered atonement. His love, O sinner, is boundless as his being: his grace is an ocean without bottom, without shore. None are this moment elevated higher in the climes of bliss, none are filled with greater ecstasies of joy, none pour forth louder acclamations of praise to the author of their salvation, than those who were once plunged deepest in perdition. Often, often, has a sovereign Jehovah chosen the rudest stones in nature's quarry, polished them with his grace, and reared them up on his building of glory. "His arm is not yet shortened that it cannot save."

The commission, however, is still more comprehensive, and extends to all the nations of the earth. Nothing is more obvious, from ancient prophecy and the writings of the apostles, than the final introduction of every "kindred" and "tongue" and "people" to the privileges of the gospel: Messiah is exhibited under characters the most general, as the "Saviour of all men; the desire of all nations, a propitiation for the sins of the whole world." Images in nature the most significant, are employed to shadow forth both the extent, and the perpetuity of his kingdom. It is compared to a grain of mustard seed, which, although in itself almost imperceptibly small, groweth into a tree, so that the fowls of the air lodge

in its branches ; to a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, which should gradually extend, should at length fill the whole earth, and remain for ever. Although the gospel had long been partial in its spread, Palestine being the only country enlightened with its glory, and the posterity of Abraham the exclusive recipients of its blessings ; yet now “ all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, the kings of Tarshish, and of the Isles shall bring presents : the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts ; yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end* come.”

* If by the *end* here mentioned, with Bishops Newton, Hurd, and other judicious commentators, we understand the overthrow of Jerusalem, there cannot possibly be a more luminous argument for the authority of prophecy, nor a more encouraging argument for us to persevere in our undertaking. The prediction, in its varied parts, received an accomplishment, no less minute than if it had been a literal history of events which had already occurred. “ It appears, indeed,” observes the former of these writers, “ from the history of the church, that before the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel was preached not only in lesser Asia, and Greece and Italy, the great theatres of action then in the world ; but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia, as far southward as Ethiopia, as far eastward as Parthia and India, as far westward as Spain and Britain. How improbable, and to all human appearance, impossible was it that a few poor fishermen, and such inferior, illiterate persons, should propagate and establish a new religion in so short a space of time, throughout the world ; doubtless it was not man’s work, but God’s ; and from the same divine Spirit proceeded both the prophecy and the completion.”—Dissert. on proph. vol. i. page 409, 410. Correspond-

III. Our obligation to attempt the more general propagation of the Gospel was our third inquiry, and now invites our attention. I might mention the explicit command of the great God our Saviour: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; teach all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Does not this command as properly belong to us; is it not as absolutely binding on us, as on the apostles, whose ears heard it audibly from the lips of their present Lord? I might observe, that it receives an additional obligation from the awful solemnity of his immediate departure. No sooner had Zion's King instructed his disciples in the things that concerned the future interests of his church, and issued the royal mandate, "preach the gospel to every creature," than lo! he is parted from them: making the cherub his car and the cloud his pavilion, he ascends on high, and enters his glory, to return no more "until the restitution of all things!" I might add, as another circumstance heightening our obligation to activity in promoting the exten-

ently with this, Bishop Hurd eloquently remarks, "Against all appearance the success followed. In less than half a century the sound of the gospel went into all lands, and within three centuries from the death of Christ, christianity ascended the imperial throne, and had the utmost parts of the earth for her possession." —Lect. on Proph. vol. i. page 199. Contemplating success so unexpected and astonishing, Zion may ardently exclaim, *What hath the Lord wrought!* she may triumphantly add, *What is he not still able to effect!* *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he can yet ordain strength, for the boundless diffusion of his Gospel: Jehovah hasten it in his time!*

sion of his gospel, the constraining influence of redeeming love. "We know the grace of the Lord Jesus, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich." The degradation and the sufferings of the Son of God in the room of his people impose on them an eternal obligation for zeal in his cause. He has thereby set us an example that we should follow his footsteps. Can we contemplate the immensity of his grace, in veiling the grandeur of the God in the meanness of the man ; the obscurity of his birth, that the arbiter of worlds was born in a manger ; the poverty of his life, that the heir of all things had not where to lay his head ; the mingled ignominy and agony of his cross ; can we contemplate these, unawed with astonishment, uninflamed with gratitude and love ? "Behold what manner of love is this !" What finite mind can survey its infinite dimensions !

— "Where roll my thoughts

"To rest from wonders ! Other wonders rise,

"And strike where'er they roll ; my soul is caught :

"Heaven's sovereign blessings, clustering from the cross,

"Rush on her in a throng and close her round,

"The pris'ner of amaze,"

"What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ?"

The very earth, that felt the pangs of dissolution, and shook to her centre ; the rocks that were rent ; the graves that were opened ; the dead who arose ; the sun who veiled himself in darkness, rebuke our insensibility and sloth. But we shall confine our

attention to the two following considerations, obligating us to disinterested zeal in this cause :

1. A concern for the glory of God. True it is, his operations, both in creation and providence, illustriously display his infinite perfections : “ The heavens declare the glory of God,” and the firmament sheweth his handy work ; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge :” Every object around us is instamped legibly with the characters of divinity : all the varied orders of being, whether animate or inanimate, from the minutest reptile crawling upon the earth, to that blazing orb which rolls majestic along the heavens, proclaim the wisdom, the benignity and grandeur of their Great Creator. These have afforded to every nation under heaven, convincing proofs of the divine existence and perfections. Contemplating the sun which sheds light and fertility on the earth, the moon that with her milder radiance gilds the evening gloom, or the comet ranging stupendous through the trackless void, the savage wanderer of the woods, no less than the lettered inhabitant of the village, have acknowledged their Author to be Divine. Yet, it is reserved for the gospel to exhibit the most illustrious, the most astonishing display.— “ The Lord God hath magnified his word above all his name.” On the page of inspiration his holiness, his justice, his grace and condescension, perfections which his

other works revealed obscurely, are legibly and luminously inscribed. Here he is revealed as "the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious:" as the God of *love*, of *peace*, of *patience* and *consolation*: as a "Father to the fatherless, and merciful even to our unrighteousness," through the atonement of his Son. "Here that immaculate purity which cannot look upon sin, and that astonishing love which cannot behold the ruin of a sinner, are awfully displayed: the majesty of the divine government is sustained, and the rigor of the law fulfilled: justice is satisfied, mercy, without restraint and without measure, flows upon our guilty world." In the gospel exclusively, is brought to human view that mystery of condescension and grace, "God manifested in the flesh;" "the express image of Jehovah made of no reputation." This, my brethren, may justly be pronounced the glory that excelleth. A God invested with our feeble nature; sustaining, by imputation, our transgressions; expiring as a sacrifice for our sins, is a subject into which "angels desire to look; a subject, which to angels themselves, must remain for ever unexplored. But, alas! my brethren, are there not myriads of our race, by whom the attributes of God as illustrated in the gospel, are unadmired, unknown? Nations, countless as the stars of heaven, inhabit this globe, who have "neither heard his fame nor seen his glory." "They are become vain in their

imagination, and have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man." With rude admiration, they gaze on the natural sun—breaking from the east, and kindling day around them, but their eyes have never beheld the Sun of righteousness, whose benign glories dissipate the more malignant gloom of spiritual darkness. Often have their ears been shocked with the voice of God speaking terribly in the earthquake and the thunder, but have never been saluted by his still small voice in the word of reconciliation.—They feel some sense of obligation to him in "whom they live, move, and have their being: but, alas! his glory they give to others, even to gods of their own creation.

With a concern for the glory of God, we may connect, as a second obligation for preaching the gospel, compassion for our fellow mortals. Sympathy for an object in distress, and a painful solicitude for its relief, are equally dignified and general characteristics of human nature. Who, that rolls in affluence, can deliberately witness a fellow mortal perishing with hunger, and not minister a pittance to his wants? Who, possessed of the common feelings of humanity, could coolly view a fellow creature shivering in the blast of winter, without endeavoring to afford him seasonable relief? But a thousand, thousand fold more pitiable is the spectacle here exhibited to our view. Not the body merely; it being perishable

in its nature, its miseries, however exquisite, are but of momentary duration ; it is the soul, the precious, never, never dying soul, which claims our compassion and our aid. Do not your hearts melt within you while your eye rolls over that western wilderness ? There you behold millions of your fellow mortals “ perishing without vision ; ” they are often stung with remorse for guilt, but strangers to that Jesus whose blood speaks reconciliation and peace. They are whelmed occasionally with apprehensions of approaching ruin ; but ignorant of that Jesus who redeems from the wrath to come.—Hark ! from the dark thickets of yonder forest, a voice breaks upon my ear ! “ Come over, ye servants of the most high God that teach the way of salvation, come over and help us. Are we not your brethren by nature, sprung from the same common parent, and involved by transgression in the same condemnation and woe ? ” Ah, beloved, we are verily guilty concerning these our brethren, in that we have seen the anguish of their souls, and have not relieved them. Turning our faces towards the west, with apparent earnestness, we have often prayed, “ be ye converted, be ye saved ; but where are the monuments of our zeal for their conversion and salvation ? Shall we remain any longer unmoved by the cry of their miseries ? Can they, to whom their own salvation is their chief concern, be altogether unconcerned about the salvation of others ? Is

it possible that any who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, who have felt those joys unutterable, which overflow the soul under the assurance of his love, is it possible for such to read that awful declaration, "he will pour his fury upon the heathen, and yet refuse their substance, refuse their service, for conveying to them the glad tidings of reconciliation? Let none deliberately mock the Most High, or wantonly insult their misery, by advising us "to leave the work to holy Providence; that God will extend relief to them in his own time." Jehovah it is true worketh, but it is equally true he worketh by means. The gospel has never yet been propagated by miracle. As far as its joyful sound has extended through the earth, it has unvaryingly been effected through the intervention of means. Must the Eunuch be savingly enlightened in the knowledge of the truth? Philip is dispatched to preach to him Jesus. Must the Samaritan woman be instructed in the doctrines of salvation? The Son of God must needs pass through her region. Is Cornelius, the Roman centurion, to be proselyted to the christian faith? Peter is employed as the instrument of his conversion. Are the people of Macedonia to be visited with the gospel of peace? Paul is addressed by the vision, "come over and help us."

The improvement of this doctrine is not less interesting than it is obvious.

1. We are encouraged amidst opposition,

however inveterate, to persevere in our present undertaking. The design of evangelizing the nations is not the sudden sally of enthusiasm ; it is not the delusive dream of the visionary ; then it might possibly evaporate with the moment. No, it is the cause of Jehovah, and must invincibly prevail. While his sovereign command, "preach the gospel to every creature," authorizes us to proceed ; his inviolable promise ensures both support and success : "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

A thousand prophecies relative to the spread of the gospel, and the conversion of the heathen, yet await their accomplishment. "In the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there they shall be called the sons of the living God : All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him." Amidst prospects so glorious, what eye does not sparkle with joy ? What heart does not beat high with expectation ? "Let Zion rejoice, let the children of Judah be glad," for yet a little while and their King shall extend unlimited the honors of his reign. "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise unto the ends of the earth ; ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein, the isles and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit." thou "in-

habitant of the rock, sing, shout from the top of thy mountain," for ere long shall the light of salvation dart joyous upon thy dreary abode.

Come, beloved in the Lord, let us awake from our security ; let us shake off the lethargy of former years ; let our exertions hereafter bear some proportion to the magnitude of our enterprise, and our assurance of success. Does the enemy of the cross eagerly seize, and industriously circulate, whatever tends to the dishonor of the Son of God ? Shall we be less active in diffusing the gospel of his glory ? To glut the avarice or gratify the ambition of their imperious masters, do not the minions of despotism brave opposition ? Do they not encounter the perils of the ocean ; submit to the fatigues of the wilderness, laugh at the glittering spear, and rush unmoved on death arrayed in tenfold horrors ? and shall we, who have enlisted as good soldiers under Jesus, the great Captain of salvation ; we, who profess to have imbibed *his* Spirit, who endured the cross and despised the shame ; we, whom he redeemed from the curse by enduring that very curse in our room ; we, for whom at the expense of his blood, he procured an inheritance incorruptible, and crowns of glory that never fade away ; shall we betray less ardor and zeal ? Carelessly can we fold our arms in sloth, or basely shrink from opposition, when our Captain waves aloft his standard, and calls aloud to

follow on? O, my brethren, to all the boasts of modern infidelity, let us not afford the additional triumph, that the friends of Zion are cold and unconcerned about her interests.

Let none dare to discourage us by multiplying objections. I repeat the declaration, the design of evangelizing the nations is the cause of God, and must invincibly prevail. Do any ask, where is your authority, what is your warrant for interfering with the religion of the heathen unsolicited, unexpected? I reply, the commission, instamped with the signature of Zion's King, is this moment spread to our view: "Preach the gospel to every creature." Do any ask where are your missionaries; whom will you send; who will embark for you in an enterprise so difficult, so hazardous? I reply, that with Jesus Jehovah is the residue of the Spirit. In him all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily; and he can easily raise up evangelists, pastors and apostles, sons of thunder, and sons of consolation, as the necessities of Zion require. Do any ask where are your resources for supporting expences so great as a mission to the heathen must naturally incur; your friends are few in number, most of them inaffluent in condition? We reply, that creation is our Master's and the fulness thereof. The gold and the silver are his, the cattle on a thousand hills are at his disposal; his servants, therefore, he can send forth, if he choose,

without money, without scrip, without purse, and not suffer them to lack. Sooner shall the ravens of the wilderness minister to their wants, or yonder cloud pour down manna for their supply, than the purposes of God come short of their accomplishment. Do any further ask, if missionaries were furnished, if funds equal to the expense were collected, is there a probability, or even a possibility of success? Are not the Indians roving in their habits, enveloped in ignorance, drenched in superstition? I reply, with God nothing is impossible; the most unsettled his grace can arrest; the most benighted it enlightens; the most stubborn it effectually subdues; the rude rover of the wilderness, no less than the politer citizen of Athens, or of Rome, it "can turn from idols, to serve the living God." We reject as unworthy a reply that popular objection, that the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Thus saith the Holy Ghost, "BEHOLD! NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME."

Only believe, and your eyes shall yet see the salvation of our God. Read, ye that despond in the prospect of our present difficulties, read the triumph of his church in former periods of the world. At the command of their covenant God, Israel, crushed by oppression, disheartened by disappointment, suddenly revive; swell beyond the chain of their captivity, and march forth from Egypt joyful and victorious. Alter-

nately were the laws of nature suspended and reversed to subserve their deliverance, and their defence. Have you never read of that host of God who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens?" Behold, again, the apostles of the Lamb, few in number, mean in condition, unskilled in worldly policy, unaided by worldly power, with no sword but "the sword of the Spirit," with no shield "but the shield of faith," they go on conquering and to conquer. No sooner is the trump of the gospel blown by this spiritual priesthood, than lo! the walls of superstition totter on their base, every idol sinks to the ground, and men of all kindreds and all characters, crowd to the standard of the cross. Abashed for his former unbelief, the Jew rapturously exclaims, lo, I have found the Messiah of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write! Convicted of his folly, the Gentile starts from his image, where he blindly kneeled, and bows in homage to the Son of David, as his Saviour and King. "Who hath heard such things? who hath seen such things? The earth brought forth in a day, and a nation was born at once; for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." Hitherto hath the Lord of hosts

performed his promises, and hath he now lost power to redeem? Is his arm unnerved by the shock of opposition, or fatigued by repeated exertions? Justly might he admonish our unbelief with the ancient rebuke, "O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?"

2. From a variety of appearances in providence, are we not encouraged to hope that these prophecies are hastening to a fulfilment? Fatigued with her former confinement, Zion begins to stretch forth her arms, and complain, "the place is too narrow for me, give place to me that I may dwell; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." Exertions unexampled, exertions the most disinterested, are making for the more general diffusion of the gospel. Forgetting each inferior distinction; nobly crucifying that unsocial, unchristian spirit, which rallies around the standard of party, so hostile to the glory of Christ, and repugnant to the genius of his gospel, christians of different denominations are now concentrating their efforts towards one great design. This day we are assembled to commemorate a new era in the annals of the christian world. A wonder indeed! Professors of various communions, once torn by religious faction, each meditating the aggrandizement of their own party, rather than the honor of their common Redeemer; whose pretended zeal for the Lord of hosts evaporated too much in ran-

corous reflections upon each other, now associate together; they sit as brethren in the same assembly; with one mouth glorify God, and with one mind deliberate on the means of enlarging his kingdom. The witting may deride our union as mere folly, or as the collusion of priests for promoting the reign of superstition; the snarling bigot may represent it as a conspiracy against the truth, and a fearful stride to latitudinarianism; but confident I am, that he who hath wrought this which you both hear and see, is the Holy Ghost. While I look around this large assembly; while I recognize our unity of design, and harmony of measure; while I mark that solicitude which heaves in every breast, and solemnizes every countenance, my imagination involuntarily transports me to that memorable occasion, when, on the day of Pentecost, the disciples with one accord waited for the promise of the Father, in the effusion of the Spirit. Thou Breath of the Lord, that as a rushing wind descended upon them, blow mightily on our assembly. Each heart inflame with an apostolic enthusiasm; each tongue endow with an eloquence divine to proclaim to the stranger and the foreigner, the wonders of Messiah's grace! Hail, all hail, ye, whom zeal for the Lord of hosts, and compassion for perishing mortals, have prompted to similar exertions! However remote in residence, or different in name, of whatever clime of the earth, or kindred of the nations you

may be, our bosoms glow towards you with the affection of brethren: Our arms are extended to embrace you as workers together with ourselves in the gospel of one common Lord. Jehovah the Spirit bless you abundantly, and cement you more and more: By the liberal effusion of his influence may he preserve your union as lasting as its objects are important and glorious. "Zion's watchmen are seeing eye to eye:" Blessed pledge of the more blissful period when the Lord shall be one, and his name one throughout the world."

A variety of other events in Providence might be mentioned, leading us to expect the speedy ingathering of the Gentiles.—The general shaking of the nations is held forth in scripture as the forerunner of the coming of him who is the desire of all nations. God has also forewarned us that he would previously pour out his fury upon the seat of the beast, and is not this prediction already accomplished in part. The vials of divine wrath have lately been emptied forth, and lo, the smoke of his torment ascendeth! One circumstance, however, appears peculiarly hopeful for the heathen, which I tremble to mention, the increase and effrontery of infidelity among ourselves. It is a part of the divine procedure, at once mysterious and awful, that he makes trial of individuals and nations; he affords to them for a season the ordinances of his grace, but if these be unimproved, he transfers them to

others : thus were the Jews at first rejected, and the Gentiles introduced to the privileges of the gospel ; thus the churches of Asia, where the power of godliness so eminently flourished, owing to their apostacy, are now utterly forsaken ; the candlestick of ordinances is removed, and the dew of the Holy Ghost altogether suspended. Tracing the movements of Providence, in former ages, and comparing our present condition with that of other Christian nations, when their judgment began, we are filled with the mingled emotions of terror and joy ; of terror for ourselves, and of joy for the heathen. That lamp, the glorious gospel, which has long shone neglected in our abodes ; which through the foul exhalations of the pit begins to glimmer, and threatens to expire, a righteous God may suddenly snatch from our enjoyment, and fasten in the dark places of the earth. Already have our spiritual judgments obviously commenced. Rarely has infidelity assumed a more effrontful air. Many that were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and early instructed in the principles of his religion, have openly renounced their profession. They imagine their talents can be consecrated to no better or nobler purpose, than the derision of every thing sacred. By a bold denial of his gospel, and renunciation of their baptismal engagements, “ they trample under foot the Son of God ; account the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, an

unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of grace." If any such are present, with all the fidelity of Jehovah's messenger, I would embrace this opportunity to warn them of their danger. The experiment of avowedly rejecting the great salvation must be considered *at least as hazardous*. Have you deliberately weighed the awful import of that declaration, "if any man be ashamed of me and my gospel, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father, and with the holy angels?" Where wilt thou stand, "thou baptized infidel, thou washed to fouler stain," where wilt thou stand when yonder heaven shall reveal thy Judge, in the full blaze of his glory? Can thy heart endure when the very elements of nature shall melt before the lightnings of his indignation? Whither wilt thou flee for help, when the hills and the mountains, to which a blind despair may hurry thee, shall start aside, and leave thee a defenceless prey to his thirsting sword? The apostate angel may palliate his doom, by pleading "that no redemption was procured for him;" the savage of the wilderness may lessen his condemnation, by pleading "that the Saviour was never offered to him;" but no circumstance, thou gospel despiser, can be suggested to soften the horrors of thy damnation. That declaration from the lips of the affronted Saviour, "I called and ye refused," must shut thee up in sullen and silent despair. Be not deceived, my beloved

hearers, let none consider these as imaginary terrors that shall never be realized. O, no : as certainly as my voice now vibrates upon your ears, shall the arch-angel's trumpet thunder the summons along the tomb, "awake, arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." Let none regard these representations as magnified, in order to excite unnecessary fears, or to startle the timid and the weak. O, no : As far as the drop of water is surpassed by the infinite ocean, so far will the terrors of that day rise above the efforts of description. "The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and cry to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb ; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand ?" Acquaint now yourselves with him and be at peace. This day is the great God renewing his overtures of mercy. He is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses : Touch the sceptre of his mercy ; improve the sacrifice of his Son, and "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

3. From these words are suggested the doctrines upon which, in preaching the gospel, we ought principally to dwell. Wheth-

er at home, or among the heathen, let it be our first concern, to fasten upon the sinner's conscience a conviction of his natural degeneracy. Let us exhibit to him, in the mirror of divine revelation, his real though fearful counterpart, his guilt, his corruption, his utter inability, by any strength of his own, to emerge from his wretchedness, and thus prostrate him submissive at the feet of sovereign mercy. Whence arises the bold invasion that has lately been made upon those doctrines of grace, which have constituted in all ages the bulwark of christianity; the general opposition to our election by the Father's love, our justification by a vicarious righteousness imputed, our instatement in the covenant, and progressive sanctification, by the operations of the Spirit of holiness? It proceeds principally, if not entirely, from ignorance of our original depravity. He who acknowledges the apostacy of mankind, who acknowledges that by the demerit of this apostacy we have forfeited every claim upon the divine favor, must also acknowledge that if all are recovered, this recovery must be purely of grace; if a part only are restored, undeserved mercy is manifested to them, but not the least injustice done to the rest. To the conscience awakened with a sense of guilt, and trembling under apprehensions of divine wrath, it becomes us to proclaim a crucified Jesus, as the only remedy. There is no redemption from the curse, but through the appli-

cation of his blood : There is no title to the heavenly inheritance, but by the imputation of his righteousness. Some, who make pretensions to superior attainments in divine things, have suggested the propriety of carefully concealing, in our addresses to the heathen, the peculiar doctrines of christianity, and of adopting in their room a system of rational religion. They suppose that by this accommodating principle, we should arrest their attention, prepossess their affections, and probably succeed in their conversion. This method, should it eventually prove successful, would literally be making their faith, to rest not on the power of God, but in the wisdom of men. It would, as a writer justly observes, be "heathenizing ourselves, instead of christianizing the heathen." But, however plausible these insinuations appear in *theory*, in *fact* they are notoriously false. The artless, unaffected doctrines of the cross, have ever triumphed in the conversion of sinners: they constitute that artillery of heaven, before which the ignorance of superstition and the hardness of infidelity are equally unable to stand.—The great apostle of the Gentiles was no unsuccessful preacher of righteousness; yet, did he aim at modelling his discourses to meet the different dispositions of his hearers? Did he aim at gratifying the curiosity of the inquisitive, at flattering the pride of the speculative, or meeting the ruder apprehensions of the vulgar? No: Whether

his audience were the sensual inhabitants of Crete, or the more polished citizens of Athens, or of Rome, his theme was unvaried: He determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. With the same doctrine the Moravians in the north, the Danes in the east, a Brainard,* a Mayhew, an Edwards, and an Elliot, in our own country, have brought in the first fruits of the pagan world, as a pledge of the ingathering of the whole.

* No apology I trust is requisite for inserting a few remarks of the great Johnathan Edwards in his life of Mr. Brainard.—“And here it is worthy to be considered, not only the effect of Calvinistic principles upon Mr. Brainard himself, but also the same effect of such doctrines, as taught and inculcated by him, on others. It is abundantly pretended of late years, that these doctrines tend to undermine the very foundations of all religion and morality, and to enervate all reasonable motives to the practice of them, and lay invincible stumbling blocks before infidels, to hinder their embracing Christianity; and that the contrary doctrines are the fruitful principles of virtue and goodness, set religion on its right basis, represent it in an amiable light, give its motives their full force, and recommend it to the reason and common sense of mankind; but where can they find an instance of so great and signal an effect of their doctrines, in bringing infidels who were at such a distance from all that is civil, humane, sober, rational and Christian, and so full of prejudices against these things, to such a degree of humanity, civility, exercise of reason, self-denial and Christian virtue? Arminians place religion in morality; let them bring an instance of their doctrine producing such a transformation of a people, in point of morality.”—To these we may add a few observations of Mr. Brainard himself. “Those doctrines, which had the most direct tendency to humble the fallen creature, to shew him the misery of his natural state, to bring him down to the foot of sovereign mercy, and to exalt the Great Redeemer, discover his transcendent excellency and infinite preciousness; and so to recommend him to the sinner’s acceptance, were the subject matter of what was delivered in public and private to them, and from time to time repeated and inculcated upon them;”—Gen. Rem. page 66.

A single observation like this, founded on actual experiment, is more convincing than volumes of speculation. By their res-

Again, while we recommend the sinner to the Lord Jesus for reconciliation and acceptance, let us unequivocally point out the necessity of the Spirit for sanctification. With equal propriety might Christ and his righteousness be overlooked, as the Holy Ghost and his operations. Perhaps a concealment of this scriptural truth may be considered as a principal reason why the preaching of the gospel is so mournfully unsuccessful among ourselves. By not duly realizing our utter inability to produce a saving change upon our hearers, or teaching them the humiliating lesson, that they are without strength; that they cannot act faith, repentance or any other grace, independently of divine aid, we have provoked the gracious Spirit to depart; and what is the consequence? Ordinances have lost their usual efficacy; they are not, as formerly, the power of God for the conviction and conversion of sinners. To our mournful *experience*, we have now been taught, what we refused to learn from his *word*, "that without him we can do nothing."

Permit me to intrude further upon your

pective fruits, we must judge of principles, as well as of persons. Facts in divinity, no less than in philosophy, are obstinate arguments. These doctrines therefore which have overcome all possible opposition, which triumphed, in the first promulgation of the gospel, over the influence of combined wealth, policy and power, which have since succeeded in purifying the most profligate, in civilizing the most savage, which have prostrated the pride of philosophy at the foot of the cross, and changed even the lion into a lamb, prove themselves fully to be both the wisdom of God, and the power of God.

patience, by inviting the attention of two classes of my audience.

Such of us, brethren and fathers, as are invested with the sacred office of the ministry, these words call loudly to make our own calling and election sure. Pretensions of zeal for spreading the gospel must be mere mockery of the Most High, if we ourselves have not previously honored him by believing on his Son; besides, of all men, the ungodly minister is, beyond conception, the most miserable. Each terror of the law, which he denounces against others, fastens the seal to his own condemnation. While, with his hand, he points his hearers the path to immortality, his own feet are gliding imperceptibly along to endless destruction. He is employed in recommending a Savior, in whom he has no interest; in painting the joys of heaven, which, without a change, he shall never participate; in describing the horrors of a hell, to which while unrenowned he is hastening. The weight of our present work, requires us also to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Our situation is awfully critical, no less than important: Do we look at home? infidelity rages; like a mighty torrent, swelling as it advances, it has broken in upon our borders, and thousands on every hand are hurried and overwhelmed in its deadly stream: rising again, as they rot, they float upon the surface, and are polluting, with the contagion of hell,

the whole atmosphere of the church. Do we look abroad? a field immense and uncultivated opens to our view. The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is spreading wide her boundaries; but, alas! who is sufficient to explore and improve her uncultivated parts? These things are mentioned, not to discourage from our present purposes: God forbid! but they are designed to shake us from every created confidence, that we may rest upon Jehovah, as our support. To him no difficulty is unconquerable, no obstacle insurmountable. Relying on his strength, the feeble become as David; worm Jacob threshes the mountains, and beats them small as dust. Opposition, in the discharge of our duty, we must calculate upon meeting; our greatest temptation, however, does not arise from the open adversary; the enemy in the camp, the traitor in disguise, is our most dangerous foe. The reproach of being "righteous overmuch," of being "frantic, wild, or enthusiastic," secretly insinuated by a brother, or a friend, has often served to shake from his firmness the *man* who could have met unmoved the majesty of tribunals, and the terror of flames. But let not these things trouble us, neither let us hold our reputation, or even our lives dear, that we may finish our course with joy.—Brethren must be comparatively hated, houses and lands must be forsaken, when the honors of our Master and the salvation of

souls are at stake. What avail all the pain, the poverty, or reproach, that can accompany the cross, when the unutterable glories of the crown open upon our view? Need we startle at the apprehension of being disowned by an acquaintance, however respected, or a brother, a sister, or parent, however dear, while we remember that they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as stars and as suns for ever and ever. The conversion of a single savage will reward us a thousand fold.—Elevating thought! At this event new transports will thrill the spirits of just men perfected: there will be joy before the angels of God: Jesus, our beloved, will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied: the Holy Ghost will have another monument to the glory of his grace.

Again, let such as are not immediately connected with any pastoral charge, examine whether providence be not calling them to embark as missionaries to the heathen.—The present is a singularly favorable opportunity for such of bringing glory to the Redeemer, of rendering inconceivable services to their fellow-creatures, and embalming eternally their own names among the living in Jerusalem. “Honorable among men, honorable in the eyes of angels, and of God himself, will our first missionaries be.” Might I, without the suspicion of ostentation, be indulged in expressing my own feelings, I would declare that next to that grace

of the Lord Jesus that counted me faithful for the ministry, I adore his goodness in giving me a seat in this Missionary Society; and a greater glory than either would I account it, were his providence pointing me out as a suitable missionary preacher to the heathen. If a bare cup of cold water given to a disciple of Jesus shall not be forgotten; if the honest confession of his name will be honorably acknowledged in the presence of his Father and the angels: how accumulated must be the reward, how unutterable the glory of those who leave all and follow him; who exchange the lap of ease, and affluence, and honor, for the fatigues, the poverty, and perils of the wilderness! Near to the Mediator on his throne will such be invited to sit down; palms of victory will be put into their hands, and crowns of pre-eminent lustre set upon their heads. Behold, the ark of the covenant rests, even the everlasting gospel; is there no tribe of Levi to lift it up and bear it along? Ocean divides its waters that you may safely pass over. Will you tempt the Lord by waiting for further signs? Lo, the pillar of cloud and of fire, the pavilion of the redeeming angel, descends; it hovers over yonder waste, will you not venture forward under its divine protection? Already the voice re-echoes through the wilderness, "prepare ye the way of the Lord:" The mountains sink, the valleys rise, crooked places are made straight, and rough

places plain. Go through ! go through ! ye ministers of our God, and may the Breaker go up before you, even Jehovah our King, upon your head.

Now, “ blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things ; and blessed be his glorious name for ever ! and let the whole earth be filled with his glory !” **AMEN, and AMEN !**