TWO TREATISES

OF

Dr JOHN OWEN's;

VIZ.

I. A Declaration of the glorious Myſtery of the PERSON OF CHRIST.

II. Meditations and Diſcourſes on the GLORY OF CHRIST.

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ:

OR, A

DECLARATION

OF THE

GLORIOUS MYSTERY

OF THE

PERSON of CHRIST, GOD AND MAN.

WITH THE

Infinite WISDOM, LOVE, and POWER of GOD in the Contrivance and Conſtitution thereof.

As alſo of

The *Grounds* and *Reaſons* of his INCARNATION, the *Nature* of his MINISTRY in HEAVEN, the *Preſent State* of the CHURCH above thereon, and the *Uſe* of his PERSON in Religion.

WITH

An Account and Vindication of the HONOUR, WORSHIP, FAITH, LOVE, and OBEDIENCE due unto him, in and from the CHURCH.

BY JOHN OWEN, D. D.

Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord; for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, Phil. iii. 8.

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THE

PREFACE.

IT is a great promiſe concerning the perſon of Chriſt, as he was to be given unto the church, (for he was a *Child born, a Son given unto us,* Iſ. ix. 6.) that God would lay him in *Zion for a foundation, a ſtone, a tried ſtone, a precious corner-ſtone, a ſure foundation; whereon he that believeth, ſhall not make haſte,* Iſ. xxviii. 16. Yet was it alſo foretold concerning him, that this precious foundation ſhould be *for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houſes of Iſrael, for a gin, and for a ſnare unto the inhabitants of Jeruſalem:* ſo as that *many among them ſhould ſtumble and fall, and be broken, and be ſnared, and be taken,* Iſ. viii. 14. 15. According unto this promiſe and prediction, it hath fallen out in all ages of the church, as the apoſtle Peter declares concerning the firſt of them: *Wherefore* (ſaith he) *alſo it is contained in the ſcripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-ſtone, elect, and precious: and he that believeth on him ſhall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them that are diſobedient, the ſtone which the builders diſallowed, the ſame is made the*

head of the corner, and a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, even unto them that ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed, 1 Epiſt. chap. ii. verſ. 6. 7. 8.

Unto them that believe unto the ſaving of the ſoul, he is, he always hath been precious; the ſun, the rock, the life, the bread of their ſouls, every thing that is good, uſeful, amiable, deſirable here or unto eternity. In, from, and by him is all their ſpiritual and eternal life, light, power, growth, conſolation and joy here, with everlaſting ſalvation hereafter: by him alone do they deſire, expect, and obtain deliverance from that woful apoſtacy from God, which is accompanied withal, which containeth in it virtually and meritorioufly, whatever is evil, noxious and deſtructive unto our nature, and which without relief will iſſue in eternal miſery. By him are they brought into the neareſt cognation, alliance, and friendſhip with God, the firmeſt union unto him, and the moſt holy communion with him, that our finite natures are capable of; and ſo conducted unto the eternal enjoyment of him: for in him *ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory*, Iſ. xlv. 25. For *Iſrael ſhall be ſaved in the Lord with an everlaſting ſalvation: they ſhall not be aſhamed nor confounded world without end*, verſ. 17.

On theſe and the like accounts, the principal

cipal design of their whole lives, unto whom he is thus precious, is to acquaint themselves with him, the mystery of the wisdom, grace, and love of God, in his person and mediation, as revealed unto us in the scripture, which *is life eternal*, John xvii. 3.; to trust in him, and unto him, as unto all the everlasting concernments of their souls, to love and honour him with all their hearts, to endeavour after conformity unto him, in all those characters of divine goodness and holiness, which are represented unto them in him. In these things consist the soul, life, power, beauty, and efficacy of Christian religion, without which, whatever outward ornaments may be put upon its exercise, it is but an useless, lifeless carcase. The whole of this design is expressed in those heavenly words of the apostle, Phil. iii. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I might win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead: not as though I had already attained,*

attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus. This is a divine expreſſion of that frame of heart, of that deſign which is predominant and efficacious in them unto whom Chriſt is precious.

But on the other hand, according unto the forementioned prediction, as he hath been a ſure foundation unto all that believe; ſo he hath in like manner been a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence unto them that ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, whereunto they alſo were appointed. There is nothing in him, nothing wherein he is concerned, nothing of him, his perſon, his natures, his office, his grace, his love, his power, his authority, his relation unto the church, but it hath been unto many a ſtone of ſtumbling, and rock of offence. Concerning theſe things have been all the woful conteſts, which have fallen out and been managed among thoſe that outwardly have made profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion. And the contentions about them do rather increaſe than abate, unto this very day; the diſmal fruits whereof the world groaneth under, and is no longer able to bear. For as the oppoſition unto the Lord Chriſt in theſe things by men of perverſe minds, hath ruined their own ſouls, as having daſhed themſelves in pieces againſt this everlaſting Rock;

Rock; ſo in conjunction with others luſts and intereſts of the carnal minds of men, it hath filled the world itſelf with blood and confuſion.

The reinthroning of the perſon, Spirit, grace, and authority of Chriſt in the hearts and conſciences of men, is the only way whereby an end may be put unto theſe woful conflicts. But this is not to be expected in any degree of perfection, amongſt them who ſtumble at this ſtone of offence, whereunto they are appointed, though in the iſſue he will herein alſo ſend forth judgment unto victory, and all the meek of the earth ſhall follow after it. In the mean time, as thoſe unto whom he is thus a rock of offence, in his perſon, his Spirit, his grace, his office and authority, are diligent and reſtleſs, in their various ways and forms, in leſſer or higher degrees, in ſecret artifices, or open contradictions unto any or all of them, under various pretences, and for divers ends, even ſecular advantages ſome of them, which the craft of Satan hath prepared for the enſnaring of them, in all ways of oppoſition unto his glory; ſo it is the higheſt duty of them unto whom he is precious, whoſe principal deſign is to be found built on him as the ſure foundation; as to hold the truth concerning him, his perſon, Spirit, grace, office, and authority, and to abound in all

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duties of faith, love, truſt, honour, and delight in him; ſo alſo to declare his excellency, to plead the cauſe of his glory, to vindicate his honour, and to witneſs him, the only reſt and reward of the ſouls of men, as they are called, and have opportunity.

This and no other is the deſign of the enſuing treatiſe, wherein as all things fall unſpeakably ſhort of the glory, excellency, and ſublimity of the ſubjects treated of; for no mind can conceive, no tongue can expreſs the real ſubſtantial glory of them; ſo there is no doubt, but that in all the parts of it, there is a reflection of failings and imperfections from the weakneſs of its author. But yet I muſt ſay with confidence, that in the whole, that eternal truth of God, concerning the myſtery of his wiſdom, love, grace, and power, in the perſon and mediation of Chriſt, with our duties towards himſelf therein, even the Father, Son, and eternal Spirit, is pleaded and vindicated, which ſhall never be ſhaken by the utmoſt endeavours and oppoſitions of the gates of hell.

And in the acknowledgment of the truth concerning theſe things, conſiſts that faith in an eſpecial manner, which was the life and glory of the primitive church, which they earneſtly contended for, wherein and whereby they were victorious, againſt all

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the troops of ſtumbling adverſaries, by whom it was aſſaulted. In giving teſtimony hereunto, they loved not their lives unto death, but poured out their blood like water, under all the Pagan perſecutors, which had no other deſign but to caſt them down, and ſeparate them from this impregnable rock, this precious foundation. In the defence of theſe truths did they conflict in prayers, ſtudies, travels, and writings, againſt the ſwarms of ſeducers, by whom they were oppoſed. And for this cauſe I thought to have confirmed the principal paſſages of the enſuing diſcourſe, with ſome teſtimonies from the moſt ancient writers of the firſt ages of the church; but I omitted that courſe, as fearing that the interpoſition of ſuch paſſages might obſtruct, inſtead of promoting the edification of the common ſort of readers, which I principally intended. Yet withal I thought not good utterly to neglect that deſign, but to give at leaſt a *ſpecimen* of their ſentiments about the principal truths pleaded for, in this preface to the whole. But herein alſo I meet with a diſappointment; for the bookſeller having unexpectedly unto me, finiſhed the printing of the diſcourſe itſelf, I muſt be contented to make uſe of what lieth already collected under my hand, not having leiſure or time to make any farther enquiry.

I ſhall do ſomething of this nature, the rather, becauſe I ſhall have occaſion thereby to give a ſummary account of ſome of the principal parts of the diſcourſe itſelf, and to clear ſome paſſages in it, which by ſome may be apprehended obſcure.

Chap. 1. The foundation of the whole is laid in the vindication of thoſe words of our bleſſed Saviour, wherein he declares himſelf to be the rock whereon the church is built, Matth. xvi. 18. *And I ſay alſo unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* The pretended ambiguity of theſe words, hath been wreſted by the ſecular intereſts of men, to give occaſion unto that prodigious controverſy among Chriſtians, namely, whether Jeſus Chriſt, or the pope of Rome, be the rock whereon the church is built. Thoſe holy men of old, unto whom Chriſt was precious, being untainted with the deſires of ſecular grandeur and power, knew nothing hereof. Teſtimonies may be, they have been multiplied by others unto this purpoſe; I ſhall mention ſome few of them.

Οὗτος ἔσιν ἡ πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα ἄγουσα ὁδὸς, ἡ πέτρα, ἡ κλεὶς, ὁ ποιμὴν, *&c.* ſaith *Ignatius*, *Epiſt. ad Philadelph.* "He (that is, Chriſt) is the way "leading unto the Father, the rock, the key, "the ſhepherd," wherein he hath reſpect unto this teſtimony. And Origen expreſly denies the

the words to be ſpoken of Peter in Matth. chap. xvi. tract. 1. *Quod ſi ſuper unum illum Petrum tantum exiſtimes totam eccleſiam ædificari, quid dicturus es de Johanne, & apoſtolorum unoquoque? num audebimus dicere, quod adverſus Petrum unum non prevalituræ ſunt portæ inferorum?* "If thou ſhalt think that "the whole church was built on Peter "alone, what ſhall we ſay of John, and "each of the apoſtles? what ſhall we dare "to ſay that the gates of hell ſhall not pre-"vail againſt Peter only?" So he according unto the common opinion of the ancients, that there was nothing peculiar in the confeſſion of Peter, and the anſwer made thereunto, as unto himſelf, but that he ſpake and was ſpoken unto in the name of all the reſt of the apoſtles. *Euſeb. Præparat. Evangel. lib.* 1. *cap.* 3. ἥτε ὀνομασι προθεσπιθεῖσα ἐκκλησια αὐτυ ἤρηκε κατὰ βάθους ἐρριζωμένη, ϗ μέχρις οὐρανίων ἀψίδων ἐυχαῖς ὁσίων ϗ θεοφιλῶν ἀνδρῶν μετεωριζομένη ——— διὰ μίαν ἐκείνην ἣν αὐτὸς ἀποφήνατο λέξιν, εἶπων, ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν οἰκοδομήσω μυ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ϗ πύλαι ἅδυ οὐ καταχύσυσιν αὐτῆς. He proves the verity of divine predictions from the glorious accompliſhment of that word and promiſe of our Saviour, that *he would build his church on the Rock*, (that is, himſelf), ſo as that the gates of hell ſhould not prevail againſt it. For *unum hoc eſt immobili fundamentum, una hæc eſt felix fidei petra, Petri ore confeſſa, Tu es Filius Dei vivi*, ſaith *Hilar.*

de Trin. lib. 2. "This is the only immovable "foundation; this is the bleſſed rock of faith, "confeſſed by Peter, Thou art the Son of the "living God." And *Epiphanius*, *Hær.* 39. ἐπὶ τῇ πέτρᾳ ταύτῃ τῆς ἀσφαλοῦς πίστεως οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν; "Upon this rock of aſſured faith I "will build my church." For many thought that faith itſelf was *metonymically* called the rock, becauſe of its object, or the perſon of Chriſt which is ſo.

One or two more out of Auſtin ſhall cloſe theſe teſtimonies. *Super hanc petram, quam confeſſus es, ſuper meipſum Filium Dei vivi, ædificabo eccleſiam meam. Super me ædificabo te, non me ſuper te. De verbis Dom. Serm.* 13. "Upon this Rock which thou haſt confeſſed, "upon myſelf the Son of the living God, I will "build my church. I will build thee upon my-"ſelf, and not myſelf on thee." And he more fully declareth his mind, *Tract.* 124. *in Joban. Eccleſia in hoc ſeculo diverſis tentationibus, velut imbribus, fluminibus, tempeſtatibuſque quatitur, et non cadit; quoniam fundata eſt ſupra petram; unde et Petrus nomen accepit. Non enim a Petro petra, ſed Petrus a petra; ſicut non Chriſtus a Chriſtiano, ſed Chriſtianus a Chriſto vocatur. Ideo quippe ait Dominus, Super hanc petram ædificabo eccleſiam meam, quia dixerat Petrus, Tu es Chriſtus, Filius Dei vivi; ſuper hanc ergo* (inquit) *petram quam confeſſus es, ædificabo eccleſiam meam. Petra enim erat Chriſtus, ſupra quod fundamentum etiam ipſe ædificatus*

dificatus est Petrus; fundamentum quippe aliud nemo potest ponere, præter id quod positum est, quod est Jesus Christus. "The church in this "world is shaken with divers temptations, "as with showers, floods and tempests, yet "falleth not, because it is built on the rock "(*petra*), from whence *Peter* took his name. "For the rock is not called *petra* from *Peter*, "but *Peter* is so called from *petra* the rock; "as Christ is not so called from Christian, "but Christian from Christ. Therefore said "the Lord, upon this rock will I build "my church, because Peter had said, Thou "art Christ, the Son of the living God. "Upon this rock, which thou hast confessed, "will I build my church. For Christ him-"self was the rock on which foundation "Peter himself was built. For other foun-"dation can no man lay, save that which "is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Chap. 2. Against this rock, this foundation of the church, the person of Christ, and the faith of the church concerning it, great opposition hath been made by the gates of hell. Not to mention the rage of the Pagan world, endeavouring by all effects of violence and cruelty, to cast the church from this foundation; all the heresies wherewith from the beginning, and for some centuries of years ensuing it was pestered, consisted in direct and immediate oppositions unto the eternal truth concerning the person of Christ.

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Some that are ſo eſteemed indeed, never pretended unto any ſobriety, but were mere effects of delirant imaginations; yet did even they alſo one way or other derive from an hatred unto the perſon of Chriſt, and centred therein. Their beginning was early in the church, even before the writing of the Goſpel by John or his Revelations, and indeed before ſome of Paul's epiſtles. And although their beginning was but ſmall, and ſeemingly contemptible, yet being full of the poiſon of the old ſerpent, they diffuſed themſelves in various ſhapes and forms, until there was nothing left of Chriſt, nothing that related unto him, not his natures, divine or human, not their properties nor actings, not his perſon, nor the union of his natures therein, that was not oppoſed and aſſaulted by them; eſpecially ſo ſoon as the goſpel had ſubdued the Roman empire unto Chriſt, and was owned by the rulers of it, the whole world was for ſome ages filled with uproars, confuſion, and ſcandalous diſorders about the perſon of Chriſt, through the curſed oppoſitions made thereunto by the gates of hell. Neither had the church any reſt from theſe conflicts for about five hundred years. But near that period of time, the power of truth and religion beginning univerſally to decay among the outward profeſſors of them, Satan took advantage to make that havock and deſtruction of the church,

church, by ſuperſtition, falſe worſhip, and profaneneſs of life, which he failed of in his attempt againſt 'the perſon of Chriſt, or the doctrine of truth concerning it.

It would be a tedious work, and it may be not of much profit unto them who are utterly unacquainted with things ſo long paſt and gone, wherein they ſeem to have no concernment, to give a *ſpecimen* of the ſeveral hereſies, whereby attempts were made againſt this rock and foundation of the church; unto thoſe who have enquired into the records of antiquity, it would be altogether uſeleſs; for almoſt every page of them at firſt view preſents the readers with an account of ſome one or more of them. Yet do I eſteem it uſeful, that the very ordinary ſort of Chriſtians ſhould, at leaſt in general, be acquainted with what hath paſſed in this great conteſt about the perſon of Chriſt from the beginning: for there are two things relating thereunto, wherein their faith is greatly concerned. For, *firſt*, there is evidence given therein, unto the truth of thoſe predictions of the ſcripture, wherein this fatal apoſtacy from the truth, and oppoſition unto the Lord Chriſt, are foretold: and, *ſecondly*, an eminent inſtance of his power and faithfulneſs, in the diſappointment and conqueſt of the gates of hell, in the management of this oppoſition. But they have been all reckoned up, and digeſted into methods of time and

matter,

matter, by many learned men of old, and of late, ſo that I ſhall not in this occaſional diſcourſe, repreſent them unto the reader again. Only I ſhall give a brief account of the ways and means, whereby they who retained the profeſſion of the truth, contended for it unto a conqueſt over the pernicious hereſies wherewith it was oppoſed.

The defence of the truth from the beginning, was left in charge unto, and managed by the guides and rulers of the church in their ſeveral capacities. And by the ſcripture it was that they diſcharged their duty, confirmed with apoſtolical tradition conſonant thereunto. This was left in charge unto them by the great apoſtle, Acts xx. 28. 29. 30. 31. 1 Tim. vi. 13. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 1. 2. 15. 23. 24. chap. iv. 1. 2. 3. 4. And wherein any of them failed in this duty, they were reproved by Chriſt himſelf, Rev. ii. 14. 15. 20. Nor were private believers in their places and capacities, either unable for this duty, or exempt from it, but diſcharged themſelves faithfully therein, according unto commandment given unto them, 1 John ii. 20. 27. chap. iv. 1. 2. 3. 2 John 8. 9. All true believers in their ſeveral ſtations, by mutual watchfulneſs, by preaching or writing, according unto their calls and abilities, effectually uſed the outward means for the preſervation and propagation of the faith of the church. And

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the ſame means are ſtill ſufficient unto the ſame ends, were they attended unto with conſcience and diligence. The pretended defence of truth with arts and arms of another kind, hath been the bane of religion, and loſt the peace of Chriſtians beyond recovery. And it may be obſerved, that whilſt this way alone for the preſervation of the truth was inſiſted on and purſued, that although innumerable hereſies aroſe one after another, and ſometimes many together, yet they never made any great progreſs, nor arrived unto any ſuch conſiſtency, as to make a ſtated oppoſition unto the truth, but the errors themſelves and their authors were as vagrand meteors, which appeared for a little while, and vaniſhed away. Afterwards it was not ſo, when other ways and means for the ſuppreſſion of hereſies were judged convenient and needful.

For in proceſs of time, when the power of the Roman empire gave countenance and protection unto Chriſtian religion, another way was fixed on for this end, namely, the uſe of ſuch aſſemblies of biſhops and others as they called *general councils*, armed with a mixt power, partly civil, and partly eccleſiaſtical, with reſpect unto the authority of the emperors, and that juriſdiction in the church which began then to be firſt talked of. This way was begun in the council of Nice, wherein although there

was a determination of the doctrine concerning the perſon of Chriſt then in agitation, and oppoſed, as unto his divine nature therein, according unto the truth, yet ſundry evils and inconveniencies enſued thereon. For thenceforth the faith of Chriſtians began greatly to be reſolved into the authority of men, and as much, if not more weight to be laid on what was decreed by the fathers there aſſembled, than on what was clearly taught in the ſcriptures. Beſides, being neceſſitated as they thought, to explain their conceptions of the divine nature of Chriſt, in words either not uſed in the ſcripture, or whoſe ſignification unto that purpoſe was not determined therein, occaſion was given unto endleſs contentions about them. The Grecians themſelves could not for a long ſeaſon agree among themſelves whether οὐσία and ὑπόστασις were of the ſame ſignification or no, both of them denoting eſſence and ſubſtance; or whether they differed in their ſignification; or if they did, wherein that difference lay. Athanaſius at firſt affirmed them to be the ſame, *Orat. 5. con. Arian.* and *Epiſt. ad African.* Baſil denied them ſo to be, or that they were uſed unto the ſame purpoſe in the council of Nice, *Epiſt.* 78. The like difference immediately fell out between the Grecians and Latins, about *hypoſtaſis* and *perſona*. For the Latins rendered *hypoſtaſis* by *ſubſtantia*, and *perſona* by πρόσωπον. Hereof Jerome

Jerome complains in his epiſtle to Damaſus, that they required of him in the eaſt to confeſs *tres hypoſtaſes*, and he would only acknowledge *tres perſonas*, *Epiſt.* 71. And Auſtin gives an account of the ſame difference, *de Trinitate*, *lib.* 5. *cap.* 8. 9. Athanaſius endeavoured the compoſing of this difference, and in a good meaſure effected it, as Gregory of Nazianzen affirms in his oration concerning his praiſe. It was done by him in a ſynod at Alexandria in the firſt year of Julian's reign. On this occaſion many conteſts aroſe even among them who all pleaded their adherence unto the doctrine of the council of Nice. And as the ſubtle Arians made incredible advantage hereof at firſt, pretending that they oppoſed not the Deity of Chriſt, but only the expreſſion of it by ὁμοούσιος; ſo afterwards they countenanced themſelves in coining words and terms to expreſs their minds with, which utterly rejected it. Hence were their ὁμοιούσιος, ἑτεροούσιος, ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, and the like names of blaſphemy, about which the conteſts were fierce and endleſs. And there were yet farther evils that enſued hereon. For the curious and ſerpentine wits of men, finding themſelves by this means ſet at liberty to think and diſcourſe of thoſe myſteries of the bleſſed Trinity, and the perſon of Chriſt, without much regard unto plain divine teſtimonies, in ſuch ways, wherein cunning

and ſophiſtry did much bear ſway, began to multiply ſuch new, curious, and falſe notions about them, eſpecially about the latter, as cauſed new diſturbances, and thoſe of large extent and long continuance. For their ſuppreſſion, councils were called one on the neck of another, whereon commonly new occaſions of differences did ariſe, and moſt of them managed with great ſcandal unto Chriſtian religion. For men began much to forego the primitive ways of oppoſing errors, and extinguiſhing hereſies, betaking themſelves unto their intereſt, the number of their party, and prevalency with the preſent emperors. And although it ſo fell out, as in that at Conſtantinople, the firſt at Epheſus, and that at Chalcedon, that the truth for the ſubſtance of it did prevail, (for in many others it happened quite otherwiſe), yet did they always give occaſions unto new diviſions, animoſities, and even mutual hatreds, among the principal leaders of the Chriſtian people. And great conteſts there were among ſome of them who pretended to believe the ſame truth, whether ſuch or ſuch a council ſhould be received, that is plainly, whether the church ſhould reſolve its faith into their authority. The ſtrifes of this nature about the firſt Epheſine council, and that at Chalcedon; not to mention them wherein the Arians prevailed, take up a good part of the eccleſiaſtical ſtory of thoſe days.

days. And it cannot be denied, but that ſome of the principal perſons and aſſemblies who adhered unto the truth, did in the heat of oppoſition unto the hereſies of other men, fall into unjuſtifiable exceſs themſelves.

We may take an inſtance hereof with reſpect unto the Neſtorian hereſy, condemned in the firſt Epheſian council, and afterwards in that at Chalcedon. Cyrillus of Alexandria, a man learned and vehement, deſigned by all means to be unto it, what his predeceſſor Athanaſius had been to the Arian: but he fell into ſuch exceſſes in his undertakings, as gave great occaſion unto farther tumults; for it is evident that he diſtinguiſheth not between ὑπόσασις, and φύσις, and therefore affirms, that the divine Word and humanity had μίαν φύσιν, *one nature only*. So he doth plainly *in Epiſt. ad Succeſſum*; they are ignorant, ſaith he, ὅτι κατ' ἀλήθειαν ἐσὶ μία φύσις τῦ λόγυ σεσαρκωμένη. Hence Eutyches the Archimandrite took occaſion to run into a contrary extreme, being a no leſs fierce enemy to Neſtorius than Cyrillus was. For to oppoſe him, who divided the perſon of Chriſt into two; he confounded his natures into one, his delirant folly being confirmed by that goodly aſſembly, the ſecond at Epheſus. Beſides, it is confeſſed that Cyrillus, through the vehemency of his ſpirit, hatred unto Neſtorius, and following the conduct of his own

own mind in nice and ſubtle expreſſions of the great myſtery of the perſon of Chriſt, did utter many things exceeding the bounds of ſobriety preſcribed unto us by the apoſtle, Rom. xii. 3. if not thoſe of truth itſelf. Hence it is come to paſs, that many learned men begin to think and write, that Cyrillus was in the wrong, and Neſtorius by his means condemned undeſervedly. However, it is certain to me, that the doctrine condemned at Epheſus and Chalcedon as the doctrine of Neſtorius, was deſtructive of the true perſon of Chriſt; and that Cyril, though he miſſed it in ſundry expreſſions, yet aimed at the declaration and confirmation of the truth; as he was long ſince vindicated by *Theorianus*, *Dialog. con. Armenios.*

However, ſuch was the watchful care of Chriſt over the church as unto the preſervation of this ſacred fundamental truth, concerning his divine perſon, and the union of his natures therein, retaining their diſtinct properties and operations, that notwithſtanding all the faction and diſorder that were in thoſe primitive councils, and ſcandalous conteſts of many of the members of them; notwithſtanding the determination contrary unto it in great and numerous councils, the faith of it was preſerved entire in the hearts of all that truly believed, and triumphed over the gates of hell.

I have mentioned theſe few things which belong

belong unto the promiſe and prediction of our bleſſed Saviour, Matth. xvi. 18. the place inſiſted on, to ſhew that the church without any diſadvantage to the truth, may be preſerved without ſuch general aſſemblies, which in the following ages proved the moſt pernicious engines for the corruption of the faith, worſhip, and manners of it. Yea from the beginning they were ſo far from being the only way of preſerving truth, that it was almoſt conſtantly prejudiſed by the addition of their authority unto the confirmation of it. Nor was there any one of them wherein the myſtery of iniquity did not work unto the laying of ſome rubbiſh in the foundation of that fatal apoſtacy, which afterwards openly enſued. The Lord Chriſt himſelf hath taken it upon him, to build his church on this rock of his perſon, by true faith of it and in it. He ſends his Holy Spirit to bear teſtimony unto him, in all the bleſſed effects of his power and grace. He continueth his word with the faithful miniſtry of it, to reveal, declare, make known, and vindicate this ſacred truth unto the conviction of gainſayers. He keeps up that faith in him, that love unto him, in the hearts of all his elect, as ſhall not be prevailed againſt. Wherefore although the oppoſitions unto this ſacred truth, this fundamental article of the church and Chriſtian religion, concerning his divine perſon, its conſtitution

conſtitution and uſe, as the human nature conjoined ſubſtantially unto it, and ſubſiſteth in it, are in this laſt age increaſed; although they are managed under ſo great a variety of forms, as that they are not reducible unto any heads of order; although they are promoted with more ſubtlety and ſpecious pretences than in former ages; yet if we are not wanting unto our duty, with the aids of grace propoſed unto us, we ſhall finally triumph in this cauſe, and tranſmit this ſacred truth inviolate unto them that ſucceed us in the profeſſion of it.

Chap. 3. This perſon of Chriſt, which is the foundation whereon the church is built, whereunto all ſorts of oppoſitions are endeavoured and deſigned, is the moſt ineffable effect of divine goodneſs and wiſdom, whereof we treat in the next place. But herein when I ſpeak of the conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt, I intend not his perſon abſolutely as he is the eternal Son of God. He was truly, really, completely a divine perſon from eternity, which is included in the notion of his being the Son, and ſo diſtinct from the Father, which is his complete perſonality. His being ſo was not a voluntary contrivance or effect of divine wiſdom and goodneſs, his eternal generation being a neceſſary internal act of the divine nature in the perſon of the Father.

Of

Of the eternal generation of the divine perſon of the Son, the ſober writers of the ancient church, did conſtantly affirm that it was firmly to be believed, but as unto the manner of it not to be enquired into. *Scrutator Majeſtatis abſorbetur a gloria*, was their rule. And the curious diſputes of Alexander and Arius about it, gave occaſion unto that many-headed monſter of the Arian hereſy which afterwards enſued. For when once men of ſubtle heads, and unſanctified hearts, gave up themſelves to enquire into things infinitely above their underſtanding and capacity, being vainly puffed up in their fleſhly minds, they fell into endleſs diviſions among themſelves, agreeing only in an oppoſition unto the truth. But thoſe who contented themſelves to be wiſe unto ſobriety, repreſſed this impious boldneſs. To this purpoſe ſpeaks *Lactantius, lib.* 4. *de vera Sapient. Quomodo igitur procreavit? Nec ſciri a quoquam poſſunt, nec narrari opera divina; ſed tamen ſacræ literæ docent illum Dei Filium, Dei eſſe Sermonem.* "How therefore did the Father "beget the Son? Theſe divine works can "be known of none, declared by none. "But the holy writings teach wherein "it is determined, that he is the Son of "God, that he is the Word of God." And *Ambroſe de fide ad Gratianum: Quæro abs te, quando aut quomodo putes Filium eſſe generaturum?*

raturum? mihi enim impossibile est scire generationis secretum. Mens deficit, vox silet, non mea tantum, sed et angelorum; supra potestates, supra angelos, supra Cherubim, supra Sensum, supra omnem sensum. Tu quoque manum ori admove; scrutari non licet superna mysteria. Licet scire quod natus sit, non licet discutere quomodo natus sit; illud negare mihi non licet, hoc quærere metus est. Nam si Paulus ea quæ audivit, raptus in tertium cœlum, ineffabilia dicit, quomodo nos exprimere possumus paternæ generationis arcanum, quod nec sentire potuimus, nec audire? Quid te ista quæstionum tormenta delectant?

" I enquire of you, when and how the " Son was begotten? Impossible it is to " me to know the mystery of this gene- " ration. My mind faileth, my voice is " silent, and not only mine, but of the " angels; it is above principalities, above " angels, above the Cherubims, above " the Seraphims, above all understanding. " Lay thy hand on thy mouth; it is not " lawful to search into these heavenly my- " steries. It is lawful to know that he was " born; it is not lawful to determine how " he was born: that it is not lawful for me " to deny; this I am afraid to enquire in- " to. For if Paul when he was taken into " the third heaven, affirms that the things " which he heard could not be uttered; " how can we express the mystery of the " divine generation, which we can neither

" apprehend

" apprehend nor hear? Why do ſuch tor-
" menting queſtions delight thee?"

Ephraim Syrus wrote a book to this purpoſe, againſt them who would ſearch out the nature of the Son of God. Among many other things to the ſame purpoſe are his words, *cap.* 2. *Infælix profecto, miſer, atque impudentiſſimus eſt, qui ſcrutari cupit Opificem ſuum. Millia millium, et centies millies millena millia angelorum et archangelorum, cum horrore glorificant, et trementes adorant; et homines lutei, pleni peccatis, de Divinitate intrepide diſſerunt? Non illorum exhorreſcit corpus, non contremeſcit animus; ſed ſecuri et garruli, de Chriſto Dei Filio, qui pro me indigno peccatore paſſus eſt, deque ipſius utraque generatione loquuntur; nec ſaltem quod in luce cæcutiunt, ſentiunt.* " He is unhappy, miſer-
" able, and moſt impudent, who deſires to
" examine or ſearch out his Maker. Thouſands
" of thouſands, and hundreds of thouſands
" of millions of angels and archangels, do
" glorify him with dread, and adore him
" with trembling; and ſhall men made of
" clay, full of ſins, diſpute of the Deity with-
" out fear? Horror doth not ſhake their
" bodies, their minds do not tremble, but
" being ſecure and prating, they ſpeak of
" the Son of God, who ſuffered for me un-
" worthy ſinner, and of both his nativities
" or generations; at leaſt they are not ſen-
" ſible how blind they are in the light."

To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks *Euſebius* at large, *Demon. Evan. lib. 5. cap. 2.*

Leo well adds hereunto the conſideration of his incarnation, in thoſe excellent words, *Serm. 9. de Nativitat. Quia in Chriſto Jeſu Filio Dei, non ſolum ad divinam eſſentiam, ſed etiam ad humanam ſpectat naturam, quod dictum eſt per prophetam; generationem ejus quis enarrabit? Utramque enim ſubſtantiam in unam conveniſſe perſonam, niſi fides credat, ſermo non explicat; et ideo materia nunquam deficit laudis; quia nunquam ſufficit copia laudatoris. Gaudiamus igitur quod ad eloquendum tantum miſericordiæ ſacramentum impares ſumus; et cum ſalutis noſtræ altitudinem promere non valeamus, ſentiamus nobis bonum eſſe quod vincimur. Nemo enim ad cognitionem veritatis magis propinquat, quam qui intelligit, in rebus Divinis, etiamſi multum proficiat, ſemper ſibi ſupereſſe quod quærat.* See alſo *Fulg. lib. 2. ad Thraſimund.*

But I ſpeak of the perſon of Chriſt as unto the aſſumption of the ſubſtantial adjunct of the human nature, not to be a part, whereof his perſon is compoſed, but as unto its ſubſiſtence therein by virtue of a ſubſtantial union. Some of the ancients, I confeſs, ſpeak freely of the compoſition of the perſon of Chriſt in and by the two natures, the divine and human. That the Son of God after his incarnation had one nature compoſed of the Deity and humanity,

nity, was the hereſy of Apolinarius Eutyches, the Monothelites, or Monophyſites, condemned by all. But that his moſt ſimple divine nature, and the human, compoſed properly of ſoul and body, did compoſe his one perſon, or that it was compoſed of them, they conſtantly affirmed: Τὸν Θεὸν μεσίτην καὶ ἀνθρώπων, κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς συγκεῖσθαι φάμεν ἔκ τε τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀνθρωπότητος τελείως ἐχούσας κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον λόγον, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πεφυκότος, ἐκ Θεοῦ κατὰ φύσιν υἱοῦ, ſaith Cyril of Alexandria. *A ſanctis Patribus adunatione ex divinitate et humanitate Chriſtus Dominus noſter compoſitus prædicatur. Pet. Diacon. lib. de Incarnat. et Grat. Chriſti, ad fulgentium.* And the union which they intended by this compoſition they called ἕνωσιν φυσικὴν, becauſe it was of divers natures; and ἕνωσιν κατὰ σύνθεσιν, an union by compoſition.

But becauſe there neither was, nor can be any compoſition properly ſo called of the divine and human natures, and that the Son of God was a perfect perſon before his incarnation, wherein he remained what he was, and was made what he was not; the expreſſion hath been forſaken and avoided; the union being better expreſſed by the aſſumption of a ſubſtantial adjunct, or the human nature into perſonal ſubſiſtence with the Son of God, as ſhall be afterwards explained. This they conſtantly admire as the moſt ineffable effect of divine wiſdom and grace; Ὁ ἄσαρκος σαρκοῦται, ὁ λόγος παχύνεται, ὁ ἀόρατος,

ἀόρατος, ἐρᾶται, ὁ ἄναφὴς ψηλαφᾶται, ὁ ἄχρονος ἄρχεται, ὁ υἱος Θεῦ υἱος ἀνθρώπυ γίνεται, saith Gregory Nazianzen, Orat. 12. in admiration of this myſtery. Hereby God communicates all things unto us from his own glorious fulneſs, the near approaches whereof we are not able to bear. So it is illuſtrated by *Euſebius*, *Demonſt. Evang. lib.* 4. *cap.* 5. *&c.* ὕτω δὲ φωτὸς ἡλίυ, μία ϗ αὐτὴ ποσβολὴ, ὁμῦ ϗ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ καταγάζει μὲν ἄερα, φωτείζει δὲ ὀφθαλμὺς, ἀφὴν δὲ θερμαίνει, πιαίνει δὲ γῆν, αὔξει δὲ φυτὰ, κ. λ.--- εἰ γᾶν ὡς ἐν ὑποθέσει λόγυ, καθεὶς ὕρανόθεν αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν παμφυὴς ἥλιος σὺν ἀνθρώποις ἐπὶ γῆς πολειτευσίτο, ὑδένα των ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς μείνας ἂν ἀδιάφαρον πάντων σελλήδην ἐμψύχων ὁμῦ, ϗ ἀψύχων αθρόα τᾶ τῦ φοτὸς προσβολῆ διαφθαρησομένων. The ſenſe of which words, with ſome that follow in the ſame place, is unto this purpoſe. By the beams of the ſun, light, and life, and heat, unto the procreation, ſuſtentation, refreſhment and cheriſhing of all things, are communicated. But if the ſun itſelf ſhould come down unto the earth, nothing could bear its heat and luſtre; our eyes would not be enlightened, but darkened by its glory, and all things be ſwallowed up and conſumed by its greatneſs; whereas through the beams of it every thing is enlightened and kindly refreſhed. So is it with this eternal beam or brightneſs of the Father's glory. We cannot bear the immediate approach of the divine Being, but through him as incarnate are all things communicated unto us, in a way ſuited unto our reception and comprehenſion.

So

So is it admired by *Leo, Serm.* 3. *de Nativit. Natura humana in Creatoris ſocietatem aſſumpta eſt, non ut ille habitator, et ille eſſet habitaculum; ſed ut naturæ alteræ ſic miſceretur altera, ut quamvis alia ſit quæ ſuſcipitur, alia vero quæ ſuſcepit, in tantam tamen unitatem conveniret utriuſq; diverſitas, et unus ideinq; ſit Filius, qui ſe, et ſecundum quod verus eſt homo, Patre dicit minorem, et ſecundum quod verus eſt Deus Patri ſe profitetur æqualem.*
" Human nature is aſſumed into the ſociety " of the Creator, not that he ſhould be the " inhabitant, and that the habitation" (that is, by an inhabitation in the effects of his power and grace, for otherwiſe the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily) " but " that one nature ſhould be ſo mingled" (that is, conjoined) " with the other; that " although that be of one kind which " aſſumeth, and that of another which is " aſſumed; yet the diverſity of them both " ſhould concur in ſuch an unity or union, " as that it is one and the ſame Son, who " as he was a true man, ſaid that he was " leſs than the Father, or the Father was " greater than he; ſo as he was true God, " profeſſeth himſelf equal unto the Father."
See alſo *Auguſt. de fide, ad Pet. Diacon. cap.* 17. *Juſtinianus Imperator Epiſt. ad Hormiſdam, Romæ epiſcop.*

And the myſtery is well expreſſed by *Maxentius, Biblioth. Patr. par. prima. Non confundimus*

confundimus naturarum diverſitatem; veruntamen Chriſtum non ut tu aſſeris Deum factum, ſed Deum factum Chriſtum confitemur. Quia non cum pauper eſſet, dives factus eſt; ſed cum dives eſſet, pauper factus eſt, ut nos divites faceret; neq; enim cum eſſet in forma ſervi, formam Dei accepit; ſed cum eſſet in forma Dei, formam ſervi accepit; ſimiliter etiam nec, cum eſſet caro, Verbum eſt factum; ſed cum eſſet Verbum caro factum eſt. "We do not con-
" found the diverſity of the natures, how-
" beit we believe not what you affirm, that
" Chriſt was made God, but we believe that
" God was made Chriſt. For he was
" not made rich when he was poor; but
" being rich, he was made poor, that he
" might make us rich. He did not take
" the form of God, when he was in the
" form of a ſervant; but being in the form
" of God, he took on him the form of a ſer-
" vant. In like manner, he was not made
" the Word when he was fleſh; but being
" the Word, he was made fleſh."

And *Hierom* ſpeaking of the effects of this myſtery, *Comment. in Ezekiel, cap.* 46. *Ne miretur lector ſi idem et Princeps eſt et Sacerdos, et vitulus, et aries, et agnus; cum in ſcripturis ſanctis pro varietate cauſarum legamus eum Dominum, et Deum, et hominem, et Prophetam, et virgam, et radicem, et florem, et Principem, et Regem juſtum, et juſtitiam, Apoſtolum, et Epiſcopum, brachium, ſervum, Angelum, Paſtorem,*

ſtorem, Filium, et unigenitum, et primogenitum, oſtium, viam, ſagittam, ſapientiam, et multa alia.
" Let not the reader wonder if he find one
" and the ſame to be the Prince and Prieſt,
" the bullock, ram, and lamb; for in the
" ſcripture, on variety of cauſes, we find
" him called Lord, God, and man, the Pro-
" phet, a rod, and the root, the flower,
" Prince, Judge, and righteous King, righ-
" teouſneſs, the Apoſtle and Biſhop, the arm,
" and ſervant of God, the Angel, the Shep-
" herd, the Son, the only begotten, the firſt-
" begotten, the door, the way, the arrow,
" wiſdom, and ſundry other things." And Ennodius hath as it were turned this paſſage of Hierom into verſe.

Corda domat, qui cuncta videt, quem cuncta tremiſcunt;
Fons, via, dextra, lapis, vitulus, leo, lucifer, agnus;
Janua, ſpes, virtus, verbum, ſapientia, vates;
Oſtia, virgultum, paſtor, mons, rete, columba,
Flamma, gigas, aquila, ſponſus, patientia, nervus,
Filius, excelſus, Dominus, Deus; omnia Chriſtus.
In natalem Papæ Epiphanii.

Quod homo eſt, eſſe Chriſtus voluit; ut et homo poſſit eſſe, quod Chriſtus eſt, ſaith *Cyprian. de Vanitat. Judæ.* And, *Quod eſt Chriſtus erimus Chriſtiani, ſi Chriſtum fuerimus ſecuti, ibid.* And he explains his mind in this expreſſion by way of admiration, *Serm. de Eleomoſyn. Chriſtus hominis Filius eſſe voluit, ut nos filios Dei faceret; humiliavit ſe, ut populum qui*

prius jacebat, erigeret; vulneratus eſt, ut vulnera noſtra ſanaret.

Chap. 4. That he was the foundation of all the holy counſels of God, with reſpect unto the vocation, ſanctification, juſtification, and eternal ſalvation of the church, is in the next place at large declared. And he was ſo on a threefold account. (1.) Of the ineffable mutual delight of the Father and the Son in thoſe counſels from all eternity. (2.) As the only way and means of the accompliſhment of all thoſe counſels, and the communication of their effects unto the eternal glory of God. (3.) As he was in his own perſon, as incarnate, the idea and exemplar in the mind of God of all that grace and glory in the church, which was deſigned unto it, in thoſe eternal counſels. As the cauſe of all good unto us, he is on this account acknowledged by the ancients.

Οὗτος γοῦν ὁ λόγος, ὁ χρίσος ϗ τϑ εἶναι πάλαι ἡμᾶς, ἦν γαρ ἐν Θεῷ, ϗ τῷ εὖ εἶναι. Νῦν δὲ ἐπιφάνη ἀνθρώποις, ἀυτὸς τουτος ὁ λόγος, ὁ μόνος ἄμφω Θεὸς τε ϗ ἄνθρωπος, ἁπάντων ἡμῖν αἴτιος ἀγαθῶν, saith *Clemens*, *Adhort. ad Gentes.* "He therefore is the Word, the cauſe of "old of our being, for he was in God, and "the cauſe of our well-being. But now he "hath appeared unto men, the ſame eternal "Word, who alone is both God and man, "and unto us the cauſe of all that is good." As he was in God the cauſe of our being and well-being from eternity; he was the foundation

dation of the divine counſels in the way explained; and in his incarnation, the execution of them all was committed unto him, that through him all actual good, all the fruits of thoſe counſels might be communicated unto us.

Chap. 5. He is alſo declared in the next place, as he is the image and great repreſentative of God, even the Father, unto the church. On what various accounts he is ſo called, is fully declared in the diſcourſe itſelf. In his divine perſon, as he was the only begotten of the Father from eternity, he is the eſſential image of the Father, by the generation of his perſon, and the communication of the divine nature unto him therein. As he is incarnate, he is both in his own entire perſon God and man, and in the adminiſtration of his office, the image or repreſentative of the nature and will of God unto us, as is fully proved. So ſpeaks *Clem. Alexandrin. Admonit. ad Gentes*; ἡ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰκὼν ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ, καὶ υἱὸς τοῦ νοῦ γνήσιος, ὁ θεῖος λόγος, φωτὸς ἀρχέτυπον φῶς, εἰκὼν δὲ τοῦ λόγου ὁ ἄνθρωπος. "The "image of God is his own Word, the natu- "ral Son of the (eternal) Mind, the divine "Word, the original Light of light; and "the image of the Word is man." And the ſame author again *Pædagog.* πρόσωπον τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ λόγος, ᾧ φωτίζεται ὁ Θεὸς καὶ γνωρίζεται. "The Word "is the face, the countenance, the repre- "ſentation of God, in whom he is brought

" to light and made known." As he is in his divine perſon, his eternal eſſential image; ſo in his incarnation, as the teacher of men, he is the repreſentative-image of God unto the church, as is afterwards declared.

So alſo Hierom expreſſeth his mind herein, *Comment. in Pſal.* 66. *Illuminet vultum ſuum ſuper nos; Dei facies quæ eſt? utique imago ejus. Dicit enim apoſtolus imaginem Patris eſſe Filium. Ergo imagine ſua nos illuminet; hoc eſt, imaginem ſuam Filium illuminet ſuper nos, ut ipſe nos illuminet; lux enim Patris lux Filii eſt.* " Let him cauſe his face to ſhine upon us; " or lift up the light of his countenance up- " on us. What is the face of God, even " his image? For the apoſtle ſays, that the " Son is the image of the Father. Where- " fore let him ſhine on us with his image; " that is, cauſe his Son, which is his image, " to ſhine upon us, that he may illuminate " us; for the light of the Father and of the " Son are the ſame." Chriſt being the image of God, the face of God, in him is God repreſented unto us, and through him are all ſaving benefits communicated unto them that believe.

Euſebius alſo ſpeaks often unto this purpoſe; as *Demon. Evangel. lib.* 4. *cap.* 2. Ὅθεν εἰκότως οἱ χρησμοὶ θεολογοῦντες, θεὸν γένητον αὐτὸν ἀποφαίνουσιν, ὡς ἂν τὰς ἀνεκφράσε, καὶ ἀπερινοήτε θεότητος μόνον ἐν αὐτῷ φέροντα τὴν εἰκόνα, οἱ ἦν καὶ θεὸν εἶναι τε αὐτὸν καὶ λέγεσθαι τῆς πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἐξομοιώσεως χάριν. " Wherefore the holy " oracles

" oracles ſpeaking theologically, or teaching " divine things, do rightly call him God be- " gotten (of the Father), as he who alone " bears in himſelf the image of the ineffable " and inconceivable Deity. Wherefore he " both is, and is called God, becauſe of his " being the character, ſimilitude, or image " of him who is the firſt." The divine perſonality of Chriſt conſiſts in this, that the whole divine nature being communicated unto him by eternal generation, he is the image of God, even the Father, by whom he is repreſented unto us. See the ſame book, chap. 7. to the ſame purpoſe. Alſo *De Eccleſiaſt. Theol. contra Marcell. lib.* 2. *cap.* 17.

Clemens abounds much in the affirmation of this truth concerning the perſon of Chriſt; and we may yet add from a multitude to the ſame purpoſe, one or more teſtimonies from him. Treating of Chriſt, as the teacher of all men (his παιδαγωγὸς), he affirms that he is, Θεὸς ἐν ἀνθρώπου χήματι; " God " in the figure or form of man;" ἄχραντος πατρικῷ θελήματι διάκονος, λόγος, Θεὸς, ὁ ἐν πατρὶ, ὁ ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ πατρὸς, σὺν ᾧ τῷ χήματι Θεὸς, " impolluted, ſerving the will of the Father, the Word, " God, who is in the Father, on the right " hand of the Father, and in or with the " form of God." Οὗτος ἡμῖν εἰκὼν ἡ ἀκαλίδωτος, τύτῳ πάντι δέγει πειρατέον ἐξομοιῶν τὴν ψυχήν. " He is the " image (of God) unto us, wherein there is

" no

" no blemish, and with all our strength are " we to endeavour to render ourselves like " unto him." This is the great end of his being the representative-image of God unto us. And *Stromat. lib.* 4. Ὁ μὲν οὖν Θεὸς ἀναπόδειχτος ὤν, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπιστημονικός. Ὁ δὲ Υἱος σοφία τις ἐστὶ καὶ ἐπιστήμη, καὶ ἀλήθεια, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τούτῳ συγγενῆ, " As God " (absolutely) falls not under demonstration, " (that is, cannot perfectly be declared), so " he doth not (immediately) effect, or teach " us knowledge. But the Son is wisdom, " and knowledge, and truth unto us, and " every thing which is cognate hereunto. " For in and by him doth God teach us, " and represent himself unto us."

Chap. 7. Upon the glory of this divine person of Christ depends the efficacy of all his offices; an especial demonstration whereof is given in his prophetical office. So it is well expressed by *Irenæus*; *qui nil molitur inepte, lib.* 1. *cap.* 1. *Non enim aliter nos discere poteramus quæ sunt Dei, nisi Magister noster Verbum existens, homo factus fuisset. Neque enim alius poterat enarrare nobis quæ sunt Patris, nisi proprium ipsius Verbum. Quis enim alius cognovit sensum Domini? aut quis alius ejus consiliarius factus est? Neque rursus nos aliter discere poteramus, nisi Magistrum nostrum videntes, et per auditum nostrum vocem ejus. precipientes, uti imitatores quidem operum, factores autem sermonum ejus facti, communionem habeamus cum ipso.* " We could not other-

" wise

" wiſe have learned the things of God, un-
" leſs our Maſter being and continuing the
" (eternal) Word, had been made man.
" For no other could declare unto us the
" things of God, but his own proper
" Word. For who elſe hath known the
" mind of the Lord? or who elſe hath
" been his counſellor? Neither on the other
" ſide could we otherwiſe have learned,
" unleſs we had ſeen our Maſter, and
" heard his voice, (*in his incarnation and*
" *miniſtry*), whereby following his works,
" *and yielding obedience unto his doctrine, we*
" *may have communion with himſelf.*"

I do perceive, that if I ſhould proceed with the ſame kind of atteſtations unto the doctrine of all the chapters in the enſuing diſcourſe, this preface would be drawn forth unto a greater length than was ever deſigned unto it, or is convenient for it. I ſhall therefore chuſe out one or two inſtances more, to give a ſpecimen of the concurrence of the ancient church in the doctrine declared in them, and ſo put a cloſe unto it.

Chap. 9. In the ninth chapter, and thoſe following, we treat of the divine honour that is due unto the perſon of Chriſt, expreſſed in adoration, invocation, and obedience proceeding from faith and love. And the foundation of the whole, is laid in the diſcovery of the true nature and cauſes of that honour: and three things are

deſigned

deſigned unto confirmation herein. (1.) That the divine nature, which is individually the ſame in each perſon of the holy Trinity, is the proper formal object of all divine worſhip, in adoration and invocation. Wherefore no one perſon is or can be worſhipped, but in the ſame individual act of worſhip, each perſon is equally worſhipped and adored. (2.) That it is lawful to direct divine honour, worſhip and invocation unto any perſon, in the uſe of his peculiar name, the Father, Son, or Spirit; or unto them altogether: but to make any requeſt unto one perſon, and immediately the ſame unto another, is not exemplified in the ſcripture, nor among the ancient writers of the church. (3.) That the perſon of Chriſt as God-man, is the proper object of all divine honour and worſhip, on the account of his divine nature; and all that he did in his human nature, are motives thereunto.

The firſt of theſe is the conſtant doctrine of the whole ancient church, namely, that whether (for inſtance) in our ſolemn prayers and invocations, we call expreſsly on the name of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit; whether we do it abſolutely or relatively, that is, with reſpect unto the relation of one perſon to the other; as calling on God, as the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; on Chriſt, as the Son of his love;

love; on the Holy Spirit, as proceeding from them both, we do formally invocate and call on the divine nature, and conſequently the whole Trinity, and each perſon therein. This truth they principally confirmed with the form of our initiation into Chriſt at baptiſm; "I baptize thee in the "name of the Father, and of the Son, and "of the Holy Ghoſt." For as there is contained therein the ſum of all divine honour, ſo it is directed unto the ſame name, not the names of the Father, Son, and Spirit, which is the ſame Deity or divine nature alone.

So ſpeak the fathers of the ſecond general council, in their letters unto the biſhops of the weſt; as they are expreſſed in *Theodoret. lib. 5. cap.* 9. This form of baptiſm teacheth us, Πιστεύειν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, δηλαδὴ, θεότητός τε καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ οὐσίας μιᾶς τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος πεπιστευομένης, ὁμοτίμου τῆς ἀξίας, καὶ συνηδίου τῆς βασιλείας, ἐν τρισὶ τελείαις ὑποστάσεσι; "To believe in the name of "the Father, and of the Son, and of the "Holy Ghoſt; ſeeing that the deity, ſub"ſtance, and power of the Father, Son, "and Holy Spirit, is one and the ſame, "their dignity equal, their kingdom co"eternal in three perfect perſons." *In nomine dixit, non nominibus, ergo non aliud nomen Patris eſt,* &c. *quia unus Deus, Ambroſ. de Spirit. Sanct. lib.* 1. *cap.* 14. Ὄνομα δὲ μοναδικὸν τῶν τριῶν

τριῶν ἕν, ἡ θεότης. "The one name common to "three is the Deity." *Gregor. Nazianzen. Orat.* 40. Hence Auſtin gives it as a rule in ſpeaking of the Holy Trinity; *Quando unus trium in aliquo opere nominatur, univerſa operari Trinitas intelligitur. Enchrid. cap.* 38. "When one perſon of the three is named in "any work, the whole Trinity is to be un- "derſtood to effect it." There is one Lord, one faith, one baptiſm, according to the ſcriptures. Wherefore as there is one faith in Chriſt, and one baptiſm of truth, although we are baptized, and believe in the Father, Son, and Spirit, καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν, οἶμαι, τρόπον καὶ λόγον, μία προσκύνησει, ἡ πατρὸς, καὶ ἐναν θρωπήσαντος υἱὸς, καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος: "So plainly in my judgment "there is one and the ſame adoration of the "Father, the Son incarnate, and the Holy "Spirit." *Cyril. Alex. de recta fide, cap.* 32.

And this they profeſſed themſelves to hold and believe in that ancient *doxology* which was firſt invented to decry the Arian hereſy; "Glory be to the Father, and to "the Son, and to the Holy Ghoſt." The ſame glory in every individual act of its aſſignation or aſcription, is directed unto each perſon jointly and diſtinctly on the account of the ſame divine nature in each of them. I need not produce any teſtimonies in the farther confirmation hereof: for in all their writings againſt the Arians they expreſsly and conſtantly contend that the Holy

Trinity,

Trinity, that is, the divine nature in three perſons, is the individual object of all divine adoration, invocation, and all religious worſhip; and that by whatever perſonal name, as the Father, Son, or Spirit, we call on God, it is God abſolutely who is adored, and each perſon participant of the ſame nature. See *Auguſt. lib. con. Serm. Arian. cap.* 35. And *Epiſt.* 66. *ad Maximum.*

For the ſecond thing, or the invocation of God by any perſonal name, or by the conjunction of the diſtinct names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together, nothing occurs more frequently among them. Yea, it is common to find in their writings prayers begun unto one perſon, and ended in the name of another; yea, begun unto Chriſt, and cloſed in the name of his only begotten Son; it being one and the ſame divine nature that is called on. Yea, the ſchoolmen do generally deny that the perſons of the Holy Trinity, under the conſideration of the formal reaſon which is conſtitutive of their perſonality, are the formal object and term of divine worſhip; but in the worſhip of one they are all worſhipped as one God over all bleſſed for ever. See *Aquin.* 22. *q.* 81. *a.* 3. *ad prima.* and *q.* 84. *a.* 1. *ad tertium. Alexand. Alenſ. p.* 3. *q.* 30. *m.* 1. *a.* 3.

But yet, although we may call on God in and by the name of any divine perſon, or enumerate at once each perſon, (ὦ τριὰς ἁγία ἀριθμου-

μένη, τριὰς ἐν ἑνὶ ὀνόματι ἀριθμυμένη, *Epiphan. Ancorat.* 8. 22.) it doth not follow, that we may make a requeſt in our prayers unto one perſon, and then immediately repeat it unto another: for it would thence follow, that the perſon unto whom we make that requeſt in the ſecond place, was not invocated, not called on, not equally adored with him, who was ſo called on in the firſt place, although the divine nature is the object of all religious invocation, which is the ſame in each perſon. Wherefore in our divine invocation, we may name and fix our thoughts diſtinctly on any perſon, according as our ſouls are affected with the diſtinct operations of each perſon in grace towards us.

For what concerns in the third place, the aſcription of divine honour in adoration and invocation unto the perſon of Chriſt; it is that which they principally contended for, and argued for in all their writings againſt the Arians.

Evidences of infinite wiſdom in the conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt, and rational diſcoveries of the condecencies therein unto the exaltation of all the other glorious properties of the divine nature, are alſo treated of. Herein we conſider the incarnation of the Son of God with reſpect unto the recovery and ſalvation of the church alone. Some have contended that he ſhould have been incarnate, had man never fallen

or

or sinned. Of them are *Rupertus, lib.* 3. *de gloria et honore Filii hominis. Albertus Magnus, in* 3. *distinct.* 10. *A.* 4. *Petrus Galatinus, lib.* 3. *cap.* 4.; as are Scotus, Halensis, and others, whom Osiander followed. The same is affirmed by Socinus concerning the birth of that man, which alone he fancied him to be, as I have elsewhere declared. But I have disproved this figment at large. Many of the ancients have laboured in this argument, of the necessity of the incarnation of the eternal Word, and the condecencies unto divine wisdom therein. See *Irenæus, lib.* 3. *cap.* 20. 21. *Eusebius, Demonst. Evangel. lib.* 4. *cap.* 1. 2. 3. 4. &c. *Cyril. Alexand. lib.* 5. *cap.* 7. *lib.* 1. *de fide ad Regin. Chrysostom, Homil.* 10. *in Johan. et in cap.* 8. *ad Rom. Serm.* 18. *Augustin, de Trinit. lib.* 13. *cap.* 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. *Leo, Epist.* 13. 18. *Sermo. de Nativit.* 1. 4. 10. *Basil. in Psal.* 48. *Albinus, lib.* 1. *in Johan. cap.* 11. *Damascen. lib.* 3. *de fide, cap.* 15. 19. *Anselm, quod Deus homo, lib. duo. Guil. Parisiensis, lib. cur Deus homo.* Some especial testimonies we may produce in confirmation of what we have discoursed in the places directed unto. There is one of them, one of the most ancient, the most learned, and most holy of them, who hath so fully delivered his thoughts concerning this mystery, as that I shall principally make use of his testimony herein.

It

It belonged unto the wiſdom and righteouſneſs of God, that Satan ſhould be conquered and ſubdued in and by the ſame nature which he had prevailed againſt by his ſuggeſtion and temptation. To this purpoſe that holy writer ſpeaks, *lib.* 3. *cap.* 20. which becauſe his words are cited by *Theodoret*, *Dial.* 2. I ſhall tranſcribe them from thence, as free from the injuries of his barbarous tranſlator; Ἦνωσεν ἂν καθὼς προέφαμεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον τῷ Θεῷ, εἰ γὰρ μὴ ἄνθρωπος ἐνίκησιν τὸν ἀντίπαλον τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, οὐκ ἂν δικαίως ἐνικήθη ὁ ἐχθρὸς, πάλιντε, εἰ μὴ ὁ Θεὸς ἐδωρήσατο τὴν σωτηρίαν, οὐκ ἂν βεβαίως ἔχομεν αὐτὴν, καὶ εἰ μὴ συνηνώθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῷ Θεῷ οὐκ ἂν ἠδυνήθη μεταχεῖν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας. Ἔδει γὰρ τὸν μεσίτην τοῦ Θεοῦ τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων, διὰ τῆς ἰδίας πρὸς ἑκατέρους οἰκειότητος εἰς φιλίαν καὶ ὁμόνοιαν τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους συνηγαγεῖν. Words plainly divine, an illuſtrious teſtimony of the faith of the ancient church, and expreſſive of the principal myſtery of the goſpel. "Wherefore, as we ſaid "before, he united man unto God. For if "man had not overcome the adverſary of "men, the enemy had not been juſtly con"quered. And on the other hand, if God "had not given and granted ſalvation, we "could never have a firm undefeaſible poſ"ſeſſion of it. And if man had not been "united unto God, he could not have been "partaker of immortality. It behoved there"fore the Mediator between God and man, "by his own participation of the nature of "each of them, to bring them both into "friendſhip

" friendſhip and agreement with each other." And to the ſame purpoſe ſpeaking of the wiſdom of God in our redemption by Chriſt, with reſpect unto the conqueſt of the devil, *lib. 5. cap.* 1. *Potens in omnibus Dei Verbum, et non deficiens in ſua juſtitia, juſte etiam adverſus ipſam converſus eſt apoſtaſiam, ea quæ ſunt ſua redimens, ab eo, non cum vi, quemadmodum ille initio dominabitur noſtri, ea quæ non erant ſua inſatiabiliter rapiens---Suo igitur ſanguine redimente nos Domino, et dante animam ſuam pro anima noſtra, et carnem ſuam pro carnibus noſtris,* &c. Again divinely; " The all-powerful " Word of God, no way defective in righ- " teouſneſs, ſet himſelf againſt the apoſtacy " juſtly alſo; redeeming from him (Satan " the head of the apoſtacy) the things which " were his own; not with force, as he bare " rule over us, inſatiably making rapine of " what was not his own.---But he the Lord " redeeming us with his own blood, giving " his ſoul for our ſouls, and his fleſh for " ours, wrought out our deliverance." Theſe things are at large inſiſted on in the enſuing diſcourſe.

It belongs unto this great myſtery, and is a fruit of divine wiſdom, that our deliverance ſhould be wrought in and by the ſame nature, wherein and whereby we were ruined. The reaſons hereof, and the glory of God therein are at large diſcourſed in the enſuing treatiſe. To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks

the

the ſame holy writer, *lib.* 5. *cap.* 14. *Non in ſemetipſo recapitulaſſet hæc Dominus, niſi ipſe caro et ſanguis ſecundum principalem plaſmationem fac[illegible] fuiſſet; ſalvans in ſemetipſo in fine, illud quod perierat in principio in Adam. Si autem ob alteram quandam diſpoſitionem Dominus incarnatus eſt, et ex altera ſubſtantia carnem attulit, non ergo in ſemetipſo recapitulatus eſt hominem, adhuc etiam nec caro dici poteſt---- habuit ergo et ipſe carnem et ſanguinem, non alteram quandam, ſed ipſam principalem Patris plaſmationem in ſe recapitulans, exquirens id quod perierat.* And to the ſame purpoſe, *lib.* 5. *cap.* 1. *Neque enim vere eſſet ſanguinem et carnem habens, per quam nos redemit, niſi antiquam plaſmationem Adæ in ſeipſum recapitulaſſet.* That which theſe paſſages give teſtimony unto, is what we have diſcourſed concerning the neceſſity of our redemption in and by the nature that ſinned; and yet withal, that it ſhould be free from all that contagion which invaded our nature by the fall. And theſe things are divinely expreſſed. "Our Lord, ſaith he, had not gathered up "theſe things in himſelf, had not he been "made fleſh and blood, according unto its "original creation." (The reader may obſerve, that none of the ancient writers do ſo frequently expreſs the fall of Adam, by our *apoſtaſy from God*, and our recovery by a *recapitulation* in Chriſt, as Irenæus doth. His

recapitulation

recapitulation being nothing but the ἀνακεφαλαίωσις mentioned by the apoſtle, Eph. i. 10. And he here affirms, that unto this end the Lord was made fleſh, *ſecundum principalem plaſmationem*, as his words are rendered; that is plainly, the original creation of our nature, in innocency, uprightneſs, purity and righteouſneſs.) "So he ſaved in himſelf in "the end, what periſhed in Adam at the "beginning: (The ſame nature, in and "by the ſame nature.) For if the Lord had "been incarnate for any other diſpoſition, "(that is, cauſe, reaſon, or end), and had "brought fleſh from any other ſubſtance, "(that is, cœleſtial or ætherial, as the Gnoſtics imagined), he had not recovered men, "brought our nature unto an head in himſelf, nor could he have been ſaid to be "fleſh. He therefore himſelf had fleſh and "blood, not of any other kind; but he "took to himſelf that which was originally "created of the Father, ſeeking that which "was loſt." The ſame is obſerved by *Auſtin, lib. de fide, ad Petrum Diaconum. Sic igitur Chriſtum Dei Filium, id eſt, unam ex Trinitate perſonam, Deum verum crede, ut divinitatem ejus de natura Patris natam eſſe non dubites; et ſic eum verum hominem crede, et ejus carnem, non cœleſtis, non aeriæ, non alterius cujuſquam putes eſſe naturæ, ſed ejus cujus eſt omnium caro; id eſt, quam ipſe Deus, homini primo de terra plaſmavit, et cæteris hominibus*

plaſmat. " So believe Chriſt the Son of God, " that is one perſon of the Trinity, to be " the true God, that you doubt not but " that his divinity was born (by eternal ge- " neration) of the nature of the Father; and " ſo believe him to be a true man, that you " ſuppoſe not his fleſh to be aerial, or hea- " venly, or of any other nature, but of that " which is the fleſh of all men; that is, " which God himſelf formed in the firſt man " of the earth, and which he forms in all " other men." That which he ſpeaks of one perſon of the Trinity, hath reſpect unto the heretical opinion of Hormiſda the biſhop of Rome, who contended, that it was unlawful to ſay, that *one perſon of the Trinity was incarnate*, and perſecuted ſome Scythian monks, men not unlearned, about it, who were ſtrenuouſly defended by Maxentius one of them.

It carrieth in it a great condecency unto divine wiſdom, that man ſhould be reſtored unto the image of God, by him who was the eſſential image of the Father, as is declared in our diſcourſe: and that he was made like unto us, that we might be made like unto him, and unto God through him. So ſpeaks the ſame *Irenæus*, *lib.* 5. *Præfat. Verbum Dei Jeſus Chriſtus, qui propter immenſam ſuam dilectionem, factus eſt, quod ſumus nos, ut nos perficeret quod eſt ipſe.* " Jeſus Chriſt the " Word of God, who from his own infinite

" love

" love, was made what we are, that he
" might make us what he is; that is, by
" the reſtoration of the image of God in us."
And again, *lib.* 3. *cap.* 20. *Filius Dei exiſtens apud Patrem, et homo factus, longam hominum expoſitionem in ſeipſo recapitulavit; in compendio nobis ſalutem præſtans, ut quod perdideramus in Adam, id eſt, ſecundum imaginem et ſimilitudinem eſſe Dei, hoc in Chriſto Jeſu reciperemus; quia enim non erat poſſibile qui ſemel victus fuerat et eliſus per inobedientiam, replaſmare et obtinere bravium victoriæ; iterum autem impoſſibile erat ut ſalutem perciperet, qui ſub peccato ceciderat, utraque operatus eſt Filius Verbum Dei exiſtens, a Patre deſcendens et incarnatus, uſque ad mortem deſcendens, et diſpenſationem conſummans ſalutis noſtræ.* " Being the Son of God
" with the Father, and being made man, he
" reconciled or gathered up in himſelf, the
" long continued expoſing of men (unto
" ſin and judgment), bringing in ſalvation
" in this compendious way, in this ſumma-
" ry of it, that what we had loſt in Adam,
" that is, our being in the image and like-
" neſs of God; that we ſhould recover in
" Chriſt. For it was not poſſible that man
" that had been once conquered, and broken
" by diſobedience, ſhould (by himſelf) be
" reformed, and obtain the crown of victory;
" nor was it again poſſible, that he ſhould re-
" cover ſalvation who had fallen under ſin.
" Both were wrought by the Son, the Word

" of God, who descending from the Father, " and being incarnate, submitted himself to " death, perfecting the dispensation of our " salvation."

And *Clemens Alexandrinus* to the same purpose; *Adhort. ad Gentes.* Ναὶ φήμι ὁ λόγος ὁ τῦ Θεῦ ἄνθρωπος γενομένος, ἵνα δι ἣ σὺ παρά ἀνθρώπυ μάθης, πὴ ποτε ἄρα ἄνθρωπος γένηται Θεός. " The Word " of God was made man, that thou mightst " learn of a man, how man may become " (*as*) God." And *Ambrose in Psal.* cxviii. *Octon.* 8. *Imago, id est, Verbum Dei, ad eum qui est ad imaginem, hoc est, hominem venit, et quærit imago eum qui est ad similitudinem, ut iterum signet, ut iterum confirmet, quia amisit quod accepit.* " The image of God, that is, " the Word of God, came into him who " was after the image of God, that is man. " And this image of God seeks him who " was after the image of God, that he might " seal him with it again, and confirm him, " because he had lost that which he had re- " ceived." And Austin in one instance gives a rational account why it was condecent unto divine wisdom, that the Son, and not the Father, or the Holy Spirit, should be incarnate; which we also enquire into, *lib. de Definition. Orthodoxis, cap.* 2. *Non Pater carnem assumpsit, neque Spiritus Sanctus, sed Filius tantum; ut qui erat in divinitate Dei Patris Filius ipse fieret in homine, hominis matris Filius; ne Filii nomen ad alterum transiret,*

qui

qui non esset æterna nativitate Filius. "The "Father did not assume flesh, nor the Ho- "ly Spirit, but the Son only; that he who "in the Deity was the Son of the Father, "should be made the Son of man, in his "mother of human race; that the name of "the Son should not pass unto any other, "who was not the Son by an eternal nati- "vity."

I shall close with one meditation of the same author, concerning the wisdom and righteousness of God in this mystery. *Enchirid. ad Laurent. cap.* 99. *Vide---universum genus humanum tam justo judicio divino in apostatica radice damnatum, ut etiam si nullus inde liberaretur, nemo recte possit Dei vituperare justitiam; et qui liberantur, sic oportuisse liberari, ut ex pluribus non liberatis, atque damnatione justissima derelictis, ostenderetur, quod meruisset universa conspersio, et quo etiam istos debitum judicium Dei duceret, nisi ejus indebita misericordia subveniret.* "Behold, the whole race "of mankind by the just judgment of God "so condemned in the apostatical root, that "if no one were thence delivered, yet no "man could rightly complain of the justice "of God; and that those who are freed, "ought so to be freed, that from the great- "er number who are not freed, but left un- "der most righteous condemnation, it might "be manifest what the whole mass had de- "served, and whither the judgment of God

"due

" due unto them would lead them, if his " mercy, which was not due, did not re- " lieve them." The reader may ſee what is diſcourſed unto theſe purpoſes: and becauſe the great end of the deſcription given of the perſon of Chriſt, is that we may *love him*, and thereby be transformed into his *image*, I ſhall cloſe this preface with the words of Hierom, concerning that *divine love* unto Chriſt which is at large declared. *Sive legas*, (ſaith he) *ſive ſcribas, ſive vigiles, ſive dormias, amor tibi ſemper buccina in auribus ſonet; hic lituus excitet animam tuam; hoc amore furebundus, quære in lecto tuo, quem deſiderat anima tua. Epiſt. ad Pammach. cap.* 4. " Whether thou " readeſt or writeſt, whether thou watcheſt " or ſleepeſt, let the voice of love (*to Chriſt*) " ſound in thine ears; let this trumpet ſtir " up thy ſoul; being overpowered (*brought* " *into an ecſtacy*) with this love, ſeek him on " thy bed, whom thy ſoul deſireth and " longeth for."

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ:

OR, A

DECLARATION

OF THE

GLORIOUS MYSTERY

OF THE

Perſon of Chriſt, &c.

CHAP. I.

Peter's confeſſion, Matth. xvi. 16. *Conceits of the Papiſts thereon. The ſubſtance and excellency of that confeſſion.*

OUR bleſſed Saviour enquiring of his diſciples their apprehenſions concerning his *perſon*, and their faith in him, Simon Peter, as he was uſually the forwardeſt on all ſuch occaſions, through his peculiar endowments of faith and zeal, returns an anſwer in the name of them all, Matth. xvi. 16. *And Simon Peter anſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God.*

Baronius, and ſundry others of the Roman church, do affirm, that the Lord Chriſt herein did preſcribe the *form of a general council.* For here, ſay they, the *principal article of our Chriſtian faith was declared and determined by Peter, whereunto all the reſt of the apoſtles*, as in duty they were obliged, *did give their conſent and ſuffrage.* This was done, as they ſuppoſe, that a rule and law might be given unto future ages, how to enact and determine *articles of faith.* For it is to be done by the *ſucceſſors of Peter* preſiding in councils, as it was now done by *Peter* in this aſſembly of Chriſt and his apoſtles.

But they ſeem to forget that *Chriſt himſelf* was now preſent,

preſent, and therefore could have no *vicar*, ſeeing he preſided in his own perſon. All the claim they lay unto the neceſſity of ſuch a viſible head of the church on the earth, as may determine articles of faith, is from the *abſence of Chriſt* ſince his aſcenſion into heaven. But that he ſhould alſo have a *ſubſtitute* whilſt he was *preſent*, is ſomewhat uncouth. And whilſt they live, they ſhall never make the *pope preſident*, where *Chriſt is preſent*. The truth is, he doth not propoſe unto his diſciples the *framing of an article of truth*; but enquires after their own faith, which they expreſſed in this confeſſion. Such things as theſe will prejudice, carnal intereſt, and the prepoſſeſſion of the minds of men with corrupt imaginations, cauſe them to adventure on, to the ſcandal, yea ruin of religion.

This ſhort, but illuſtrious confeſſion of Peter, compriſeth eminently the whole truth concerning the *perſon* and *office* of Chriſt. Of his *perſon*, in that although he was the *Son of man*, under which appellation he made his enquiry, (*Whom do men ſay that I the Son of man am?*) yet was he not only ſo, but the eternal Son of the living God. Of his *office*, that he was the *Chriſt*, he whom God had anointed to be the Saviour of the church, in the diſcharge of his kingly, prieſtly, and prophetical power. Inſtances of the like brief confeſſions we have elſewhere in the ſcripture, Rom. x. 9. *If thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thy heart, that God raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved.* 1 John iv. 2. *Every ſpirit that confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is of God. And every ſpirit that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is not of God.* And it is manifeſt, that all divine truths have ſuch a concatenation among themſelves, and do all of them ſo centre in the *perſon of Chriſt*, as veſted with his offices towards the church, that they are all virtually compriſed in this confeſſion. And they will be ſo accounted unto all who deſtroy them not by contrary errors and imaginations inconſiſtent with them; though it be the duty of all men to obtain the expreſs knowledge of them in particular, according unto the means thereof which they do enjoy. The danger of mens ſouls lieth not in a

diſability

diſability to attain a comprehenſion of longer or more ſubtle confeſſions of faith, but in embracing things contrary unto, or inconſiſtent with this foundation thereof. Whatever it be, whereby men ceaſe *to hold the head*, how ſmall ſoever it ſeem, that alone is pernicious, Col. ii. 18. 19.

This *confeſſion* therefore, as containing the ſum and ſubſtance of that faith, which they were called to give teſtimony unto, and concerning which their trial was approaching, is approved by our Saviour: and not only ſo, but eminent privileges are granted unto him that made it, and in him unto the whole church, that ſhould live in the ſame faith and confeſſion, verſ. 17. 18. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I ſay alſo unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church: and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

Two things doth our Saviour conſider in the anſwer returned unto his enquiry. (1.) The *faith of Peter* in this confeſſion, the faith of him that made it. (2.) The *nature and truth of the confeſſion*; both which are required in all the diſciples of Chriſt; *for with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation*, Rom. x. 10.

The firſt thing which he ſpeaks unto, is the *faith of Peter*, who made this confeſſion; without this no outward confeſſion is of any uſe or advantage. For even the *devils* knew him to be the holy One of God, Luke iv. 34. yet would he not permit them to ſpeak it, Mark i. 34. That which gives glory unto God in any confeſſion, and which gives us an intereſt in the truth confeſſed, is the *believing of the heart*, which is unto righteouſneſs. With reſpect hereunto, the Lord Chriſt ſpeaks, verſ. 17. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art thou Simon Barjona: for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*

He commends and ſets forth the faith of Peter, (1.) from its *effect*; (2.) from its *cauſe*. Its *effect* is, that it made him *bleſſed* in whom it was. For it is not only a bleſſed thing to believe and know Jeſus Chriſt, as it is called *life eternal*, John xvii. 3.; but it is that which

gives an immediate intereſt in the bleſſed ſtate of adoption, juſtification, and acceptance with God, John i. 12. (2.) The immediate *cauſe* of this faith is divine revelation. It is not the effect or product of our own abilities, the beſt of which are but *fleſh and blood*. That faith which renders them bleſſed in whom it is, is wrought in them, by the power of God revealing Chriſt unto their ſouls. Thoſe who have more abilities of their own unto this end than Peter had, we are not concerned in.

2. He ſpeaks unto the *confeſſion* itſelf, acquainting his diſciples with the nature and uſe of it, which from the beginning he principally deſigned, verſ. 18. *And I ſay unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church: and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

From the ſpeaking of theſe words unto Peter, there is a controverſy raiſed in the world, *whether the Lord Chriſt himſelf, or the pope of Rome, be the rock whereon the church is built.* And unto that ſtate are things come in religion among them that are called Chriſtians, that the greateſt number is for the *pope*, and againſt *Chriſt* in this matter. And they have good reaſon for their choice. For if Chriſt be the *rock* whereon the church is built, whereas he is a *living ſtone*, thoſe that are laid and built on him muſt be *lively ſtones* alſo, as this apoſtle aſſures us, 1 Epiſt. ii. 4. 5. they muſt be like unto Chriſt himſelf, partaking of his nature, quickened by his Spirit, ſo as it were to be *bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh*, Eph. v. 10. Nor can any be built on him, but by a living faith, effectual in univerſal obedience. Theſe things the generality of men like not at all. And therefore the fabric of the living temple on this foundation is uſually but ſmall, ſeldom conſpicuous or outwardly glorious. But if the pope be this rock, all the Papiſts in the world, or all that have a mind ſo to be, be they never ſo wicked and ungodly, may be built upon him, and be made partakers of all that deliverance from the powers of hell, which that rock can afford them. And all this may be obtained at a very eaſy rate. For the acknowledgment of the pope's ſovereign authority in the church, is all that is required thereunto. How they bring in the claim of their pope

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by Peter, his being at Rome, being biſhop of Rome, dying at Rome, fixing his chair at Rome, devoting and tranſmitting all his right, title, power and authority, every thing but his faith, holineſs, and labour in the miniſtry, unto the pope, I ſhall not here enquire, I have done it elſewhere. Here is fixed the root of the tree, which is grown great, like that in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, until it is become a receptacle for the beaſts of the field, and the fowls of the air, ſenſual men and unclean ſpirits. I ſhall therefore briefly lay an ax unto the root of it, by evidencing that it is not the perſon of Peter who confeſſed Chriſt, but the *perſon of Chriſt* whom Peter confeſſed, that is the *rock* on whom the church is built.

1. The variation of the expreſſions proves undeniably that our Saviour intended we ſhould not underſtand the *perſon of Peter* to be the *rock*. He takes occaſion from his name to declare what he deſigned, but no more. *And I ſay alſo unto thee, thou art Peter.* He had given him this name before at his firſt calling, John i. 42. Now he gives the reaſon of his ſo doing, namely, becauſe of the illuſtrious confeſſion, that he ſhould make of the rock of the church. As the name of God under the Old Teſtament, was called on perſons, and things, and places, becauſe of ſome eſpecial relation unto him. Wherefore the expreſſion is varied on purpoſe to declare, that whatever be the ſignification of the name *Peter*, yet the perſon ſo called was not the rock intended. The words are σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ. Had he intended the *perſon of Peter*, he would have expreſſed it plainly, σὺ εἶ πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ σοὶ; *Thou art a rock, and on thee will I build.* At leaſt the gender had not been altered, but he would have ſaid, ἐπὶ τοῦτο τῷ πέτρῳ, which would have given ſome colour to this imagination. The exception which they lay hereunto, from the uſe of *Cephas* in the *Syriac*, which was the name of Peter, and ſignifies a rock or a ſtone, lies not only againſt the authentic authority of the *Greek original*, but of their own tranſlation of it, which reads the words, *Tu es Petrus, et ſuper hanc petram.*

2. If the church was built on the *perſon of Peter*, then when he died the church muſt utterly fail. For no build-

ing can poſſibly abide when its foundation is removed and taken away. Wherefore they tell us they do not intend by the *perſon of Peter*, that ſingular individual perſon alone to be this rock; but *he and his ſucceſſors the biſhops of Rome are ſo.* But this ſtory of his *ſucceſſors at Rome* is a ſhameful fable. If the pope of Rome be a true believer, he ſucceeds in common with all other believers into the privileges which belong unto this confeſſion. If he be not, he hath neither lot nor portion in this matter. But the pretence is utterly vain on another account alſo. The apoſtle ſhewing the inſufficiency of the *Aaronical prieſthood*, wherein there was a ſucceſſion of God's own appointment, affirms that it could not bring the church unto a perfect ſtate, becauſe the *high prieſts died one after another, and ſo were many*, Heb. vii. 8. 23. 24. And thereon he ſhews that the church cannot be conſummated or perfected, unleſs it reſt wholly in and on him, who *lives for ever*, and was *made a Prieſt after the power of an endleſs life*. And if the Holy Ghoſt judged the ſtate of the Jewiſh church to be weak and imperfect, becauſe it reſted on high prieſts that died one after another, although their ſucceſſion was expreſsly ordained of God himſelf; ſhall we ſuppoſe that the Lord Chriſt, who came to conſummate the church, and to bring it unto the moſt perfect eſtate whereof in this world it is capable, ſhould build it on a *ſucceſſion of dying men*, concerning which ſucceſſion there is not the leaſt intimation that it is appointed of God? And as unto the matter of *fact*, we know both what interruptions it hath received, and what monſters it hath produced, both ſufficiently manifeſting that it is not of God.

3. There is but one *rock*, but one foundation. There is no mention in the ſcripture of two rocks of the church. In what others invent to this purpoſe we are not concerned. And the rock and the foundation are the ſame; for the rock is that whereon the church is built, that is the foundation. But that the Lord Chriſt is this ſingle rock and foundation of the church, we ſhall prove immediately. Wherefore neither Peter himſelf, nor his pretended ſucceſſors can be this *rock*. As for any other rock, it belongs not unto our religion: they that have framed it

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may uſe it as they pleaſe. For they that make ſuch things, are like unto the things they make. *So is every one that truſteth in them*, Pſal. cxv. 8. *But their rock is not like our Rock, themſelves being judges*, unleſs they will abſolutely equal the pope unto Jeſus Chriſt.

4. Immediately after this declaration of our Saviour's purpoſe to build his church on the rock, he reveals unto his diſciples the *way and manner* how he would lay its foundation, namely, in his death and ſufferings, verſ. 21. And thereon, this ſuppoſed rock, being a little left unto his own ſtability, ſhewed himſelf to be but a *reed ſhaken with the wind.* For he is ſo far from putting himſelf under the weight of the building, that he attempts an obſtruction of its foundation. He began to rebuke Chriſt himſelf for mentioning his ſufferings, wherein alone the foundation of the goſpel-church was to be laid, verſ. 22. And hereon he received the ſevereſt rebuke that ever the Lord Jeſus gave unto any of his diſciples, verſ. 23. And ſo it is known that afterwards through ſurpriſal and temptation, he did what lay in him to recal that confeſſion which here he made, and whereon the church was to be built. For that no fleſh might glory in itſelf, he that was ſingular in this confeſſion of Chriſt, was ſo alſo in the denial of him. And if he in his own perſon manifeſted how unmeet he was to be the foundation of the church, they muſt be ſtrangely infatuated who can ſuppoſe his pretended ſucceſſors ſo to be. But ſome men will rather have the church to be utterly without any foundation, than that it ſhould not be the pope.

The vanity of this pretence being removed, the ſubſtance of the great *myſtery* contained in the atteſtation given by our Saviour unto the confeſſion of Peter, and the promiſe thereunto annexed, may be comprized in the enſuing aſſertions.

1. The *perſon of Chriſt*, the Son of the living God, as veſted with his offices, whereunto he was called and anointed, is the foundation of the church, the *rock* whereon it is built.

2. The *power and policy of hell* will be always engaged in oppoſition unto the relation of the church unto this foundation, or the building of it on this *rock*.

3. The

3. The *church that is built on this rock*, ſhall never be disjoined from it, or prevailed againſt by the oppoſition of the gates of hell.

The two former of theſe I ſhall ſpeak briefly unto, my principal deſign being a demonſtration of a truth that ariſeth from the conſideration of them all.

The foundation of the church is twofold. (1.) *Real.* (2.) *Doctrinal.* And in both ways Chriſt alone is the foundation. The *real* foundation of the church he is, by virtue of the myſtical union of it unto him, with all the benefits whereof from thence, and thereby it is made partaker. For thence alone hath it ſpiritual life, grace, mercy, perfection and glory, Eph. iv. 15. 16. Col. ii. 19. And he is the *doctrinal* foundation of it, in that the faith or doctrine concerning him and his offices, is that divine truth which in a peculiar manner animates and conſtitutes the church of the New Teſtament, Eph. ii. 19. 20. 21. 22. Without the faith and confeſſion hereof, no one perſon belongs unto that church. I know not what is now believed, but I judge it will not yet be denied that the external formal cauſe of the church of the New Teſtament, is the confeſſion of the faith concerning the perſon, offices, and grace of Chriſt, with what is of us required thereon. In what ſenſe we aſſert theſe things, will be afterwards fully cleared.

That the Lord Chriſt is thus the foundation of the church, is teſtified unto, Iſ. xxviii. 16. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a ſtone, a tried ſtone, a precious corner-ſtone, a ſure foundation: he that believeth, ſhall not make haſte.* It is among the bold inroads, that in this late age have been made on the vitals of religion, that ſome in compliance with the Jews, have attempted the application of this promiſe unto Hezekiah. The violence they have offered herein to the mind of the Holy Ghoſt, might be evidenced from every word of the context. But the interpretation and application of the laſt words of this promiſe by the apoſtles, leaves no pretence unto this inſinuation: *He that believes on him ſhall not be aſhamed* or *confounded*, Rom. ix. 33. chap. x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 6. that is, he ſhall be eternally ſaved; which it is the higheſt blaſphemy to apply unto any other but Jeſus Chriſt alone. He therefore is alone that *foun-*

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dation which God hath laid in and of the church; ſee Pſal. cxviii. 22. Matth. xxi. 42. Mark xii. 10. Luke xx. 17. Acts iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 4. Eph. ii. 20. 21. 22. Zech. iii. 9. But this fundamental truth of Chriſt being the only foundation of the church, is ſo expreſsly determined by the apoſtle St Paul, as not to need any farther confirmation, 1 Cor. iii. 11. *For other foundation can no man lay, but that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt.*

CHAP. II.

Oppoſition made unto the church as built on the perſon of Chriſt.

THere are in the words of our Saviour unto Peter, concerning the *foundation of the church*, a promiſe of its preſervation, and a prediction of the oppoſition that ſhould be made thereunto. And accordingly all things are come to paſs, and carrying on towards a complete accompliſhment. For (that we may begin with the oppoſition foretold) the *power and policy of hell ever were, and ever will be engaged in oppoſition unto the church built on this foundation;* that is, the faith of it concerning his perſon, office, and grace, whereby it is built on him. This, as unto what is paſt concerneth matter of fact; whereof therefore I muſt give a brief account; and then we ſhall examine what evidences we have of the ſame endeavour at preſent.

The *gates of hell*, as all agree, are the power and policy of it; or the actings of Satan both as a *lion*, and as a *ſerpent*, by rage and by ſubtilty. But whereas in theſe things he acts not viſibly in his own perſon, but by his agents, he hath always had two ſorts of them employed in his ſervice. By the one he executes his *rage*, and by the other his *craft*; he animates the one as a *lion*, the other as a *ſerpent*: in the one he acts as the *dragon*, in the other as the *beaſt that had two horns like the lamb, but ſpake like the dragon.* The firſt is the unbelieving world, the other apoſtates, and ſeducers of all ſorts. Wherefore his work in this kind is of a double nature; the one an effect of his power and rage, acted by the world in perſecution, the other of his policy and craft,

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acted by heretics in ſeduction. In both he deſigns to ſe. parate the church from its foundation.

The oppoſition of the firſt ſort he began againſt the perſon of Chriſt immediately in his human nature. *Fraud* he firſt once attempted in his temptation, Matth. iv. but quickly found that that way he could make no approach unto him. *The prince of this world came, but had no. thing in him.* Wherefore he betook himſelf unto *open force*, and by all means poſſible ſought his deſtruction; ſo alſo the more at any time the church is by faith and watchfulneſs ſecured againſt ſeduction, the more doth he rage againſt it in open perſecution. And for the example and comfort of the church, in its conformity unto him, no means were left unattempted that might inſtigate and prepare the world for his ruin. Reproaches, contempt, ſcorn, falſe and lying accuſations by his ſuggeſtions, were heaped on him on every hand. Hereby in the whole courſe of his miniſtry, he *endured the contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf*, Heb. xii. 3. And there is herein bleſſed proviſion made of ineſtimable conſolation, for all thoſe who are *predeſtinated to be conformed unto his image*, when God ſhall help them by faith to make uſe of his example. He calls them to *take up his croſs, and follow him*; and he hath ſhewed them what is in it by his own bearing of it. Contempt, reproach, deſpiteful uſage, calumnies, falſe accuſations, wreſtings of his words, blaſphemning of his doctrine, reviling of his perſon, all that he ſaid and did as to his principles about human government, and moral converſation, encompaſſed him all his days. And he hath aſſured his followers, that *ſuch and no other*, at leaſt for the moſt part, ſhall be their lot in this world. And ſome in all ages have an experience of it in an eminent manner. But have they any reaſon to complain? why ſhould the *ſervant* look for better meaſure than the *Maſter* met withal? To be made like unto him in the worſt of evils, for his ſake, is the beſt and moſt honourable condition in this world. God help ſome to believe it. Hereby was way made for his death. But in the whole it was manifeſted, how infinitely in all his ſubtilty and malice Satan falls ſhort of the contrivances of divine wiſdom and power. For all that

that he attained by effecting his death, in the *hour of darkneſs*, was but the *breaking of his own head*, the *deſtruction of his works*, with the ruin of his kingdom; and what yet remains to conſummate his eternal miſery, he ſhall himſelf work out in his oppoſition unto the church. His reſtleſs malice and darkneſs will not ſuffer him to give over the purſuit of his rage, until nothing remains to give him a full entrance into endleſs torments, which he haſteneth every day. For when he ſhall have filled up the meaſure of his ſins, and of the ſins of the world in being inſtrumental unto his rage, eternal judgment ſhall put all things unto their iſſue. Through that ſhall he, with the world, enter into everlaſting flames, and the whole church built on the rock into reſt and glory.

No ſooner did the *church of the New Teſtament* begin to ariſe on this foundation, but the whole world of Jews and Gentiles, ſet themſelves with open force to deſtroy it. And all that they contended with the church about was their faith, and confeſſion of it, that *Jeſus was the Chriſt, the Son of the living God.* This foundation they would caſt it from, or exterminate it out of the earth. What were the endeavours of the *gates of hell* in this kind, with what height of rage, with what bloody and inhuman cruelties they were exerciſed and executed, we have ſome obſcure remembrance in the ſtories that remain, from the martyrdom of Stephen unto the days of Conſtantine. But although there be enough remaining on record, to give us a view of the inſatiable malice of the *old murderer*, and an aſtoniſhing repreſentation of human nature degenerating into his image, in the perpetration of all horrid inhuman cruelties, yet is it all as nothing, in compariſon of that proſpect which the laſt day will give of them, when the earth ſhall diſcloſe all the blood that it hath received, and the righteous Judge ſhall lay open all the contrivances for its effuſion, with the rage and malice wherewith they were attended. The ſame *rage* continueth yet unallayed in its principles. And although God in many places reſtrain and ſhut it up in his providence, by the circumſtances of human affairs, yet as it hath the leaſt advantage, as it finds any door open unto it, it endeavours to act itſelf in leſſer or higher degrees. But whatever diſmal ap-

pearance of things there may be in the world, we need not fear the ruin of the church by the moſt bloody oppoſitions. Former experiences will give ſecurity againſt future events. It is built on the Rock, and thoſe *gates of hell* ſhall not prevail againſt it.

The ſecond way whereby Satan attempted the ſame end, and yet continueth ſo to do, was by *pernicious errors and hereſies*. For all the hereſies wherewith the church was aſſaulted and peſtered for ſome centuries of years, were oppoſitions unto their faith in the perſon of Chriſt. I ſhall briefly reflect on the heads of this oppoſition, becauſe they are now after a revolution of ſo many ages lifting up themſelves again, though under new vizards and pretences. They were of three ſorts.

1. That which introduced other doctrines and notions of divine things, abſolutely excluſive of the *perſon and mediation of Chriſt*. Such was that of the Gnoſtics, begun as it is ſuppoſed by Simon the magician. A ſort of people they were with whom the firſt churches, after the deceaſe of the apoſtles, were exceedingly peſtered, and the faith of many was overthrown. For inſtead of Chriſt, and God in him reconciling the world unto himſelf, and the obedience of faith thereon according unto the goſpel, they introduced *endleſs fables*, *genealogies*, and *conjugations of deities*, or divine powers, which practically iſſued in this, that Chriſt was ſuch an *emanation of light and knowledge in them*, as made them perfect; that is, it took away all differences of good and evil, and gave them liberty to do what they pleaſed without ſenſe of ſin, or danger of puniſhment. This was the firſt way that Satan attempted the faith of the church, namely, by ſubſtituting a *perfecting light and knowledge* in the room of the perſon of Chriſt; and, for ought I know, it may be one of the laſt ways whereby he will endeavour the accompliſhment of the ſame deſign. Nor had I made mention of theſe pernicious imaginations, which have lain rotting in oblivion for ſo many generations, but that ſome again endeavour to revive them, at leaſt ſo far as they were advanced and directed againſt the faith and knowledge of the perſon of Chriſt.

2. Satan attempted the ſame work by them who *denied*

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his divine nature, that is, in effect denied him to be the *Son of the living God*, on the faith whereof the church is built. And theſe were of two ſorts.

1. Such as plainly and openly denied him to have any *pre-exiſtence* unto his conception and birth of the holy virgin. Such were the Ebionites, Samoſetanians, and Photinians. For they all affirmed him to be a *mere man*, and no more, though miraculouſly conceived and born of the virgin, as ſome of them granted; though denied, as it is ſaid, by the Ebionites; on which account he was called the Son of God. This attempt lay directly againſt the *everlaſting Rock*, and would have ſubſtituted *ſand* in the room of it. For no better is the beſt of human nature to make a foundation for the church, if not united unto the divine. Many in thoſe days followed thoſe pernicious ways; yet the foundation of God ſtood ſure, nor was the church moved from it. But yet after a revolution of ſo many ages, is the ſame endeavour again engaged in. The old enemy taking advantage of the prevalency of Atheiſm and profaneneſs among thoſe that are called Chriſtians, doth again employ the ſame engine to overthrow the faith of the church, and that with more ſubtilty than formerly, in the Socinians. For their faith, or rather unbelief concerning the perſon of Chriſt, is the ſame with thoſe before mentioned. And what a vain wanton generation admire and applaud in their ſophiſtical reaſonings, is no more but what the *primitive church* triumphed over through faith, in the moſt ſubtle management of the Samoſetanians, Photinians, and others. An evidence it is, that Satan is not unknowing unto the workings of that vanity and darkneſs, of thoſe corrupt affections in the minds of men, whereby they are diſpoſed unto a contempt of the myſtery of the goſpel. Who would have thought, that the old exploded pernicious errors of the Samoſetanians, Photinians, and Pelagians, againſt the power and grace of Chriſt, ſhould enter on the world again with ſo much oſtentation and triumph, as they do at this day? But many men, ſo far as I can obſerve, are fallen into ſuch a diſlike of the *Chriſt of God*, that every thing concerning his perſon, Spirit, and grace, is an abomination unto them. It is not want of underſtanding to comprehend doctrines, but

hatred unto the things themſelves, whereby ſuch perſons are ſeduced. And there is nothing of this nature, whereunto nature, as corrupted, doth not contribute its utmoſt aſſiſtance.

2. There were ſuch as oppoſed his *divine nature*, under pretence of declaring it another way, than the faith of the church did reſt in. So was it with the Arians, in whom the *gates of hell* ſeemed once to be near a prevalency. For the whole profeſſing world almoſt was once ſurpriſed into that hereſy. In words they acknowledged his divine perſon; but added, as a limitation of that acknowledgment, that the divine nature which he had, was *originally created of God*, and produced out of nothing, with a double blaſphemy, denying him to be the true God, and making a God of a mere creature. But in all theſe attempts, the oppoſition of the *gates of hell* unto the church, reſpected faith in the perſon of Chriſt as the Son of the living God.

Secondly, By ſome his *human nature* was oppoſed; for no ſtone did Satan leave unturned in the purſuit of his great deſign. And that which in all theſe things he aimed at, was the ſubſtitution of a falſe Chriſt, in the room of him, who in one perſon was both the Son of man, and the Son of the living God. And herein he infected the minds of men with endleſs imaginations. Some denied him to have any real human nature, but to have been a *phantaſm*, an appearance, a diſpenſation, a mere cloud acted by divine power; ſome, that he was made of *heavenly fleſh*, brought from above, and which, as ſome alſo affirmed, was a *parcel of the divine nature*. Some affirmed, that his body was not animated as ours are, by a *rational ſoul*; but was immediately acted by the power of the divine Being, which was unto it in the room of a living ſoul. Some, that his body was of an *ætherial nature*, and was at length turned into the ſun; with many ſuch diabolical deluſions. And there yet want not attempts in theſe days, of various ſorts, to deſtroy the verity of his human nature; and I know not what ſome late *phantaſtical opinions* about the nature of glorified bodies may tend unto. The deſign of Satan in all theſe pernicious imaginations, is to break the cognation and alliance between

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Chriſt in his human nature and the church, whereon the ſalvation of it doth abſolutely depend.

Thirdly, He raiſed a vehement oppoſition againſt the *hypoſtatical union*, or the union of theſe two natures in one perſon. This he did in the Neſtorian hereſy, which greatly, and for a long time peſtered the church. The authors and promoters of this opinion, granted the Lord Chriſt to have a divine nature, to be the Son of the living God. They alſo acknowledged the truth of his human nature, that he was truly a man even as we are. But the *perſonal union* between theſe two natures they denied. An union they ſaid there was between them, but ſuch as conſiſted only in *love*, *power*, and *care*. God did, as they imagined, eminently and powerfully manifeſt himſelf in the man Chriſt Jeſus, had him in an eſpecial regard and love, and did more act in him than in any other. But that the Son of God aſſumed our nature into *perſonal ſubſiſtence* with himſelf, whereby whole Chriſt was one perſon, and all his mediatory acts were the acts of that one perſon, of him who was both God and man; this they would not acknowledge. And this pernicious imagination, though it ſeem to make great conceſſions of truth, doth no leſs effectually evert the foundation of the church than the former: for if the divine and human nature of Chriſt do not conſtitute one *individual perſon*, all that he did for us was only as a man, which would have been altogether inſufficient for the ſalvation of the church, nor had *God redeemed it with his own blood*. This ſeems to be the opinion of ſome amongſt us at this day, about the perſon of Chriſt. They acknowledge the being of the eternal Word, the Son of God; and they allow in the like manner, the verity of his human nature, or own that man Chriſt Jeſus: only they ſay, that the eternal Word was in him and with him in the ſame kind, as it is with other believers; but in a ſupreme degree of manifeſtation and power. But though in theſe things there is a great endeavour, to put a new colour and appearance on old imaginations, the deſign of Satan is one and the ſame in them all, namely, to oppoſe the building of the church upon its proper ſole foundation. And theſe things ſhall be afterwards expreſsly ſpoken unto.

I intend no more in theſe inſtances, but briefly to demonſtrate, that the principal oppoſition of the *gates of hell* unto the church, lay always unto the building of it by faith on the perſon of Chriſt.

It were eaſy alſo to demonſtrate, that Mahumetiſm, which hath been ſo ſore a ſtroke unto the Chriſtian profeſſion, is nothing but a concurrence and combination of theſe two ways, of force and fraud, in oppoſition unto the perſon of Chriſt.

It is true, that Satan after all this, by another way, attempted the doctrine of the offices and grace of Chriſt, with the worſhip of God in him. And this he hath carried ſo far, as that it iſſued in a fatal *Antichriſtian apoſtacy*; which is not of my preſent conſideration.

But we may proceed to what is of our own immediate concernment. And the ſame work with that before deſcribed is ſtill carried on. The perſon of Chriſt, the faith of the church concerning it, the relation of the church unto it, the building of the church on it, the life and preſervation of the church thereby, are the things that the *gates of hell* are engaged in an oppoſition unto. For,

1. It is known with what ſubtilty and urgency his divine nature and perſon are oppoſed by the Socinians. What an acceſſion is made daily unto their incredulity; what inclination of mind multitudes do manifeſt towards their pernicious ways, are alſo evident unto all who have any concernment in or for religion. But this argument I have laboured in on other occaſions.

2. Many who expreſsly deny not his *divine perſon*, yet ſeem to grow weary of any concernment therein. A *natural religion*, or none at all, pleaſeth them better than faith in God by Jeſus Chriſt. That any thing more is neceſſary in religion, but what *natural light* will diſcover and conduct us in, with the *moral* duties of righteouſneſs and honeſty which it directs unto, there are too many that will not acknowledge. What is beyond the line of nature and reaſon, is rejected as unintelligible myſteries or follies. The perſon and grace of Chriſt are ſuppoſed to breed all the diſturbance in religion. Without them the common notions of the divine Being and goodneſs, will guide men ſufficiently unto eternal bleſſedneſs: they did ſo be-

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fore the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, and may do ſo now he is gone to heaven.

3. There are ſome who have ſo ordered the frame of objective religion, as that it is very uncertain, whether they leave any place for the perſon of Chriſt in it or no. For beſides their denial of the *hypoſtatical union* of his natures, they aſcribe all that unto a *light within them*, which God will effect only by Chriſt as a Mediator. What are the internal actings of their minds, as unto faith and truſt towards him, I know not; but from their outward profeſſion he ſeems to be almoſt excluded.

4. There are not a few who pretend high unto religion and devotion, who declare no erroneous conceptions about the doctrine of the *perſon of Chriſt*, who yet manifeſt themſelves not to have that regard unto him, which the goſpel preſcribes and requires. Hence have we ſo many diſcourſes publiſhed about religion, the practical holineſs and duties of obedience, written with great elegancy of ſtile, and ſerioufneſs in argument, wherein we can meet with little or nothing, wherein Jeſus Chriſt, his office or his grace are concerned: yea it is odds, but in them all, we ſhall meet with ſome *reflections* on thoſe who judge them to be the life and centre of our religion. The things of Chriſt beyond the example of his converſation on the earth, are of no uſe with ſuch perſons unto the promotion of piety and goſpel-obedience. Concerning many books of this nature, we may ſay what a learned perſon did of one of old; there were in it many things laudable and delectable, *ſed nomen Jeſu non erat ibi.*

5. Suited unto theſe manifeſt inclinations of the minds of men, unto a neglect of Chriſt in the religion they frame unto themſelves, dangerous and noxious inſinuations concerning what our thoughts ought to be of him, are made and tendered. As, (1.) It is ſcandalouſly propoſed and anſwered, of *what uſe is the conſideration of the perſon of Chriſt in our religion?* Such are the novel enquiries of men, who ſuppoſe there is *any thing* in Chriſtian religion wherein the perſon of Chriſt is of no conſideration; as though it were not the life and ſoul that animates the whole of it, that which gives it its eſpecial *form as Chriſtian*; as though by virtue of our religion, we received any thing from

from God, any benefit in mercy, grace, privilege, or glory, and not through the perſon of Chriſt; as though any one duty, or act of religion towards God, could be acceptably performed by us, without a reſpect unto, or a conſideration of the perſon of Chriſt; or that there were any lines of truth in religion, as it is Chriſtian, that did not relate thereunto. Such bold enquiries, with futi. lous anſwers annexed unto them, ſufficiently manifeſt what acquaintance their authors have, either with Chriſt himſelf, which in others they deſpiſe, or with his goſpel, which they pretend to embrace. (2.) A *mock ſcheme* of religion is framed, to repreſent the folly of them who de. ſign to learn the mind and will of God, in and by him. (3.) *Reproachful reflections* are made on ſuch as plead the neceſſity of *acquaintance* with him, or the knowledge of him, as though thereby they rejected the uſe of the goſpel. (4.) *Profeſſed love* unto the perſon of Chriſt is traduced as a *mere fancy* and vapour of diſtempered minds, or weak imaginations. (5.) The *union of the Lord Chriſt and his church* is aſſerted to be *political* only, with reſpect unto laws and rules of government. And many other things of a like nature are aſſerted, derogatory unto his glory, and repugnant unto the faith of the church; ſuch as from the foundation of Chriſtian religion were never vent. ed by any perſons before, who did not openly avow ſome impious hereſy concerning his perſon. And I no way doubt, but that men may with leſs guilt and ſcandal, fall under ſundry *doctrinal miſapprehenſions* concerning it, than by crying *hail* thereunto, to deſpoil it of all its glory, as unto our concernment therein, in our practical obedience unto God. Such things have we deſerved to ſee and hear.

6. The very name or expreſſion of *preaching Chriſt*, is become a term of reproach and contempt; nor can ſome, as they ſay, underſtand what is meant thereby, unleſs it be an *engine to drive all rational preaching, and ſo all mo. rality and honeſty out of the world.*

7. That which all theſe things tend unto and centre in is that horrible profaneneſs of life, that neglect of all go. ſpel-duties, that contempt of all ſpiritual graces and their effects, which the generality of them that are called Chri. ſtians in many places are given up unto. I know not whe. ther

ther it were not more for the honour of Chriſt, that ſuch perſons would publicly renounce the profeſſion of his name, rather than practically manifeſt their inward diſregard unto him.

That by theſe and the like means, Satan doth yet attempt the ruin of the church, as unto its building on the everlaſting Rock, falls under the obſervation of all who are concerned in its welfare: and whatever others may apprehend concerning this ſtate of things in the world, how any that love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, eſpecially ſuch as are called to declare and repreſent him unto men in the *office of the miniſtry*, can acquit themſelves to be faithful unto him, without giving their teſtimony againſt, and endeavouring to ſtop what lies in them, the progreſs of this prevailing declenſion, from the only foundation of the church, I know not; nor will it be eaſy for themſelves to declare. And in that variety of conceptions which are about him, and the oppoſition that is made unto him, there is nothing more neceſſary than that we ſhould renew and atteſt our confeſſion of him, as the Son of the living God, the only Rock whereon the church of them that ſhall be ſaved is founded and built.

Pauca ideo de Chriſto, as Tertullian ſpeaks; ſome few things concerning the perſon of Chriſt, with reſpect unto the confeſſion of Peter, and the promiſe thereunto annexed, wherein he is declared the *ſole foundation of the church*, will be compriſed in the enſuing diſcourſe. And he who hath ordained ſtrength out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings, as he hath given ability to expreſs theſe poor mean contemplations of his glory, can raiſe by them a revenue of honour unto himſelf in the hearts of them that do believe. And ſome few things I muſt premiſe in general unto what I do deſign. As,

1. The inſtances which I ſhall give concerning the *uſe and conſideration of the perſon of Chriſt in Chriſtian religion*, or of him as he is the foundation whereon the church is built, are but *few*, and thoſe perhaps not the moſt ſignal or eminent, which the greater ſpiritual wiſdom and underſtanding of others might propoſe. And indeed who ſhall undertake to declare what are the chief inſtances of this incomprehenſible effect of divine wiſdom? *What is his*

name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canſt tell? Prov. xxx. 4. See Iſ. ix. 6. It is enough for us to ſtand in an holy admiration at the ſhore of this unſearchable ocean, and to gather up ſome parcels of that divine treaſure, wherewith the ſcripture of truth is enriched.

2. I make no pretence of ſearching into the bottom or depths of any part of this great *myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh.* They are altogether unſearchable unto the line of the moſt enlightened minds in this life. What we ſhall farther comprehend of them in the other world, God only knows. We cannot in theſe things, by our utmoſt diligent ſearch, *find out the Almighty unto perfection.* The *prophets* could not do ſo of old, nor can the *angels* themſelves at preſent, who *deſire to look into theſe things,* 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. 12. Only I ſhall endeavour to repreſent unto the faith of them that do believe, ſomewhat of what the ſcripture doth plainly reveal, evidencing in what ſenſe the *perſon of Chriſt is the ſole foundation of the church.*

3. I ſhall not herein reſpect them immediately by whom the divine perſon of Chriſt is denied and oppoſed. I have formerly treated thereof, beyond their contradiction in way of reply. But it is *their conviction* which I ſhall reſpect herein, who under an outward confeſſion of the truth, do either notionally or practically, either ignorantly or deſignedly, God knows, I know not, endeavour to weaken the faith of the church in its adherence unto this foundation. Howbeit neither the one ſort nor the other have any place in my thoughts, in compariſon of the inſtruction and edification of others, who love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity.

CHAP. III.

The perſon of Chriſt the moſt ineffable effect of divine wiſdom and goodneſs. Thence the next cauſe of all true religion. In what ſenſe it is ſo.

THE *perſon of Chriſt is the moſt glorious and ineffable effect of divine wiſdom, grace and power,* and therefore

therefore is the next foundation of all acceptable religion and worſhip. The divine *Being* itſelf is the firſt formal reaſon, foundation and object of all religion. It all depends, on taking God to be our God, which is the firſt of his commands. For religion, and the worſhip performed in it, is nothing but the due reſpect of rational creatures, unto the divine nature, and its infinite excellencies It is the *glorifying of God as God*, the way of expreſſing that reſpect, being regulated by the revelation of his will. Yet the *divine eſſence* is not in itſelf the next and immediate cauſe of religious worſhip. But it is the *manifeſtation* of this Being and its excellencies wherewith the mind of rational creatures is immediately affected, and whereby it is obliged to give that religious honour and worſhip which is due unto that Being, and neceſſary from our relation thereunto. Upon this manifeſtation, all creatures capable by an intelligent nature of a ſenſe thereof, are indiſpenſably obliged to give all divine honour and glory to God.

The way alone whereby this manifeſtation may be made, is by *outward acts and effects*. For in itſelf the divine nature is hid from all living, and dwelleth in that light whereunto no creature can approach. This therefore God firſt made by the *creation* of all things out of nothing. The creation of man himſelf, with the principles of a rational intelligent nature, a conſcience atteſting his ſubordination unto God, and of all other things declaring the glory of his wiſdom, goodneſs, and power, was the immediate ground of all *natural religion*, and yet continues ſo to be. And the glory of it anſwers the means and ways of the manifeſtation of the divine Being, exiſtence, excellencies and properties. And where this manifeſtation is deſpiſed or neglected, there God himſelf is ſo; as the apoſtle diſcourſeth at large, Rom. i. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.

But of all the effects of the divine excellencies, the conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt as the foundation of the new creation, as the *myſtery of godlineſs*, was the moſt ineffable and glorious. I ſpeak not of his divine perſon abſolutely. For his diſtinct perſonality and ſubſiſtence was by an internal, and eternal act of the divine Being

in the perſon of the Father, or eternal generation, which is eſſential unto the divine eſſence, whereby nothing anew was outwardly wrought or did exiſt. He was not, he is not in that ſenſe, the effect of divine wiſdom and power of God, but the eſſential Wiſdom and Power of God himſelf. But we ſpeak of him only as *incarnate*, as he aſſumed our nature into perſonal ſubſiſtence with himſelf. His conception in the womb of the virgin, as unto the integrity of human nature, was a miraculous operation of the divine power. But the prevention of that nature from any ſubſiſtence of its own, by its aſſumption into perſonal union with the Son of God, in the firſt inſtance of its conception, is that which is above all miracles, nor can be deſigned by that name. A myſtery it is, ſo far above the order of all creating or providential operations, that it wholly tranſcends the ſphere of them that are moſt miraculous. Herein did God glorify all the properties of the divine nature, acting in a way of infinite wiſdom, grace and condeſcenſion. The depths of the myſtery hereof, are open only unto him whoſe underſtanding is infinite, which no created underſtanding can comprehend. All other things were produced and effected by an outward emanation of power from God: *he ſaid, Let there be light, and there was light.* But this aſſumption of our nature into *hypoſtatical union* with the Son of God, this conſtitution of one and the ſame individual perſon in two natures ſo infinitely diſtinct, as thoſe of God and man, whereby the *Eternal* was made *in time*, the *Infinite* became *finite*, the *Immortal*, *mortal*, yet continuing eternal, infinite, immortal, is that ſingular expreſſion of divine wiſdom, goodneſs and power, wherein God will be admired and glorified unto all eternity. Herein was that change introduced into the whole firſt creation, whereby the bleſſed angels were exalted, Satan and his works ruined, mankind recovered from a diſmal apoſtacy, all things made new, all things in heaven and earth reconciled and gathered into one head, and a revenue of eternal glory raiſed unto God, incomparably above what the firſt conſtitution of all things in the order of nature could yield unto him.

In the expreſſion of this myſtery, the ſcripture doth ſometimes

ſometimes draw the *vail* over it, as that which we cannot look into. So in his conception of the virgin, with reſpect unto this union which accompained it, it was told her, that *the power of the Higheſt ſhould overſhadow her*, Luke i. 35. A work it was of the power of the Moſt High, but hid from the eyes of men in the nature of it; and therefore *that holy thing* which had no ſubſiſtence of its own, which ſhould be born of her, ſhould *be called the Son of God*, becoming one perſon with him. Sometimes it expreſſeth the greatneſs of the myſtery, and leaves it as an object of our admiration, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *Without controverſy, great is the myſtery of godlineſs: God was manifeſted in the fleſh.* A myſtery it is, and that of thoſe dimenſions as no creature can comprehend. Sometimes it putteth things together, as that the diſtance of the two natures, ſhall illuſtrate the glory of the one perſon. John i. 14. *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us.* But what Word was this? *That which was in the beginning, which was with God, which was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made, who was light and life.* This Word was made *fleſh*; not by any change of his own nature or eſſence; not by a tranſubſtantiation of the divine nature into the human; not by ceaſing to be what he was, but by becoming what he was not, in taking our nature to his own, to be his own, whereby he *dwelt among us.* This *glorious Word* which is God, and deſcribed by his eternity and omnipotency in works of creation and providence, *was made fleſh*, which expreſſeth the loweſt ſtate and condition of human nature; *without controverſy*, great is this myſtery of godlineſs. And in that ſtate wherein he viſibly appeared as ſo made fleſh, thoſe who had eyes given them from above, ſaw *his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* The eternal Word being made fleſh, and manifeſted therein, they ſaw his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father. What heart can conceive, what tongue can expreſs the leaſt part of the glory of this divine wiſdom and grace? So alſo is it propoſed unto us, Iſ. ix. 6. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government ſhall be on his ſhoulder: and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor,*

lor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of peace. He is called in the firſt place *Wonderful*, and that deſervedly, Prov. xxx. 4. That the *mighty God* ſhould be a *Child born*, and the *everlaſting Father* a *Son given unto us*, may well entitle him unto the name of *Wonderful.*

Some amongſt us ſay, that if there were no other way for the redemption and ſalvation of the church, but this only of the *incarnation* and mediation of the Son of God, that there was no wiſdom in the contrivance of it. Vain man indeed would be wiſe, but is like the wild aſs's colt. Was there *no wiſdom* in the contrivance of that, which when it is effected, leaves nothing but *admiration* unto the utmoſt of all created wiſdom? Who hath known the mind of the Lord in this thing? or who hath been his counſeller in this work, wherein the mighty God became a Child born to us, a Son given unto us? Let all vain imaginations ceaſe; there is nothing left unto the ſons of men, but either to reject the *divine perſon of Chriſt*, as many do unto their own deſtruction, or humbly to adore the myſtery of infinite wiſdom and grace therein. And it will require a condeſcending charity, to judge that thoſe do really believe the *incarnation of the Son of God*, who live not in the admiration of it, as the moſt adorable effect of divine wiſdom.

The glory of the ſame myſtery is elſewhere teſtified unto. Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. *God hath ſpoken unto us by his Son, by whom alſo he made the worlds; who being the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, upholding all things by the word of his power, by himſelf purged our ſins.* That he purged our ſins by his death, and the oblation of himſelf therein unto God, is acknowledged. That this ſhould be done by him, by whom the worlds were made, who is the eſſential brightneſs of the divine glory, and the expreſs image of the perſon of the Father therein, who upholds, rules, ſuſtains all things by the word of his power, whereby God purchaſed his church with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. is that wherein he will be admired unto eternity. See Phil. ii. 6. 7. 8. 9.

Iſaiah vi. there is a repreſentation made of him as on a throne,

throne, *filling the temple with the train of his glory*. The Son of God it was, who was so represented, and that as he was to fill the *temple of his human nature* with divine glory, when the fulness of the Godhead *dwelt in him bodily*. And herein the *seraphims*, which administered unto him, had *six wings*, with two whereof they *covered their faces*, as not being able to behold or look into the glorious mystery of his incarnation, vers. 2. 3. John xii. 40. Chap. ii. 19. Col. ii. 9. But when the same ministering spirits under the name of *cherubims*, attended the throne of God in the administration of his *providence*, as unto the disposal and government of the world, they had *four wings only*; and covered not their faces, but steadily beheld the glory of it, Ezek. i. 6. Chap. x. 2. 3.

This is the glory of Christian religion, the basis and foundation that bears the whole superstructure, the root whereon it grows. This is its life and soul, that wherein it differs from, and inconceivably excels whatever was in true religion before, or whatever any false religion pretended unto. Religion in its *first constitution*, in the state of pure incorrupted nature, was orderly, beautiful and glorious. Man being made in the image of God, was fit and able to glorify him as God. But whereas whatever perfection God had communicated unto our nature, he had not *united it unto himself in a personal union*, the fabric of it quickly fell unto the ground. Want of this foundation made it obnoxious unto ruin. God manifested herein, that no gracious relation between him and our nature could be stable and permanent; unless our *nature was assumed into personal union and subsistence* with himself. This is the only rock and assured foundation of the relation of the church unto God, which now can never utterly fail. Our nature is eternally secured in that union, and we ourselves, as we shall see thereby. Col. i. 17. 18. *In him all things consist*; wherefore whatever beauty and glory there was in the relation that was between God and man, and the relation of all things unto God by man, in the preservation whereof natural religion did consist, it had no beauty nor glory in comparison of this which doth excel; or the manifestation of God in the flesh, the appearance and subsistence of the divine and human natures in

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the ſame ſingle individual perſon. And whereas God in that ſtate, had given man dominion *over the fiſh of the ſea, and the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth*, Gen. i. 26.; it was all but an obſcure repreſentation of the exaltation of our nature in Chriſt, as the apoſtle declares, Heb. ii. 6. 7. 8. 9.

There was true religion in the world *after the fall*, both before and after giving of the law; a religion built upon and reſolved into divine revelation. And as for the outward glory of it, the adminiſtration that it was brought into under the tabernacle and temple, it was beyond what is repreſented in the inſtitutions of the goſpel. Yet is Chriſtian religion, our *evangelical* profeſſion, and the ſtate of the church thereon, *far more glorious*, beautiful and perfect, than that ſtate of religion was capable of, or could attain. And as this is evident from hence, becauſe God in his wiſdom, grace, and love to the church, hath removed *that* ſtate, and introduced *this* in the room thereof; ſo the apoſtle proves it in all conſiderable inſtances in his *epiſtle to the Hebrews*; written unto that purpoſe. There were two things before in religion. The *promiſe*, which was the life of it, and the *inſtitutions* of worſhip under the law, which were the outward glory and beauty of it. And both theſe were nothing, or had nothing in them, but only what they before propoſed and repreſented of Chriſt, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*. The promiſe was concerning him; and the inſtitutions of worſhip did only repreſent him. So the apoſtle declares it, Col. ii. 17. Wherefore as all the religion that was in the world after the fall, was built on the promiſe of this work of God in due time to be accompliſhed, ſo it is the actual performance of it, which is the foundation of Chriſtian religion, and which gives it the pre-eminence above all that went before it. So the apoſtle expreſſeth it, Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. *God who at*, &c.

All *falſe religion* pretended always unto things that were *myſterious*. And the more men could invent, or the devil ſuggeſt, that had an appearance of that nature, as ſundry things were ſo introduced horrid and dreadful, the more reverence and eſteem were reconciled unto it. But the whole compaſs of the craft of Satan, and the imagi-

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nations of men, could never extend itſelf unto the leaſt reſemblance of this myſtery. And it is not amiſs conjectured, that the apoſtle in his deſcription of it, 1 Tim. iii. 16. did reflect upon, and condemn the vanity of the *Eleuſynian myſteries*, which were of the greateſt vogue and reputation among the Gentiles.

Take away the conſideration hereof, and we deſpoil Chriſtian religion of all its glory, debaſing it unto what Mahumetiſm pretends unto, and unto what in Judaiſm was really enjoyed.

The *faith* of this myſtery ennobles the mind wherein it is, rendering it ſpiritual and heavenly, transforming it into the image of God. Herein conſiſts the excellency of faith above all other powers and acts of the ſoul, that it receives, aſſents unto, and reſts in things in their own nature abſolutely incomprehenſible. It is ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων, Heb. xi. 1. *The evidence of things not ſeen*; that which makes evident as by demonſtration, thoſe things which are no way objected unto ſenſe, and which reaſon cannot comprehend. The more ſublime and glorious, the more inacceſſible unto ſenſe and reaſon, are the things which we believe, the more are we changed into the image of God, in the exercise of faith upon them. Hence we find this moſt glorious effect of faith, or the tranſformation of the mind into the likeneſs of God, no leſs real, evident, and eminent in many, whoſe rationally comprehenſive abilities are weak and contemptible in the eye of that wiſdom, which is of this world, than in thoſe of the higheſt natural ſagacity, enjoying the beſt improvements of reaſon. For *God hath choſen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom*, James ii. 5. However they may be poor, and as another apoſtle ſpeaketh, *fooliſh, weak, baſe* and *deſpiſed*, 1 Cor. i. 27. 28. yet that faith which enables them to aſſent unto, and embrace divine myſteries, renders them *rich* in the ſight of God, in that it makes them like unto him.

Some would have all things that we are to believe, to be levelled abſolutely unto *our reaſon* and comprehenſion; a principle which at this day ſhakes the very foundations of Chriſtian religion. It is not ſufficient, they ſay, to determine, that the faith or knowledge of any thing is neceſ-

ſary unto our obedience and ſalvation, that it ſeems to be fully and perſpicuouſly revealed in the ſcripture; unleſs the things ſo revealed, be obvious and comprehenſible unto our reaſon. An apprehenſion, which, as it ariſeth from the pride which naturally enſues on the ignorance of God and ourſelves; ſo it is not only an invention ſuited to debaſe religion, but an engine to evert the faith of the church, in all the principal myſteries of the goſpel, eſpecially of the *Trinity, and incarnation of the Son of God.* But faith which is truly divine, is never more in its proper exerciſe, doth never more elevate the ſoul into conformity unto God, than when it acts in the contemplation and admiration of the moſt *incomprehenſible myſteries*, which are propoſed unto it by divine revelation.

Hence things *philoſophical*, and of a deep rational indagation, find great acceptance in the world, as in their proper place they do deſerve. Men are furniſhed with proper meaſures of them, and they find them proportionate unto the principles of their own underſtandings. But as for *ſpiritual and heavenly myſteries*, the thoughts of men, for the moſt part, recoil upon their firſt propoſal, nor will be encouraged to engage in a diligent enquiry into them, yea commonly reject them as fooliſh, or at leaſt that wherein they are not concerned. The reaſon is that given in another caſe by the apoſtle, *All men have not faith*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 2. which makes them abſurd and unreaſonable in the conſideration of the proper objects of it. But where this faith is, the greatneſs of the myſteries which it embraceth, heightens its efficacy in all bleſſed effects upon the ſoul. Such is this *conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt*, wherein the glory of all the holy properties and perfections of the divine nature are manifeſted, and do ſhine forth. So ſpeaks the apoſtle, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *Beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory.* This glory which we behold, is the glory of the face of God in Jeſus Chriſt, Chap. iv. 6. or the glorious repreſentation which is made of him in the perſon of Chriſt, whereof we ſhall treat afterwards. The glaſs wherein this glory is repreſented unto us, propoſed unto our view and contemplation, is divine revelation in the goſpel. Herein *we behold it* by faith alone. And

thoſe whoſe view is ſtedfaſt, who moſt abound in that contemplation by the exerciſe of faith, are thereby *changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory;* or are more and more renewed and transformed into the likeneſs of God ſo repreſented unto them.

That which ſhall at laſt perfectly effect our utmoſt conformity to God, and therein our eternal bleſſedneſs, is *viſion*, or ſight. *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. Here faith begins what ſight ſhall perfect hereafter. But yet *we walk by faith, and not by ſight*, 2 Cor. v. 7. And although the life of faith and viſion differ in degrees, or as ſome think in kind, yet have they both the ſame object, and the ſame operations; and there is a great cognation between them. The object of *viſion* is the whole myſtery of the divine exiſtence and will; and its operation, is a perfect conformity unto God, a likeneſs unto him, wherein our bleſſedneſs ſhall conſiſt. Faith hath the ſame object, and the ſame operations in its degree and meaſure. The great and incomprehenſible myſteries of the divine Being, of the will and wiſdom of God, are its proper objects, and its operation with reſpect unto us, is *conformity* and likeneſs unto him. And this it doth in a peculiar manner, in the contemplation of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; and herein we have our neareſt approaches unto the life of viſion, and the effects of it. For therein, *beholding the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, we are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory*; which perfectly to conſummate is the effect of ſight in glory. The exerciſe of faith herein doth more raiſe and perfect the mind, more diſpoſe it unto holy heavenly frames and affections, than any other duty whatever.

To be *nigh unto God*, and to be *like unto him*, are the ſame. To be always with him, and perfectly like him, according to the capacity of our nature, is to be eternally bleſſed. To live by faith in the contemplation of the glory of God in Chriſt, is that initiation into both, whereof we are capable in this world. The endeavours of ſome to contemplate and report the glory of God in nature, in the works of creation and providence, in the things of the greater and the leſſer world, do deſerve their juſt commen-

dation; and it is that which the ſcripture in ſundry places calls us unto. But for any there to abide, there to bound their deſigns, when they have a much more noble and glorious Object for their meditations, namely, *the glory of God in Chriſt*, is both to deſpiſe the wiſdom of God in that revelation of himſelf, and to come ſhort of that transforming efficacy of faith in the contemplation hereof, whereby we are made like unto God. For hereunto alone doth it belong, and not unto any natural knowledge, nor to any knowledge of the moſt ſecret receſſes of nature.

I ſhall only ſay, that thoſe who are *inconverſant* with theſe objects of faith, whoſe minds are not delighted in the admiration of, and acquieſcency in things incomprehenſible, ſuch as is this conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt, who would reduce all things to the meaſure of their own underſtandings, or elſe wilfully live in the neglect of what they cannot comprehend, do not much prepare themſelves for that *viſion* of theſe things in glory, wherein our bleſſedneſs doth conſiſt.

Moreover, this conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt being the moſt admirable and ineffable effect of divine wiſdom, grace and power, it is that alone which can bear *the weight of the whole ſuperſtructure* of the myſtery of godlineſs; that whereinto the whole ſanctification and ſalvation of the church is reſolved, wherein alone faith can find reſt and peace. *Other foundation can no man lay, ſave that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. iii. 11. Reſt and peace with God, is that which we ſeek after; *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* In this enquiry, the acts of the *mediatory office* of Chriſt are in the goſpel firſt preſented unto us, eſpecially his oblation and interceſſion. Through them is he able to ſave unto the utmoſt thoſe that come to God by him. But there were oblations for ſin, and interceſſions for ſinners under the Old Teſtament: yet of them all doth the apoſtle affirm, that they could not make *them perfect that came unto God by them*, nor take away conſcience condemning for ſin, Heb. ii. 1. 2. 3. 4. Wherefore it is not theſe things in themſelves that can give us reſt and peace, but their relation unto the perſon of Chriſt. The oblation and interceſſion of

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any other would not have ſaved us. Hence for the ſecurity of our faith, we are minded that *God redeemed the church with his own blood*, Acts xx. 28. He did ſo who was God, as he was manifeſted in the fleſh. His blood alone could purge our conſciences from dead works, who did offer himſelf unto God, through the eternal Spirit, Heb. ix. 14. And when the apoſtle for our relief againſt the guilt of ſin, calleth us unto the conſideration of interceſſion and propitiation, he mindeth us peculiarly of his *perſon* by whom they are performed, 1 John ii. 1. 2. *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins.* And we may briefly conſider the order of theſe things.

1. We ſuppoſe in this caſe conſcience to be awakened unto a ſenſe of ſin, and of *apoſtacy* from God thereby. Theſe things are now generally looked on as of no great concernment unto us, by ſome made a mock of, and by the moſt thought eaſy to be dealt withal at time convenient. But when God *fixeth* an apprehenſion of his diſpleaſure for them on the ſoul, if it be not before it be too late, it will cauſe men to look out for *relief*.

2. This *relief* is propoſed in the goſpel. And it is the death and mediation of Chriſt alone. By them peace with God muſt be obtained, or it will ceaſe for ever. But,

3. When any perſon comes *practically* to know how great a thing it is for an *apoſtate* ſinner, to obtain the remiſſion of ſins, and an inheritance among them that are ſanctified, endleſs *objections*, through the power of unbelief, will ariſe unto his diſquietment. Wherefore,

4. That which is principally ſuited to give him reſt, peace, and ſatisfaction, and without which nothing elſe can ſo do, is the due conſideration of, and the acting of faith upon this *infinite effect* of *divine wiſdom* and goodneſs, in the conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt. This at firſt view will reduce the mind unto that concluſion, *If thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible.* For what end cannot be effected hereby? what end cannot be accompliſhed that was deſigned in it? Is any thing too hard for God? did God ever do any thing like this, or make uſe of any ſuch means for any other end whatever?

Againſt

Againſt this no objection can ariſe. On this conſider. ation of him, faith apprehends Chriſt to be as he is in. deed, the power of God, and the wiſdom of God unto the ſalvation of them that do believe, and therein doth it find reſt with peace.

CHAP. IV.

The perſon of Chriſt the foundation of all the counſels of God.

SEcondly, The perſon of Chriſt is the *foundation of all the counſels of God*, as unto his own eternal glory in the vocation, ſanctification, and ſalvation of the church. That which I intend is what the apoſtle expreſſeth, Eph. i. 9. 10. *Having made known the myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which he purpoſed in himſelf; that in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of time, he might gather together in one all things in Chriſt, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him.* The myſteries of the will of God, according to his good pleaſure which he purpoſed in himſelf, are his *counſels* concerning his own eternal glory in the ſanctification and ſalvation of the church here below, to be united unto that above. The abſolute original hereof was in his own *good pleaſure*, or the ſovereign acting of his wiſdom and will. But it was all to be effected in Chriſt, which the apoſtle twice repeats; he would gather *all things into an head in Chriſt, even in him;* that is, in him alone.

Thus it is ſaid of him with reſpect unto his future incarnation and work of mediation, *that the Lord poſſeſſed him in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old; that he was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*, Prov. viii. 22. 23. The *eternal perſonal exiſtence* of the Son of God is ſuppoſed in theſe expreſſions, as I have elſewhere proved. Without it none of theſe things could be affirmed of him. But there is a regard in them, both unto his future incarnation, and the accompliſhment of the *counſels of God* thereby. With

With reſpect thereunto, God *poſſeſſed him in the beginning of his ways, and ſet him up from everlaſting.* God poſſeſſed him eternally as his eſſential wiſdom, as he was always, and is always in the boſom of the Father, in the mutual ineffable love of the Father and Son, in the eternal bond of the Spirit. But he ſignally *poſſeſſed* him in the *beginning of his ways*, as his wiſdom acting in the production of all the ways and works that are outwardly of him. The *beginning of God's ways before his works*, are his counſels concerning them, even as our counſels are the beginning of our ways, with reſpect unto future works. And he *ſet him up from everlaſting*, as the foundation of all the counſels of his will, in and by whom they were to be executed and accompliſhed.

So it is expreſſed, verſ. 30. 31. *I was by him, as one brought up with him: I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him: rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men.* And it is added, that thus it was before *the foundation of the world was laid, or the chiefeſt part of the duſt of the earth was made*, that is, man was created. Not only was the delight of the Father in him, but his delight was in the habitable parts of the earth, and among the ſons of men, before the creation of the world. Wherefore the eternal proſpect of the work he had to do for the children of men is intended herein. In and with him God laid the foundation of all his counſels, concerning his love towards the children of men: And two things may be obſerved herein.

1. That the perſon of the Son *was ſet up*, or exalted herein. I was *ſet up*, ſaith he, *from everlaſting*. This cannot be ſpoken abſolutely of the perſon of the Son himſelf; the divine nature being not capable of being ſo *ſet up*. But there was a peculiar glory and honour, belonging unto the perſon of the Son, as *deſigned* by the Father, unto the execution of all the counſels of his will. Hence was that prayer of his upon the accompliſhment of them, John xvii. 5. *And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* To ſuppoſe that the Lord Chriſt prayeth in theſe words, for ſuch a real communication of the properties of the divine nature unto the human, as ſhould render it *im-*

menſe,

menſe, *omniſcient*, and unconfined unto any ſpace, is to think that he prayed for the deſtruction, and not the exaltation of it. For on that ſuppoſition, it muſt neceſſarily loſe all its own eſſential properties, and conſequently its being. Nor doth he ſeem to pray only for the *manifeſtation* of his divine nature, which was eclipſed in his exinanition or appearance in the form of a ſervant. There was no need to expreſs this, by the *glory which he had with the Father before the world was*, for he had it not in any eſpecial manner before the world was; but equally from eternity, and in every moment of time: wherefore he had a peculiar glory of his own with the Father before the world was; and this was no other, but that eſpecial exaltation which he had when he was *ſet up* from everlaſting, as the foundation of the counſels of God, for the ſalvation of the church. In thoſe eternal tranſactions that were between the Father and the Son, with reſpect unto his incarnation and mediation, or his undertaking to execute and fulfil the eternal counſels of the wiſdom and grace of the Father, there was an *eſpecial glory* which the Son had with him. *The glory which he had with the Father before the world was.* For the manifeſtation hereof he now prays; and that the glory of his goodneſs, grace and love in his peculiar undertaking of the execution of the counſels of God, might be made to appear. And this is the principal deſign of the goſpel. It is the declaration as of the grace of God the Father, ſo of the love, grace, goodneſs and compaſſion of the Son, in undertaking from everlaſting the accompliſhment of God's counſels in the ſalvation of the church. And hereby doth he *hold up the pillars of the* earth, or ſupport this inferior creation, which otherwiſe, with the inhabitants of it, would by ſin have been diſſolved. And thoſe by whom his eternal divine preexiſtence in the form of God, antecedent unto his incarnation, is denied, do what lies in them expreſsly to deſpoil him of all that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. So we have herein the whole of our deſign. In the *beginning of God's ways*, *before his works of old*: that is, in his eternal counſels with reſpect unto the children of men, or the ſanctification and ſalvation of the church, the Lord poſſeſſed, enjoyed the Son as his eternal

nal wiſdom, in and with whom they were laid, in and by whom they were to be accompliſhed, wherein his delights were with the ſons of men.

2. That there was an *ineffable delight* between the Father and the Son in this his *ſetting up* or exaltation. *I was*, ſaith he, *daily his delights, rejoicing always before him.* It is not abſolutely the mutual eternal delight of the Father and the Son, ariſing from the perfection of the ſame divine excellencies in each perſon that is intended; but reſpect is plainly had unto the *counſels of God*, concerning the ſalvation of mankind, by him who is his power and wiſdom unto that end. This counſel of peace was originally between JEHOVAH and the *Branch*, Zech. vi. 13. or the Father and the Son as he was to be incarnate. For therein was he *fore-ordained before the foundation of the world*, 1 Pet. i. 20.; namely, to be a Saviour and deliverer, by whom all the counſels of God were to be accompliſhed; and this by his own will and concurrence in counſel with the Father. And ſuch a foundation was laid of the ſalvation of the church in theſe counſels of God, as tranſacted between the Father and the Son, that it is ſaid, that eternal *life was promiſed before the world began*, Tit. i. 2. For although the *firſt formal promiſe* was given after the fall; yet was there ſuch a preparation of grace and eternal life in theſe counſels of God, with his unchangeable purpoſe to communicate them unto us, that all the faithfulneſs of God was engaged in them. *God that cannot lie, hath promiſed before the world began.* There was eternal life with the Father, that is, in his counſel treaſured up in Chriſt, and in him was afterwards manifeſted unto us, 1 John i. 2. And to ſhew the ſtability of this purpoſe and counſel of God, with the infallible conſequence of his actual promiſe, and efficacious accompliſhment thereof, *grace is* ſaid to be *given us in Chriſt Jeſus before the world began*, 2 Tim. i. 9.

In theſe counſels did God *delight*, or in the perſon of Chriſt, as his eternal wiſdom in their contrivance, and as the means of their accompliſhment in his future incarnation. Hence he ſo teſtifieth of him, *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold, my elect in whom my ſoul delighteth*, Iſ. xlii. 1.; as he alſo proclaims the *ſame delight* in him from hea-

ven in the days of his fleſh, Matth. iii. 17. Chap. xvii. 5. He was the delight of God, as he in whom all his counſels, for his own glory, in the redemption and ſalvation of the church, were laid and founded. Iſ. xlix. 3. *My ſervant in whom I will be glorified*, that is, *by raiſing the tribes of Jacob, reſtoring the preſerved of Iſrael, in being a light unto the Gentiles, and the ſalvation of God unto the ends of the earth*, verſ. 6.

We conceive not aright of the *counſels of God*, when we think of nothing but the effect of them, and the glory that ariſeth from their accompliſhment. It is certainly true, that they ſhall all iſſue in *his glory*, and the demonſtration of it ſhall fill up eternity. The manifeſtative glory of God unto eternity, conſiſts in the effects and accompliſhment of his holy counſels. *Heaven* is the ſtate of the actual accompliſhment of all the counſels of God in the ſanctification and ſalvation of the church. But it is not with God as it is with men. Let mens counſels be never ſo wiſe, it muſt needs abate of their ſatisfaction in them, becauſe their conjectures (and more they have not) of their effects and events are altogether uncertain. But all the counſels of God having their entire accompliſhment through revolutions perplexing and ſurpaſſing all created underſtandings, incloſed in them infallibly and immutably, the great ſatisfaction, complacency, and delight of the divine Being is in theſe counſels themſelves.

God doth *delight* in the actual accompliſhment of his works. He made not this world, nor any thing in it for its own ſake. Much leſs did he make this earth to be a theatre for men to act their luſts upon, the uſe which it is now put to and groans under. But he made *all things for himſelf*, Prov. xvi. 4. He *made them for his pleaſure*, Rev. iv. 11.; that is, not only by an act of ſovereignty, but to his own delight and ſatisfaction. And a double teſtimony did he give hereunto, with reſpect unto the works of creation (1.) In the *approbation* which he gave of the whole upon its ſurvey. And *God ſaw all that he had made, and behold, it was good*, Gen. i. 31. There was that impreſſion of his divine wiſdom, power, and goodneſs upon the whole, as manifeſted his glory, wherein he was well pleaſed. For immediately thereon, all creatures capable

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of the conception and apprehenſion of his glory, *ſang forth his praiſe*, Job xxxviii. 6. 7. (2.) In that he *reſted from his works*, or in them when they were finiſhed, Gen. ii. 2. It was not a reſt of wearineſs from the labour of his work, but a reſt of complacency and delight in what he had wrought, that God *entered* into.

But the principal delight and complacency of God is in his *eternal counſels*. For all his delight in his works, is but in the effects of thoſe divine properties, whoſe primitive and principal exerciſe is in the counſels themſelves, from whence they proceed. Eſpecially is it ſo as unto theſe counſels of the Father and the Son, as to the redemption and ſalvation of the church, wherein they delight, and mutually rejoice in each other on their account. They are all eternal acts of God's infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and love, a delight and complacency wherein is no ſmall part of the divine bleſſedneſs. Theſe things are abſolutely inconceivable unto us, and ineffable by us; we cannot find the Almighty out unto perfection. However, certain it is, from the notions we have of the divine Being and excellencies, and from the revelation he hath made of himſelf, that there is an infinite delight in God, in the eternal actings of his wiſdom, goodneſs, and love, wherein, according to our weak and dark apprehenſions of things, we may ſafely place no ſmall portion of divine bleſſedneſs. Self-exiſtence in its own immenſe being, thence ſelf-ſufficiency unto itſelf in all things, and thereon ſelf-ſatisfaction, is the principal notion we have of divine bleſſedneſs.

1. God delighteth in theſe his eternal counſels in Chriſt, as they are acts of *infinite wiſdom*, as they are the higheſt inſtance wherein it will exert itſelf. Hence, in the accompliſhment of them, Chriſt is emphatically ſaid to be the *Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24.; he in whom the counſels of his wiſdom were to be fulfilled. And in him is the *manifold wiſdom of God* made known, Eph. iii. 10. Infinite wiſdom being that property of the divine nature, whereby all the actings of it are diſpoſed and regulated, ſuitably unto his own glory in all his divine excellencies, he cannot but delight in all the acts of it. Even amongſt men, whoſe *wiſdom* compared with that of God, is *folly*

itſelf, yet is there nothing wherein they have a real rational complacency, ſuitable unto the principles of their nature, but in ſuch actings of that wiſdom which they have, and ſuch as it is, towards the proper ends of their being and duty. How much more doth God delight himſelf in the infinite perfection of his own wiſdom, and its eternal acting for the repreſentation of all the other glorious excellencies of his nature? Such are his counſels concerning the ſalvation of the church by Jeſus Chriſt; and becauſe they were all laid *in him* and *with him*, therefore is he ſaid to be his *delights continually before the world was*. This is that which is propoſed as the object of our admiration, Rom. xi. 33. 34. 35. 36.

2. They are acts of *infinite goodneſs*, whereon the divine nature cannot but be infinitely delighted in them. As *wiſdom* is the *directive principle* of all divine operations; ſo *goodneſs* is the *communicative principle* that is effectual in them. He is *good, and he doth good*; yea, he doth good, becauſe he is good, and for no other reaſon; not by the neceſſity of nature, but by the intervention of a free act of his will. His goodneſs is abſolutely infinite, eſſentially perfect in itſelf; which it cannot be, if it belonged unto it *naturally* and neceſſarily to act and communicate itſelf unto any thing without God himſelf. The divine nature is eternally ſatisfied in and with its own goodneſs; but it is that principle which is the immediate fountain of all the communications of good unto others, by a *free act of the will of God*. So when Moſes deſired to *ſee* his glory, he tells him, that *he will cauſe all his goodneſs to paſs before him, and would be gracious unto whom he would be gracious*, Exod. xxxiii. 19. All divine operations in the gracious communication of God himſelf, are from his goodneſs, by the intervention of a free act of his will. And the greateſt exerciſe and emanation of divine *goodneſs*, was in theſe holy counſels of God for the ſalvation of the church by Jeſus Chriſt. For whereas in all other effects of his goodneſs he gives of *his own*, herein he *gave himſelf*, in taking our nature upon him. And thence, as he expreſſeth the deſign of man in his fall, as upbraiding him with folly and ingratitude, *Behold, the man is become as one of us*, Gen. iii. 22.; we may with all humble

humble thankfulneſs, expreſs the means of our recovery, *Behold, God is become like one of us*, as the apoſtle declares it at large, Phil. ii. 6. 7. 8. It is the nature of ſincere goodneſs, even in its loweſt degree, above all other habits or principles of nature, to give a *delight* and complacency unto the mind in the exerciſe of itſelf, and communication of its effects. A *good man* doth both delight in doing good, and hath an abundant reward for the doing it, in the doing of it. And what ſhall we conceive concerning eternal, abſolute, infinite, perfect, immixed goodneſs, acting itſelf in the higheſt inſtance, (in an effect cognate and like unto it) that it can extend unto? So was it in the *counſels of God* concerning the *incarnation of his Son*, and the ſalvation of the church thereby. No heart can conceive, no tongue can expreſs the leaſt portion of that *ineffable delight* of the holy bleſſed God, in theſe counſels wherein he acted and expreſſed unto the utmoſt his own eſſential goodneſs. Shall a *liberal man deviſe liberal things*, becauſe they are ſuited unto his inclination? Shall a *good man* find a ſecret refreſhment and ſatisfaction in the exerciſe of that low, weak, imperfect, *mixed goodneſs* that his nature is inlaid withal; and ſhall not he whoſe *goodneſs* is *eſſential* unto him, whoſe *being* it is, and in whom it is the immediate principle of communicating himſelf unto others, be infinitely *delighted* in the higheſt exerciſe of it, which divine wiſdom did direct?

The effect of theſe eternal counſels of God in future glory, is reſerved for them that do believe; and therein will there be the neareſt manifeſtation of the glory of God himſelf unto them, when he ſhall be *glorified in his ſaints, and eternally admired in all that believe*. But the bleſſed *delight* and ſatisfaction of God, was and is, in thoſe counſels themſelves, as they were acts of his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs. Herein was the Lord Chriſt *his delight continually*, before the foundation of the world; in that in him were all theſe counſels laid, and through him were they all to be accompliſhed. The conſtitution of his perſon was the only way whereby *divine wiſdom and goodneſs* would act, and communicate of themſelves unto mankind, in which actings are the eternal *delight* and complacency of the divine Being.

3. *Love*

3. *Love and grace* have the ſame influence into the *counſels of God*, as wiſdom and goodneſs have. And in the ſcripture-notion of theſe things, they ſuperadd unto goodneſs this conſideration, that their object *is ſinners*, and thoſe that are unworthy. God doth univerſally communicate of his goodneſs unto all his creatures, though there be an eſpecial exerciſe of it towards them that believe. But as unto his *love and grace*, as they are peculiar unto his *elect*, the church *choſen in Chriſt before the foundation of the world*, ſo they reſpect them primarily in a loſt undone condition by ſin, Rom. v. 8. *God commendeth his love unto us, in that whilſt we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us. God is love*, ſaith the apoſtle, his nature is eſſentially ſo. And the beſt conception of the natural internal actings of the holy Perſons is *love*. And all the acts of it are full of delight. This is, as it were, the womb of all the eternal counſels of God; which renders his complacency in them ineffable. Hence doth he ſo wonderfully expreſs his delight and complacency in the *actings of his love* towards the church, Zeph. iii. 17. *The Lord thy God in the midſt of thee is mighty; he will ſave; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will reſt in his love; he will rejoice over thee with ſinging.* The reaſon why in the ſalvation of the church, he *rejoiceth with joy*, and *joyeth with ſinging*, the higheſt expreſſion of divine complacency, is becauſe he *reſteth in his love*, and ſo is pleaſed in the exerciſe of its effects.

But we muſt return to manifeſt in particular, how all theſe *counſels of God* were laid in the *perſon of Chriſt*, to which end the things enſuing may be diſtinctly conſidered.

1. God made all things in the beginning *good, exceeding good.* The whole of his work was diſpoſed into a perfect *harmony*, beauty, and order, ſuited unto that manifeſtation of his own glory which he deſigned therein. And as all things had their own individual exiſtence, and operations ſuited unto their being, and capable of an end, a reſt, or a bleſſedneſs, congruous unto their natures and operations; ſo in the various reſpects which they had each to other, in their mutual ſupplies, aſſiſtances, and co-operation, they all tended unto that ultimate end, of his eternal

nal glory. For as in their *beings* and exiſtence they were effects of *infinite power*, ſo were their mutual reſpects and ends diſpoſed in *infinite wiſdom*. Thereon were the eternal power and wiſdom of God glorified in them; the one in their production, the other in their diſpoſal into their order and harmony. *Man* was a creature that God made, that by him he might receive the glory that he aimed at in and by the whole inanimate creation, both that below which was for his uſe, and that above which was for his *contemplation*. This was the end of our nature in its original conſtitution. Thereunto are we again reſtored in Chriſt, James i. 18. Pſal. civ. 24. cxxxvi. 5. Rom. i. 20.

2. God was pleaſed to *permit the entrance of ſin*, both in heaven above and in earth beneath, whereby this whole order and *harmony* was diſturbed. There are yet *characters* of divine power, wiſdom, and goodneſs remaining on the works of creation, and inſeparable from their beings. But the *primitive glory* that was to redound unto God by them, eſpecially as unto all things here below, was from the *obedience of man*, unto whom they were put in ſubjection. Their good eſtate depended on their ſubordination unto him, in a way of *natural uſe*, as his did on God in the way of *moral obedience*, Gen. i. 26. 28. Pſal. viii. 6. 7. 8. Man, as was ſaid, is a creature which God made, that by him he might receive the glory that he aimed at, in and by the whole inanimate creation. This was the end of our nature in its original conſtitution. Thereunto are we again reſtored in Chriſt, James i. 18. But the *entrance of ſin* caſt all this order into confuſion, and brought the curſe on all things here below. Hereby were they deprived of that eſtate, wherein they were declared *exceeding good*, and caſt into that of *vanity*, under the burden whereof they groan, and will do ſo to the end, Gen. iii. 17. 18. Rom. viii. 20. 21. And theſe things we muſt again conſider afterwards.

3. *Divine wiſdom* was no way *ſurpriſed* with this diſaſter. God had from all eternity laid in proviſions of counſels for the *recovery* of all things into a better and more permanent eſtate than what was loſt by ſin. This is the ἀνάψυξις, the ἀποκατάστασις πάντων, the *reviſication*, the

the *reſtitution* of all things, Acts iii. 19. 21.; the ἀνακεφαλαίωσις, or the *gathering* all things in heaven and earth into a new head in Chriſt Jeſus, Eph. i. 10. For although it may be, there is more of curioſity than of edification, in a ſcrupulous enquiry into the *method or order* of God's eternal decrees or counſels, and the diſpoſal of them into a ſubſerviency one unto another; yet this is neceſſary from the infinite *wiſdom*, *preſcience*, and immutability of God, that he is *ſurpriſed* with nothing, that he is put unto *no new counſels* by any events in the works of creation. All things were diſpoſed by him, into thoſe ways and methods, and that from eternity, which conduce unto, and certainly iſſue in that *glory* which is ultimately intended. For as we are careful to ſtate the *eternal decrees of God*, and the actual operations of his providence, ſo as that the *liberty* of the will of man as the next cauſe of all his *moral actions*, be not infringed thereby; ſo ought we to be careful not to aſcribe ſuch a *ſacrilegious liberty* unto the wills of any creatures, as that God ſhould be *ſurpriſed*, impoſed on, or *changed* by any of their actings whatever. For *known unto him are all his works from the foundation of the world*, and with him there is neither *variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning*.

4. There were therefore *eternal counſels of God*, whereby he diſpoſed all things into a *new order*, unto his own glory, in the ſanctification and ſalvation of the church. And of them two things may be conſidered. (1.) Their *original*. (2.) The *deſign* of their accompliſhment.

Their firſt ſpring or original was in the *divine will and wiſdom* alone, without reſpect unto any external moving cauſe. No reaſon can be given, no cauſe be aſſigned of theſe counſels, but the *will of God* alone. Hence are they called or deſcribed by, the *good pleaſure which he purpoſed in himſelf*, Eph. i. 9.; *the purpoſe of him who worketh all things according to the counſel of his will*, verſ. 11. *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller? or who hath given firſt unto him, and it ſhall be recompenſed to him again? for of him, and through him, and to him are all things*, Rom. xi. 34. 35. 36. The incarnation of Chriſt, and his mediation thereon, were not the *procuring cauſe* of theſe *eternal counſels* of

of God; but the effects of them, as the scripture constantly declares. But the design of their *accomplishment* was laid in the person of the Son alone. As he was the essential Wisdom of God, all things were at first created by him. But upon a prospect of the ruin of all by sin, God would in and by him, *as he was fore-ordained to be incarnate*, restore all things. The whole counsel of God unto this end centred in him alone. Hence their foundation is rightly said to *be laid in him*, and is declared so to be by the apostle, Eph. i. 4. For the spring of the sanctification and salvation of the church lies in *election*, the decree whereof compriseth the *counsels of God* concerning them. Herein God from the beginning *chuseth us unto salvation, through the sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. the one being the *end* he designeth, the other the *means* and way thereof. But this he did *in Christ; he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unblameable before him in love*; that is, *unto salvation, through the sanctification of the Spirit*. In him we were not actually, nor by faith, before the foundation of the world: yet were we then *chosen in him*, as the only foundation of the execution of all the counsels of God, concerning our sanctification and salvation.

Thus as all things were originally made and created by him, as he was the *essential Wisdom of God*, so all things are renewed and recovered by him, as he is the *provisional wisdom* of God in and by his incarnation. Therefore are these things put together and compared unto his glory, Col. i. 15.—19. *He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.*

Two things as the foundation of what is ascribed unto the Lord Christ in the ensuing discourse, are asserted, vers. 15. (1.) *That he is the image of the invisible God*; (2.) That he is the *first-born of every creature*; things

ſeeming very diſtant in themſelves, but glorioufly united and centring in his perſon.

1. He is the *image of the inviſible God;* or as it is elſewhere expreſſed, he is in *the form of God*, his *eſſential* form, for other form there is none in the divine nature. The *brightneſs of the glory*, and *expreſs image* of the Father's perſon. And he is called here the *inviſible God*, not abſolutely with reſpect unto his eſſence, though it be moſt true, the divine eſſence being abſolutely *inviſible*, and that equally, whether conſidered as in the Father or in the Son. But he is called ſo, with reſpect unto his *counſels*, his *will*, his *love*, and his *grace*. For ſo *none hath ſeen him at any time, but the only begotten which is in the boſom of the Father*, he declares him, John i. 18. As he is thus the *eſſential*, the *eternal image* of the inviſible God, his wiſdom and power, the *efficiency of the firſt creation*, and its *conſiſtence* being created, is aſcribed unto him, verſ. 16. 17. *By him were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, viſible and inviſible*. And becauſe of the great notions and apprehenſions that were then in the world, eſpecially among the Jews, unto whom the apoſtle had reſpect in this epiſtle, of the *greatneſs and glory of the inviſible part* of the creation in heaven above, he mentions them in particular, under the moſt glorious titles that any could, or then did aſcribe unto them; *whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers*. All things were created by him, and for him; the ſame expreſſion that is uſed of God abſolutely, Rom. xi. 36. Rev. iv. 11. Add hereunto thoſe other places to this purpoſe, John i. 1. 2. 3. Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. And thoſe that are not under the efficacy of ſpiritual infatuations, cannot but admire at the power of *unbelief*, the blindneſs of the minds of men, and the craft of Satan, in them who deny the *divine nature* of Jeſus Chriſt. For whereas the apoſtle plainly affirms, that the works of the creation do demonſtrate the *eternal power and Godhead* of him by whom they were created, Rom. i. 19. 20.; and not only ſo, but it is uncontroulably evident in the light of nature; it being ſo directly, expreſsly, frequently affirmed, that all things whatever, *abſolutely*, and in their diſtributions into heaven and earth, with the things contained reſpectively

reſpectively in them, were made and created by Chriſt; it is the higheſt *rebellion* againſt the light and teachings of God, to diſbelieve his divine exiſtence and power.

2. Again, it is added, that he *is the firſt-born of every creature*; which principally reſpects the *new creation*, as it is declared, verſ. 18. *He is the head of the body, the church; the beginning, the firſt-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.* For in him were all the counſels of God laid, for the recovery of all things unto himſelf; as he was to be *incarnate.* And the accompliſhment of theſe counſels of God by him, the apoſtle declares at large in the enſuing verſes. And theſe things are both conjoined and compoſed in this place. As God the Father did nothing in the *firſt creation* but *by him* as his eternal Wiſdom, John i. 3. Heb. i. 2. Prov. viii.; ſo he deſigned nothing in the *new creation* or reſtoration of all things unto his glory, but in him, as he was to be incarnate. Wherefore in his perſon were laid all the *foundation of the counſels of God*, for the ſanctification and ſalvation of the church. Herein he is glorified, and that in a way unſpeakably exceeding all that glory which would have accrued unto him from the firſt creation, had all things abode in their primitive conſtitution.

His perſon therefore is the foundation of the church, the great *myſtery* of *godlineſs*, or the *religion* we profeſs; the entire life and ſoul of all ſpiritual truth; in that all *the counſels of the wiſdom, grace, and goodneſs of God, for the redemption, vocation, ſanctification, and ſalvation of the church, were all laid in him, and by him were all to be accompliſhed.*

CHAP. V.

The perſon of Chriſt the great repreſentative of God and his will.

WHAT *may be known* of God, is his *nature* and *exiſtence*, with the holy *counſels of his will.* A

representation of them unto us, is the foundation of all religion, and the means of our conformity unto him, wherein our present duty, and future blessedness do consist. For to *know God*, so as thereby to be made *like unto him*, is the chief end of man. This is done perfectly only in the *person of Christ*, all other means of it being subordinate thereunto, and none of them of the same nature therewithal. The end of the *word* itself, is to instruct us in the knowledge of God in Christ. That therefore which I shall now demonstrate is, that in the *person and mediation of Christ*, (*which are inseparable in all the respects of faith unto him*), *there is made unto us a blessed representation of the glorious properties of the divine nature, and of the holy counsels of the will of God.* The first of these I shall speak unto in this chapter; the other in that which ensues, wherein we shall manifest how all *divine truths do centre* in the person of Christ. And the consideration of sundry things are necessary unto the explication hereof.

1. God in his *own essence*, being and existence, is absolutely *incomprehensible*. His nature being immense, and all his holy properties *essentially infinite*, no creature can directly or perfectly comprehend them, or any of them. He must be *infinite*, that can perfectly comprehend that which is *infinite*. Wherefore God is perfectly known unto himself only; but as for us, *how little a portion is heard of him?* Hence he is called the *invisible God*, and said to dwell in light inaccessible. The *subsistence* of his most single and simple nature in *three distinct persons*, though it raises and ennobles faith in its revelation, yet it *amazeth* reason, which would trust to itself in the contemplation of it; whence men grow giddy who will own no other guide, and are carried out of the way of truth. *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him*, John i. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

2. Therefore we can have no direct *intuitive notions* or apprehensions of the divine essence, or its properties. Such *knowledge is too wonderful for us.* Whatever is pleaded for an *intellectual vision* of the essence of God in the light of glory, yet none pretend unto a possibility of an immediate

diate *full comprehenſion* of it. But in our preſent ſtate God is unto us, as he was unto Moſes under all the external manifeſtations of his glory, *in thick darkneſs*, Exod. xx. 21. All the rational conceptions of the minds of men, are ſwallowed up and loſt, when they would exerciſe themſelves *directly* on that which is abſolutely immenſe, eternal, infinite. When we ſay *it is ſo*, we know not what we ſay, but only that it is not otherwiſe. What we *deny* of God, we know in ſome meaſure, but what we *affirm*, we know not; only we declare what we *believe* and adore. *Neque ſenſus eſt ejus, neque phantaſia, neque opinio, nec ratio, nec ſcientia*, ſays *Dionyſ. de Divin. Nomin.* 1. We have no means, no corporal, no intellectual inſtrument or power for the comprehenſion of him; nor hath any other creature: ἐπεὶ ἀυτὸ ὅπερ ἐσιν ὁ Θεὸς, οὐ μόνον οἱ Προφῆται, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἄγγελοι εἶδον, οὔτε ἀρχάγγελοι, ἀλλ' ἐὰν ἐρωτήσες ἀυτὺς ἀκούσῃ περὶ μὲν τᾶς ὐσίας οὐδὲν ἀποκρινομένος δόξα δὲ ἐν ὑψίτοις μόνον ἀδοντες τῶ Θεῶ· κὰν παρὰ τῶν Χερυβὶμ ἢ τῶν, σέραφειμ ἐπιθυμήσάς τι μαθεῖν, τὸ μυσικὸν τᾶ ἁγιασμᾶ μέλος ἀκούσῃ, ϗ ὅτι πλήρης ὁ ὐρανὸς ϗ ἡ γῆ τῆς δόξης ἀυτᾶ. "For "that which is God (*the eſſence of God*) not only have "not the prophets ſeen, but neither the angels nor the "archangels. If thou wilt enquire of them, thou ſhalt "have nothing of the ſubſtance of God, but only hear "them ſay, Glory to God on high. If thou aſkeſt the "cherubims and ſeraphims, thou ſhalt only hear the "praiſe of holineſs, The whole earth is full of his glory," ſays *Chryſoſtom*, in *cap.* 1. *Joh. v.* 18. That God is in himſelf abſolutely incomprehenſible unto us, is a neceſſary effect of our infinite diſtance from him. But as *he externally repreſents* himſelf unto us, and by the notions which are ingenerated in us by the effects of his properties, are our conceptions of him, Pſal. xix. 1. Rom. i. 21.

This is declared in the anſwer given unto that requeſt of Moſes; *I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy glory*, Exod. xxxiii. 18. Moſes had *heard a voice* ſpeaking unto him, but he that ſpake was *in thick darkneſs*, he ſaw him not. Glorious evidences he gave of his majeſtatical preſence, but no appearance was made of his eſſence or perſon. Hereon Moſes deſireth for the full ſatisfaction of his ſoul, (as the nearer

nearer any one is unto God, the more earneſt will be his deſire after the full fruition of him), that he might have a *ſight of his glory*, not of that created glory, in the tokens of his preſence and power which he had beheld, but of the *increated glory* of *his eſſence* and being. Through a tranſport of love to God, he would have been in heaven whilſt he was on the earth; yea, deſired more than heaven itſelf will afford, if he would have ſeen the *eſſence of God* with his corporeal eyes. In anſwer hereunto, God tells him, *That he cannot ſee his face and live*; none can have either bodily ſight or direct mental intuition of the divine Being. But this I will do, ſaith God, *I will make my glory paſs before thee, and thou ſhalt ſee my back parts*, Exod. xxxiii. 18.—23. *&c.* This is all that God would grant, namely, ſuch *external repreſentations* of himſelf in the proclamation of his name, and created appearances of his glory, as we have of a man whoſe *back parts only* we behold as he paſſeth by us. But as to the *being of God*, and his ſubſiſtence in the *Trinity of perſons*, we have no direct intuition into them, much leſs comprehenſion of them.

3. It is evident therefore, that our conceptions of God, and of the glorious properties of his nature, are both ingenerated in us, and regulated under the conduct of *divine revelation*, by reflections of his glory on other things, and repreſentations of his divine excellencies in the effects of them. So the inviſible things of God, *even his eternal power and Godhead, are clearly ſeen, being manifeſted and underſtood by the things that are made*, Rom. i. 20. Yet muſt it be granted, that no mere creature, not the angels above, not the heaven of heavens, are meet or able to receive upon them, ſuch *characters* of the divine excellencies, as to be a complete ſatisfactory repreſentation of the *being* and *properties* of God unto us. They are all *finite* and limited, and ſo cannot properly repreſent that which is *infinite* and immenſe. And this is the true reaſon why all worſhip or *religious* adoration of them is idolatry. Yet are there ſuch effects of God's glory in them, ſuch impreſſions of divine excellencies upon them, as we cannot comprehend nor ſearch out unto perfection. How little do we conceive of the nature, glory, and power of *angels*! ſo remote are we from an immediate comprehenſion of the uncreated

uncreated glory of God, as that we cannot fully apprehend, nor conceive aright, the reflection of it on creatures in themſelves finite and limited. Hence they thought of old, when they had *ſeen an angel*, that ſo much of the divine perfections had been manifeſted unto them, that thereon they *muſt die*, Judg. xiii. 21. 22. Howbeit they come infinitely ſhort of making any *complete repreſentation* of God, nor is it otherwiſe with any creature whatever.

4. Mankind ſeemed to have always had a *common apprehenſion*, that there was need of a nearer and more full repreſentation of God unto them, than was made in any of the works of creation or providence. The *heavens indeed declared his glory*, and the firmament always ſhewed his handy work. The *inviſible things* of his eternal power and Godhead, were continually made known by the things that are made. But men generally miſcarried and miſſed it in the contemplation of them, as the *apoſtle* declares, Rom. i. For ſtill they were influenced by a common preſumption, that there muſt be a *nearer*, and more evident manifeſtation of God; that made by the works of creation and providence, being not ſufficient to guide them unto him. But in the purſuit hereof, they utterly ruined themſelves. They would do what God had not done. By common conſent they *framed repreſentations of God* unto themſelves; and were ſo beſotted therein, that they utterly loſt the benefit which they might have received, by the manifeſtation of him in the works of the creation, and took up with moſt fooliſh imaginations. For whereas they might have learned from thence, the *being of God*, his infinite wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, namely, in the impreſſions and *characters* of them on the things that were made; in their own *repreſentations* of him, they changed the *glory of the inviſible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beaſts, and creeping things*, Rom. i. 23. Wherefore this common preſumption, that there was no way to attain a due ſenſe of the divine Being, but by ſome *repreſentation* of it, though true in itſelf, yet by the craft of Satan, and fooliſh ſuperſtitions of the minds of men, became the occaſion of all *idolatry* and flagitious wickedneſs in the world. Hence were all thoſe ἐπιφανειαι, or ſup-

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poſed *illuſtrious appearances* of their gods, which Satan deluded the Gentiles by; and hence were all the ways which they deviſed to bring God into human nature, or the likeneſs of it. Wherefore in all the revelations that ever God made of himſelf, his mind, and will, he always laid this practice of *making repreſentations of him*, under the moſt ſevere interdict and prohibition. And this he did evidently, for theſe two reaſons.

1. Becauſe it was a bold and fooliſh intrenching upon his *proviſional wiſdom* in the caſe. He had taken care that there ſhould be *a glorious image and repreſentation* of himſelf, infinitely above what any created wiſdom could find out. But as when Moſes went into the mount, the Iſraelites would not wait for his return, but made a *calf* in his ſtead; ſo mankind refuſing to wait for the actual exhibition of that *glorious image* of himſelf, which God had provided, they broke in upon his wiſdom and ſovereignty, to make *ſome* of their own. For this cauſe was God ſo provoked, that he gave them up to ſuch ſtupid blindneſs, that in thoſe things wherein they thought *to ſhew themſelves wiſe*, and to bring God nearer unto them, they became contemptibly fooliſh, abaſed their nature, and all the noble faculties of their minds unto *hell*, and departed unto the utmoſt diſtance from God, whom they ſought to bring near unto them.

2. Becauſe nothing that can fall into the invention or imagination of men, could make any other but *falſe repreſentations* of him, and ſo ſubſtitute an *idol* in his place. His own immediate works have great *characters* of his divine excellencies upon them, though unto us obſcure and not clearly legible without the light of revelation. Somewhat he did of old repreſent of his glorious preſence, though not of his being, in the viſible inſtitutions of his worſhip. But all mens inventions to this end, which are neither *divine works of nature*, nor *divine inſtitutions of worſhip*, are all but falſe repreſentations of God, and therefore accurſed by him.

Wherefore it is granted, that God hath placed *many characters* of his divine excellencies upon his works of creation and providence; many, of his *glorious preſence* upon the tabernacle and temple of old; but none of theſe things ever

ever did or could give *ſuch a repreſentation* of him, as wherein the ſouls of men might fully acquieſce, or obtain ſuch conceptions of him as might enable them to worſhip and honour him in a due manner. They cannot, I ſay, by all that may be ſeen in them, and learned from them, repreſent God as the *complete object* of all our affections, of all the actings of our ſouls in faith, truſt, love, fear, obedience, in that way whereby he may be glorified, and we may be brought unto the everlaſting fruition of him. This therefore is yet to be enquired after. Wherefore,

5. A mere *external doctrinal revelation* of the divine nature and properties, without any *exemplification*, or real repreſentation of them, was not ſufficient unto the end of God in the manifeſtation of himſelf. This is done in the ſcripture. But the whole ſcripture is built on this foundation, or proceeds on this ſuppoſition, that there is a *real repreſentation* of the divine nature unto us, which it declares and deſcribes. And as there was ſuch a notion on the minds of all men, that ſome repreſentation of God, wherein he might be near unto them, was neceſſary, which aroſe from the conſideration of the infinite diſtance between the divine nature and their own, which allowed of no meaſures between them; ſo as unto the event God himſelf hath declared, that in his *own way* ſuch a repreſentation was needful unto that end of the manifeſtation of himſelf, which he deſigned. For,

6. All this is done in the *perſon of Chriſt*. He is the complete image and perfect repreſentation of the divine being and excellencies. I do not ſpeak of it abſolutely, but as God propoſeth himſelf as the *object of our faith*, truſt, and obedience. Hence it is *God* as *the Father*, who is ſo peculiarly repreſented in him and by him; as he ſays, *He that hath ſeen the Son, hath ſeen the Father alſo*, John xiv. 9.

Unto ſuch a *repreſentation* two things are required. (1.) That all the properties of the divine nature, the knowledge whereof is neceſſary unto our preſent obedience and future bleſſedneſs, be *expreſſed* in it, and manifeſted unto us. (2.) That there be therein the *neareſt approach* of the divine nature made unto us whereof it

is capable, and which we can receive. And both theſe are found in the *perſon of Chriſt*, and therein alone.

In the perſon of Chriſt we conſider both the *conſtitution* of it in the *union of his natures*, and the reſpect of it unto his *work of mediation*, which was the end of that conſtitution. And, (1.) Therein, as ſo conſidered, is there a bleſſed *repreſentation* made unto us of all the holy properties of the nature of God; of his wiſdom, his power, his goodneſs, grace and love, his righteouſneſs, truth and holineſs, his mercy and patience. As this is affirmed concerning them all in general, or the glory of God in them, which is ſeen and known only *in the face of Chriſt*; ſo it were eaſy to manifeſt the ſame concerning every one of them in particular, by expreſs teſtimonies of ſcripture. But I ſhall at preſent confine myſelf unto the proofs of the whole aſſertion which do enſue.

(2.) There is therein the moſt *incomprehenſible approach of the divine nature made unto ours*; ſuch as all the imaginations of men did ever infinitely fall ſhort of; as hath been before declared. In the *aſſumption of our nature into perſonal union* with himſelf, and our cognation unto God thereby, with the union which believers obtain with him thereon, being *one in the Father and the Son, as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father*, John xvii. 20. 21. there is the neareſt approach of the divine Being unto us, that the nature of things is capable of. Both theſe ends were deſigned in thoſe repreſentations of God, which were of human invention. But in both of them they utterly failed. For inſtead of repreſenting any of the *glorious properties* of the nature of God, they debaſed it, diſhonoured it, and filled the minds of men with *vile conceptions* of it. And inſtead of bringing God *nearer unto them*, they put themſelves at an infinite moral diſtance from him. But my deſign is the confirmation of our aſſertions from the ſcripture.

Col. i. 15. *He is the image of the inviſible God.* This title or property of *inviſible*, the apoſtle here gives unto God, to ſhew what need there was of an *image* or *repreſentation* of him unto us, as well as of one in whom he would declare the counſels of his will. For he intends not only the *abſolute inviſibility*

viſibility of his eſſence, but his being *unknown unto us* in himſelf. Wherefore, as was before obſerved, mankind was generally prone to make *viſible* repreſentations of this *inviſible* God, that in them they might contemplate on him, and have him preſent with them, as they fooliſhly imagined. Unto the craft of Satan abuſing this inclination of mankind, *idolatry* owes its original and progreſs in the world. Howbeit, neceſſary it was that this *inviſible God* ſhould be ſo repreſented unto us by ſome *image* of him, as that we might know him, and that therein he might be worſhipped according unto his own mind and will. But this muſt be of his own contrivance, an effect of his own infinite wiſdom. Hence as he abſolutely rejecteth all *images and repreſentations of him* of mens deviſings, for the reaſons before mentioned, and declares that the honour that any ſhould think would thereby redound unto him, was not given unto him, but unto the *devil*; ſo that which he hath provided himſelf, unto his own holy ends and purpoſes, is every way approved of him. For he will have all *men honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*; and ſo, as that he who *honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father*, John v. 23.

This *image* therefore is the perſon of Chriſt; *He is the image of the inviſible God.* This in the firſt place reſpects the divine perſon abſolutely as he is the *eſſential image* of the Father; which muſt briefly be declared.

1. The Son is ſometimes ſaid to be ἐν Πάτρι, *in the Father*, and the Father in the Son. John xiv. 10. *Believeſt thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* This is from the *unity* or ſameneſs of their nature; for *he and the Father are one*, John x. 30. Thence *all things that the Father hath are his*, chap. xvi. 15. becauſe their nature is one and the ſame. With reſpect unto the divine eſſence abſolutely conſidered, wherein the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, the one cannot be ſaid to be the *image* of the other: for he and the Father are one; and one and the ſame thing, cannot be the image of itſelf in that wherein it is one.

2. The Son is ſaid not only to be ἐν Πάτρι, *in the Father*, in the unity of the ſame eſſence; but alſo πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα, or Θεὸν, *with the Father, or with God* in the diſtinction

of his perſon. John i. 1. *The Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The Word *was God*, in the unity of the divine eſſence; and the Word was *with God*, in its diſtinct perſonal ſubſiſtence. The *Word*, that is, the perſon of the Son, as diſtinct from the Father, was *with God*, or the Father. And in this reſpect he is the *eſſential image* of the Father, as he is called in this place, and Heb. i. 3. and that becauſe he partakes of all the ſame divine properties with the Father.

But although the *Father* on the other ſide be partaker of all the *eſſential divine properties of the Son*, yet is not he ſaid to be the *image of the Son*. For this property of an *image* reſpects not the things themſelves, but the *manner* of the participation of them. Now the *Son receives all from the Father*, and the Father nothing from the Son. Whatever belongs unto the perſon of the Son, as the perſon of the Son, he receives it all from the Father by eternal generation; for *as the Father hath life in himſelf, ſo hath he given unto the Son to have life in himſelf*, John v. 26. He is therefore the *eſſential image* of the Father, becauſe all the properties of the divine nature are communicated unto him, together with perſonality from the Father.

3. In his *incarnation* the Son was made the *repreſentative image* of God unto us, as he was in his perſon the *eſſential image* of the Father by eternal generation. The *inviſible God*, whoſe nature and divine excellencies our underſtandings can make no approach unto, doth in him repreſent, exhibit, or make preſent unto our faith and ſpiritual ſenſe, both himſelf and all the glorious excellencies of his nature.

Wherefore our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, may be conſidered three ways.

1. Merely with reſpect unto his *divine nature*. This is one and the ſame with that of the Father. In this reſpect the one is not the image of the other, for both are the ſame.

2. With reſpect unto his *divine perſon* as the Son of the Father; the only begotten, the eternal Son of God. Thus he receives as his *perſonality*, ſo all divine excellen-

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cies from the Father; so he is the *essential image* of the Father's person.

3. As he *took our nature upon him*; or in the assumption of our nature into *personal union* with himself, in order unto the work of his mediation. So is he the only *representative image* of God unto us; in whom alone we see, know and learn all the divine excellencies, so as to live unto God, and be directed unto the enjoyment of him. All this himself instructs us in.

He reflects it on the Pharisees as an effect of their blindness and ignorance, that they *had neither heard the voice of God at any time, nor seen his shape*, John v. 37. And in opposition hereunto, he tells his disciples, that *they had known the Father, and seen him*, Chap. xiv. 7. And the reason he gives thereof, is *because they that knew him, knew the Father also*. And when one of his disciples not yet sufficiently instructed in this *mystery*, replied, *Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*, vers. 8.; his answer is, *Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*, vers. 9.

Three things are required unto the justification of this assertion.

1. That the Father and he be of the *same nature*, have the same essence and being. For otherwise it would not follow, that he who had *seen him, had seen the Father also*. This ground of it he declares in the next verse, *The Father is in me, and I am in the Father*: namely, because they were one in nature and essence. For the divine nature being simply the same in them all, the divine persons are *in each other* by virtue of the oneness of that nature.

2. That he be *distinct from him*. For otherwise there cannot be a *seeing of the Father* by the *seeing of him*. He is seen in the Son as represented by him, as his image; the Word, the Son of the Father, as he was with God. The unity of nature, and the distinction of persons, is the ground of that assertion of our Saviour; *he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also*.

3. But moreover, the Lord Christ hath a respect herein unto himself in his entire person as he was *incarnate*, and therein unto the discharge of his mediatory work. *Have*

I been ſo long time with you, and haſt thou not known me? Whilſt he was with them, dwelt among them, converſed with them, he was the great *repreſentative* of the glory of God unto them. And notwithſtanding this particular miſtake, they did then *ſee his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father*, John i. 14. And in him was manifeſted the glory of the Father. *He is the image of the inviſible God.* In him God was, in him he dwelt, in him is he *known*, in him is he worſhipped according unto his own will, in him is there a *nearer approach* made unto us, by the divine nature, than ever could enter into the heart of man to conceive. In the conſtitution of his perſon, of two natures, ſo infinitely diſtinct and ſeparate in themſelves, and in the work it was deſigned unto, the wiſdom, power, goodneſs, love, grace, mercy, holineſs, and faithfulneſs of God, are manifeſted unto us. This is the one bleſſed *image of the inviſible God*, wherein we may learn, wherein we may contemplate and adore all his divine perfections.

The ſame truth is teſtified unto, Heb. i. 3. *God ſpake unto us in the Son, who is the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.* His divine nature is here included, as that without which he could not have made a perfect repreſentation of God unto us. For the apoſtle ſpeaks of him, as of him *by whom the worlds were made*, and who *upholdeth all things by the word of his power.* Yet doth he not ſpeak of him abſolutely as he was God, but alſo as he, who *in himſelf purged our ſins, and is ſat down at the right hand of the Majeſty on high*, that is, in his whole perſon. Herein he is ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, the *effulgency*, the *reſplendency* of divine glory. That wherein the divine glory ſhines forth, in an evident manifeſtation of itſelf unto us. And as a farther explication of the ſame myſtery, it is added, that he is the *character* or *expreſs image* of the perſon of the Father. Such an impreſſion of all the glorious properties of God is on him, as that thereby they become legible unto all them that believe.

So the ſame apoſtle affirms again, that he is *the image of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. In what ſenſe, and unto what end he declares, verſ. 6. *We have the knowledge of the glory of God*

God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. Still it is ſuppoſed, that the glory of God, as eſſentially in him, is *inviſible* unto us, and incomprehenſible by us. Yet is there a *knowledge of it* neceſſary unto us, that we may live unto him, and come unto the enjoyment of him. This we obtain only in the *face* or *perſon* of Chriſt ἐν προσώπῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ; for in him that glory is repreſented unto us.

This was the teſtimony which the apoſtles gave concerning him, when he dwelt among them in the days of his fleſh. *They ſaw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,* John i. 14. The divine glory was manifeſt in him, and in him they ſaw the glory of the Father. So the ſame apoſtle witneſſeth again who recorded this teſtimony, 1 John i. 2. *For the life was manifeſted, and we have ſeen it, and bear witneſs, that eternal life was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto us.* In the Son incarnate that eternal life which was originally in and with the Father, was *manifeſt* unto us.

It may be ſaid, that the *ſcripture* itſelf is ſufficient for this end of the *declaration of God unto us,* ſo that there is no need of any other repreſentation of him; and theſe things ſerve only to turn the minds of men from learning the mind and will of God therein, to ſeek for all in the perſon of Chriſt. But the true end of propoſing theſe things, is to draw men unto the *diligent ſtudy of the ſcripture,* wherein alone they are revealed and declared. And in its proper uſe, and unto its proper end it is *perfect* and moſt ſufficient. It is λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, the word of God; howbeit, it is not λόγος ἐσιωδής, the internal eſſential Word of God, but λόγος προφόρικος, the external word ſpoken by him. It is not therefore, nor can be the *image* of God, either eſſential or repreſentative, but is the revelation and declaration of it unto us, without which we can know nothing of it.

Chriſt is the image of the inviſible God, the expreſs image of the perſon of the Father. And the principal end of the whole *ſcripture,* eſpecially of the *goſpel,* is to declare him ſo to be, and how he is ſo. What God promiſed by his prophets in the holy ſcriptures, concerning his Son Jeſus Chriſt, that is fully declared in the goſpel,

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Rom. i. 1.—4. The gospel is the declaration of Christ as *the power of God, and the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.; or an evident representation of God in his person and mediation unto us, Gal. iii. 1. Wherefore three things are herein to be considered.

1. *Objectum reale et formale fidei;* the real formal object of our faith in this matter. This is the *person of Christ* the Son of God incarnate, the *representative image* of the glory of God unto us; as in the testimonies insisted on.

2. *Medium revelans*, or *lumen deferens;* the means of its revelation, or the *objective light* whereby the perception and knowledge of it is conveyed unto our minds. This is the *gospel;* compared unto a *glass*, because of the prospect which we have of the *image of God* therein, 2 Cor. iii. 18. But without it, by any other means, and not by it, we can behold nothing of this image of God.

3. *Lumen præparans, elevans, disponens subjectum.* The internal light of the mind, in the saving illumination of the Holy Spirit, enabling us by that means, and in the use of it, spiritually to behold and discern the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

Through both these, in their several ways of operation, there proceedeth from the *real object of our faith*, Christ as the image of God, *a transforming power*, whereby the soul is changed into the *same image*, or is made conformable unto Christ, which is that whereunto we are predestinated. But we may yet a little farther contemplate on these things, in some instances wherein the glory of God and our own duty are concerned.

1. *The glory of God's wisdom* is exalted, and the pride of the imaginations of men is proportionably debased. And in these two consists the real foundation of all religion in our souls. This God designed in the dispensation of himself and his will, 1 Cor. i. 29. 31. This he calls us unto, Is. ii. 22. Zech. ii. 13. As this frame of heart is prevalent in us, so do all other graces shine and flourish. And it is that which influences all our duties, so far as they are acceptable unto God. And there is no truth more instructive unto it, than that before us. It is taken for granted, and the event hath demonstrated it to be so, that some

ſome *expreſs repreſentation* ſhould be made of God unto us; wherein we might contemplate the glorious excellencies of his nature, and he might draw nigh unto us, and be preſent with us. This therefore men *attempted* to effect and accompliſh, and this God alone hath *performed*, and could ſo do. And their ſeveral ways for this end are herein manifeſt. As the way whereby God hath *done* it, is the principal exaltation of his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, as ſhall be immediately more fully declared, ſo the way whereby men *attempted* it, was the higheſt inſtance of wickedneſs and folly. It is, as we have declared, in *Chriſt alone* that God hath done it: and that therein he hath exalted and manifeſted the riches, the treaſures of his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, is that which the goſpel, the Spirit, and the church do give teſtimony unto A more glorious effect of *divine wiſdom* and goodneſs, a more illuſtrious manifeſtation of them, there never was, nor ever ſhall be, than in the finding out, and conſtitution of this way of the repreſentation of God unto us. The ways of men for the ſame end, were ſo far from giving a *right repreſentation* of the perfections of the divine nature, that they were all of them below, beneath, and unworthy of our own. For in nothing did the blindneſs, darkneſs, and folly of our nature in its depraved condition, ever ſo exert and evidence themſelves, as in contriving ways for the *repreſentation of God unto us*, that is, in *idolatry*, the worſt and vileſt of evils. So Pſal. cxv. 4.——8. Iſ. xliv. Rev. i. 19. 20. *&c.* This pride and folly of men, was that which loſt all knowledge of God in the world, and all obedience unto him. The *ten commandments* are but a tranſcript of the light and law of nature. The firſt of theſe required, that God, the only true God, the Creator and Governor of all, ſhould be *acknowledged*, worſhipped, believed in, and obeyed. And the ſecond was, that we ſhould not *make unto ourſelves any image or repreſentation of him.* Whatever he would do himſelf, yet he ſtrictly forbid that we ſhould make any ſuch *unto ourſelves.* And here began the *apoſtacy* of the world from God. They did not abſolutely reject him, and ſo caſt off the firſt fundamental precept of the law of nature; but they ſubmitted not unto his wiſdom and authority in the *next*,

which was evidently educed from it. They would *make images* and repreſentations of him *unto themſelves*: and by this invention of their own, they firſt *diſhonoured* him, and then *forſook* him, giving themſelves up unto the rule and ſervice of the devil. Wherefore, as the way that God in infinite wiſdom found out, for the *repreſentation* of himſelf unto us, was the only means of recovery from the firſt *apoſtacy*; the way found out by men unto the ſame end, was the great means of caſting the generality of mankind into the fartheſt degree of a *new apoſtacy* from God, whereof our nature is capable. And of the ſame kind will all our contrivances in what belongs unto his worſhip and glory, be found to be, though unto us they may appear both ſpecious and neceſſary. This therefore ſhould lead us into a continual admiration of the *wiſdom* and grace of God, with a due ſenſe of our own *vileneſs and baſeneſs* by nature: for we are in nothing better or wiſer than they, who fell into the utmoſt folly and wickedneſs, in their deſigns for the higheſt end, or the repreſentation of God unto us. The more we dwell on ſuch conſiderations, the more fear and reverence of God, with faith, truſt, and delight in him, will be increaſed; as alſo humility in ourſelves, with a ſenſe of divine grace and love.

2. There is a peculiar ground of the ſpiritual efficacy of this *repreſentation* of God. The revelation that he hath made of himſelf, and of the glorious properties of his nature, in the works of creation and providence, are in themſelves *clear*, *plain*, and *manifeſt*, Pſal. xix. 1. 2. Rom. i. 21. 22. Thoſe which are made in Chriſt are *ſublime* and *myſterious*. Howbeit the *knowledge* we have of him, as he is repreſented unto us in Chriſt, is far more clear, certain, ſteady, effectual, and operative, than any we can attain, in and by all other ways of revelation. The reaſon hereof is, not only becauſe there is a more *full and extenſive revelation* made of God, his counſels, and his will, in Chriſt and the goſpel, than in all the works of creation and providence; but becauſe this revelation and repreſentation of God is received by *faith* alone, the other by *reaſon* only; and it is *faith* that is the principle of ſpiritual *light* and *life* in us. What is received thereby is *operative* and *effectual* unto all the ends of the *life of God*.

God. For we *live by faith* here, as we ſhall by *ſight* hereafter. Reaſon alone, eſpecially as it is corrupted and depraved, can diſcern no glory in the *repreſentation* of God by Chriſt. Yea, all that is ſpoken thereof, or declared in the goſpel, is *fooliſhneſs* unto it. Hence many live in a profeſſion of the faith of the *letter of the goſpel*, yet having no light, guide, nor conduct, but that of *reaſon*, they do not, they cannot really behold the *glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*; nor hath the revelation of it any *efficacy* upon their ſouls. The manifeſtation of him in the *light of nature*, by the works of creation and providence, is ſuited unto their reaſon, and doth affect it: for that which is made in Chriſt, they ſay of it, as the Iſraelites did of *manna* that came down from heaven, *What is it?* we know not the meaning of it: for it is made unto *faith* alone, and all men have not faith. And where God *ſhines into the heart*, by that faith which is of *divine operation*, there, with *open face we behold the glory of God as in a glaſs*, or have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. There is not the meaneſt believer, but in the real exerciſe of faith in Chriſt, hath more *glorious apprehenſions of God*, his wiſdom, goodneſs, and grace, of all his glorious excellencies, than the moſt learned and wiſe in the world can attain unto, in the exerciſe of reaſon, on the proper objects of it. So are theſe things oppoſed by the apoſtle, 1 Cor. i. Wherefore *faith in Chriſt* is the only means of the true knowledge of God; and the diſcoveries which are made of him, and his excellencies thereby, are thoſe alone which are *effectual* to conform us unto his image and likeneſs. And this is the reaſon why ſome men are ſo little affected with the goſpel, notwithſtanding the continual preaching of it unto them, and their outward profeſſion of it: it doth not *inwardly affect* them, it produceth no bleſſed effects in them. Some ſenſe they have of the *power of God*, in the works of creation and providence, in his rule and government; and in the workings of natural conſcience: beyond theſe they have no real ſenſe of him. The reaſon is, becauſe they *have not faith*, whereby alone the *repreſentation* that is made of God in Chriſt, and declared in the goſpel, is made effectual unto the ſouls of men. Wherefore,

3. It is the higheſt *degeneracy* from the myſtery of Chriſtian religion, for men to ſatisfy themſelves in natural diſcoveries of the *divine Being* and excellencies, without an *acquaintance* with that perfect declaration and repreſentation of them, which is made in the perſon of Chriſt, as he is revealed and declared in the goſpel. It is confeſſed, that there may be good uſe made of the evidence which *reaſon* gives, or takes from its own innate principles, with the conſideration of the external works of divine wiſdom and power, concerning the *being* and *rule* of God. But to reſt herein, to eſteem it the *beſt* and moſt *perfective* knowledge of God that we can attain, not to riſe up unto the more full, perfect, and evident manifeſtation of himſelf that he hath *made in Chriſt*, is a declaration of our *unbelief*, and a virtual renunciation of the goſpel. This is the ſpring of that *declenſion* unto a mere *natural religion*, which diſcovers itſelf in many, and uſually ends in the expreſs denial of the divine perſon of Chriſt: for when the *proper uſe* of it is deſpiſed, on what grounds can the *notion* of it be long retained? But a ſuppoſition of his *divine perſon* is the foundation of this diſcourſe. Were he not the *eſſential image* of the Father in his own divine perſon, he could not be the *repreſentative image* of God unto us, as he is incarnate. For if he were a man only, however miraculouſly produced, and glorioufly exalted, yet the angels above, the glorious heavens, the ſeat and throne of God, with other effects of creating power and wiſdom, would no leſs *repreſent* his glory than it could be done in him. Yet are they no where jointly nor ſeparately ſtiled the *image of the inviſible God*; the *brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*; nor doth God ſhine into our hearts to give us the knowledge of his glory in the face of them. And it argues the woful enmity of the *carnal mind* againſt God, and all the effects of his wiſdom, that whereas he hath granted us ſuch a *glorious image* and repreſentation of himſelf, we like it not, we delight not in the contemplation of it, but either deſpiſe it, or neglect it, and pleaſe ourſelves in that which is incomparably beneath it.

4. Becauſe God is not *thus known*, it is that the knowledge of him is ſo barren and fruitleſs in the world, as it manifeſts

manifeſts itſelf to be. It were eaſy to produce, yea, endleſs to number the teſtimonies that might be produced out of Heathen writers, given unto the *being* and *exiſtence* of God, his *authority*, *monarchy* and *rule*: yet what were the effects of that knowledge which they had? Beſides that wretched *idolatry* wherein they were all immerſed, as the apoſtle declares, Rom. i. it reſcued them from no kind of wickedneſs and villany, as he there alſo manifeſts. And the *virtues* which were found among them, were evidently derived from other cauſes, and not from the knowledge they had of God. The Jews have the knowledge of God by the *letter of the Old Teſtament*. But yet not knowing him in Chriſt, and having loſt all ſenſe and apprehenſion of thoſe repreſentations which were made of his being in him in the law, they continue univerſally a people carnal, obſtinate, and wicked. They have neither the *virtues* of the Heathens among them, nor the *power* of the truth of religion. As it was with them of old, ſo it yet continueth to be; *they profeſs that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate*, Tit. i. 16. So is it among many that are called Chriſtians at this day in the world. Great pretence there is unto the knowledge of God; yet did flagitious ſins and wickedneſs ſcarce ever more abound among the Heathens themſelves. It is the knowledge of God in Chriſt alone that is effectually powerful to work the ſouls of men unto a conformity unto him. Thoſe alone who behold the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory.

CHAP. VI.

The perſon of Chriſt the great repoſitory of ſacred truth. Its relation thereunto.

DIVINE ſupernatural truth is called by the apoſtle, the *truth which is according to godlineſs*, Tit. i. 1. Whereas therefore the perſon of Chriſt is the great *myſtery*

ry of godlineſs, we muſt in the next place enquire what is the relation of ſpiritual ſupernatural truth thereunto. And this I ſhall do in purſuit of what was propoſed in the foregoing chapter, namely, that he is the great *repreſentative* unto the church, of God, his holy properties, and the counſels of his will.

All *divine truth* may be referred unto two heads. Firſt, that which is *eſſentially* ſo, and ſecondly, that which is ſo *declaratively*. The firſt is God himſelf, the other are the counſels of his will.

1. God himſelf is the firſt and only *eſſential truth*, in whoſe being and nature the ſprings of all truth do lie. Whatever is *truth*, ſo far as it is ſo, derives from him; is an emanation from that eternal fountain of it. *Being*, *truth*, and *goodneſs*, are the principal notions of God, and in him they are all the ſame. How this is repreſented in Chriſt, as he is in himſelf the eſſential image of the Father, and as incarnate the repreſentative image of him unto us, hath been declared.

2. The *counſels of God* are the next ſpring and cauſe, as alſo the ſubject-matter or ſubſtance of all truth, that is, ſo *declaratively*. *Divine truth is the declaration of the counſels of God*, Acts xx. 27. Of them all, the perſon of Chriſt is the ſacred repoſitory and treaſury; in him are they to be learned. All their efficacy and uſe depends on their relation unto him. He is the centre and circumference of all the lines of truth, that is, which is divine, ſpiritual, and ſupernatural. And the beauty of it, is preſented unto us only in his *face* or *perſon*. We ſee it not, we know it not but as God ſhines into our hearts to give us the knowledge of it therein, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

So he teſtifieth of himſelf, *I am the truth*, John xiv. 6. He is ſo *eſſentially*, as he is one with the Father, the God of truth, Deut. xxxii. 4. He is ſo *efficiently*; as by him alone it is fully and effectually declared. For *no man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten, who is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*, John i. 18. He is ſo *ſubſtantially*, in oppoſition unto the *types* and ſhadows of the Old Teſtament; for in him *dwelt the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. The body is of Chriſt, verſ. 17.

17. He is ſo *ſubjectively*; for all divine truth relating to the ſaving knowledge of God, is treaſured up in him.

In him *are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3.; that is, the wiſdom and knowledge of God in his counſels concerning the vocation, ſanctification, and ſalvation of the church; concerning which the apoſtle falls into that holy admiration; *O the depths of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God!* Rom. xi. 33. And they are called *treaſures* in a twofold account, both mentioned together by the Pſalmiſt. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O Lord, how great is the ſum of them?* They are treaſures becauſe *precious* and invaluable, and are therefore uſually preferred above all earthly treaſures which men moſt highly eſteem, Prov. iii. 14. 15.: and they are ſo becauſe of the *greatneſs* of the ſum of them; and therefore alſo called *unſearchable riches*, Eph. iii. 8. Theſe precious unſearchable treaſures of the wiſdom and knowledge of God, that is, all divine ſupernatural truths, are *hid*, or ſafely depoſited in Chriſt, in and from whom alone they are to be learned and received.

So are we ſaid to *learn the truth as it is in Jeſus*, Eph. iv. 21. And the knowledge of all evangelical ſacred truth, is in the ſcripture moſt frequently expreſſed by the knowledge of him, John viii. 19. chap. xvii. 3. 2 Cor. ii. 14. chap. iv. 5. 6. Eph. i. 17. Phil. iii. 8. 10. 1 John i. 1. 2. chap. ii. 4. 13. 14. chap. v. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 20.

Setting aſide what we have diſcourſed and proved before, concerning the *laying of the foundation of all the counſels of God in the perſon of Chriſt*, and the repreſentation of them in the ineffable conſtitution thereof, I ſhall give ſome few inſtances of this *relation* of all ſupernatural truth unto him; manifeſting that we cannot learn them, nor know them, but with a due reſpect thereunto.

1. There are two things wherein the *glory of truth* doth conſiſt; firſt, its *light*; ſecondly, its *efficacy* or power. And both theſe do all ſupernatural truths derive from this relation unto Chriſt. (1.) No truth whatever brings any *ſpiritual light* unto the mind but by virtue thereof. *In him is life, and the life is the light of men*, John i. 4. He is the *true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, verſ. 9. Wherefore, as truth is the only

means

means of illumination, ſo it cannot communicate any light unto the mind, but only as it is a *beam from him*, as it is an organ to convey it from that fountain. Separated from him and its relation unto him, it will not retain, it cannot communicate any real ſpiritual light or underſtanding to the ſouls of men. How ſhould it, if all light be originally in him, as the ſcripture teſtifieth? Then alone is the mind irradiated with heavenly truth, when it is received as proceeding from, and leading unto the *Sun of righteouſneſs*, the bleſſed ſpring of all ſpiritual light, which is Chriſt himſelf. Whatever *notional knowledge* men may have of divine truths, as they are doctrinally propoſed in the ſcripture, yet if they know them not in their reſpect unto the *perſon of Chriſt* as the foundation of the counſels of God; if they diſcern not how they proceed from him and centre in him, they will bring no ſpiritual ſaving light unto their underſtanding. For all ſpiritual life and light is in him, and from him alone. An inſtance hereof we have in the Jews. They have the ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament, wherein the ſubſtance of all divine truth is revealed and expreſſed. And they are diligent in the ſtudy of them. Howbeit their minds are not at all *illuminated*, nor irradiated by the truths contained in them, but they live and walk in horrible darkneſs. And the only reaſon hereof is, becauſe they know not, becauſe they reject the *relation* of them unto Chriſt, without which they are deprived of all enlightening power.

(2.) *Efficacy* or power is the ſecond property of divine truth. And the end of this efficacy is to make us like unto God, Eph. iv. 20.—24. The mortification of ſin, the renovation of our natures, the ſanctification of our minds, hearts and affections, the conſolation of our ſouls, with their edification in all the parts of the life of God, and the like, are the things that God hath deſigned to effect by his truth, John xvii. 17. Whence it is able to *build us up, and give us an inheritance among all them that are ſanctified*, Acts xx. 32. But it is from their relation unto the perſon of Chriſt, that they have any thing of this power and efficacy. For they have it no otherwiſe but as they are conveyances of his grace unto the ſouls of men. So 1 John i. 1. 2.

Wherefore

Wherefore, as *profeſſors of the truth*, if ſeparated from Chriſt as unto real union, are *withering branches*; ſo *truths profeſſed*, if doctrinally ſeparated from him, or their reſpect unto him, have no living power or efficacy in the ſouls of men. When Chriſt is formed in the heart by them, when he *dwelleth plentifully* in the ſoul through their operation, then and not elſe do they put forth their proper power and efficacy. Otherwiſe they are as waters ſeparated from the fountain, they quickly dry up or become a noiſome puddle; or as a beam interrupted from its continuity unto the ſun, is immediately deprived of light.

2. All divine ſpiritual truths are *declarative* either of the *grace* and love of God *unto us*, or of *our duty*, obedience, and gratitude *unto him*. But as unto theſe things, *Chriſt is all and in all*. We can have no due apprehenſions of the love and grace of God, no underſtanding of the divine truths of the word wherein they are revealed, and whereby they are exhibited unto them that believe, but in the exerciſe of faith on Chriſt himſelf. For in, by, and from him alone it is, that they are propoſed unto us, that we are made partakers of them. It is from *his fulneſs* that all grace is received. No truth concerning them can by any imagination be ſeparated from him. He is the *life and ſoul* of all *ſuch truths*, without which as they are written in the word, they are but a dead letter, and that of ſuch a *character* as is *illegible* unto us, as unto any real diſcovery of the grace and love of God. And as to thoſe of the other ſort, which are *inſtructive* unto us in our duty, obedience, and gratitude, we cannot come unto a practical compliance with any one of them but by the aids of grace received from him. For *without him we can do nothing*, John xv. 5. And he alone *underſtands* divine truth, who *doth it*, John vii. 17. There is not therefore any one text of ſcripture which preſſeth our duty unto God, that we can ſo underſtand as to perform that duty in an acceptable manner, without an actual regard unto Chriſt, from whom alone we receive ability for the performance of it, and in or through whom alone it is accepted with God.

3. All the *evidence of divine ſpiritual truth*, and all

the foundation of our real intereſt in the things whereof it is a declaration, as to benefit, advantage, and comfort, depends on their relation unto Chriſt. We may take an inſtance in one article of divine truth, which ſeems to be moſt diſengaged from any ſuch relation, namely, *the reſurrection of the dead.* But there is no man who rightly believes or comprehends this truth, who doth it not upon the evidence given unto it, and example of it in the perſon of Chriſt *riſing from the dead.* Nor can any man have a comfortable expectation or faith of an eſpecial intereſt in a *bleſſed reſurrection*, (which is our whole concern in that truth, Phil. iii. 11.), but by virtue of a myſtical union unto him as the Head of the church that ſhall be raiſed unto glory. Both theſe the apoſtle inſiſts upon at large, 1 Cor. xv. So is it with all other truths whatever.

Wherefore, all divine ſupernatural truths, revealed in the ſcripture, being nothing but the declaration of theſe counſels of God, whoſe foundation was laid in the perſon of Chriſt; and whereas they are all of them *expreſſive* of the love, wiſdom, goodneſs, and grace of God unto us, or *inſtructive* in our obedience and duty to him, all the actings of God towards us, and all ours towards him, being in and through him alone; and whereas all the life and power of theſe truths, all their beauty, ſymmetry, and harmony in their union and conjunction, which is expreſſive of divine wiſdom, is all from him, who as a living ſpirit diffuſed through the whole *ſyſtem*, both acts and animates it, all the treaſures of truth, wiſdom, and knowledge may be well ſaid to be *hid in him.* And we may conſider ſome things that enſue hereon.

1. Hence it is that thoſe who reject the divine perſon of Chriſt, who believe it not, who diſcern not the wiſdom, grace, love, and power of God therein, do conſtantly reject or corrupt all other ſpiritual truths of divine revelation, nor can it otherwiſe be. For they have a *conſiſtency* only in their relation unto the myſtery of godlineſs, *God manifeſt* in the fleſh; and from thence derive their ſenſe and meaning. This being removed, the truth in all other articles of religion immediately falls to the ground. An inſtance hereof we have in the Socinians. For although they retain the common notions of the unity and

exiſtence

exiſtence of the divine nature, which are indelibly fixed on the minds of men, yet is there no one truth that belongs peculiarly unto Chriſtian religion, but they either deny it, or horribly deprave it. Many things concerning God and his eſſential properties; as his immutability, immenſity, preſcience, they have greatly perverted. So is that fulfilled in them, which was ſpoken by Jude the apoſtle, verſ. 10. *They ſpeak evil of the things which they know not; and what they do know naturally, as brute beaſts, in them they corrupt themſelves.* So they do in the things mentioned, whereof there are natural notions in the minds of men. But of *evangelical truths*, which they know not, they ſpeak evil, and deride them. The *Holy Trinity* they blaſpheme; the *incarnation* of the Son of God they ſcorn; the work of his mediation in his oblation and interceſſion, with the ſatisfaction and merit of his obedience and ſuffering, they reject. So do they whatever we are taught of the depravation of our natures by the fall, of the renovation of them by the Holy Ghoſt, and unto all other articles of our faith do they offer violence to corrupt them. The beginning of their tranſgreſſion or apoſtacy is in a diſbelief of the divine perſon of Chriſt. That being rejected, all other ſacred truths are removed from their *baſis* and *centre*; that which gives them their unity and harmony. Hereon they fluctuate up and down in the minds of men, and appearing unto them under various deceiving colours, are eaſily miſapprehended or diſbelieved. Yea, there can no direct proper repreſentation be made of them unto the underſtandings of men. Diſſolve the knot, centre, and *harmony* in the moſt beautiful compoſition or ſtructure, and every part will contribute as much unto the deformity and ruin of the whole, as it did before unto its beauty and conſiſtency. So is it with every doctrine, ſo is it with the whole ſyſtem of evangelical truths. Take the perſon of Chriſt out of them, diſſolve their harmony in relation thereunto, whereby we no longer *hold the head* in the faith and profeſſion of them, and the minds of men cannot deliver them from an irreconcileable difference among themſelves. Hereon ſome of them are immediately rejected, and ſome of them corrupted. For they loſe their native light and beauty. They will neither agree

nor conſiſt any where but in Chriſt. Hence it is, that no inſtance can be given of any who from the original of Chriſtian religion, rejected the divine perſon of Chriſt, and preſerved any one evangelical truth beſides pure and uncorrupted. And I do freely confeſs, that all which we believe concerning the Holy Trinity, the eternal counſels of God, the efficacy of the mediation of Chriſt, his ſatisfaction and merit, the way which we own of the ſanctification, juſtification, and ſalvation of the church, are to be eſteemed fables, as the Socinians contend, if what we believe concerning the perſon of Chriſt, be ſo alſo.

2. Hence it is that the knowledge and profeſſion of the truth with many is ſo *fruitleſs*, *inefficacious*, *and uſeleſs*. It is not known, it is not underſtood nor believed in its relation unto Chriſt, on which account alone it conveys either light or power to the ſoul. Men profeſs they know the truth, but they know it not in its proper order, in its harmony and uſe. It leads them not to Chriſt, it brings not Chriſt unto them, and ſo is lifeleſs and uſeleſs. Hence oft-times none are more eſtranged from the life of God, than ſuch as have much notional knowledge of the doctrines of the ſcripture. For they are all of them uſeleſs and ſubject to be abuſed, if they are not improved to form Chriſt in the ſoul; and transform the whole perſon into his likeneſs and image. This they will not effect where their relation unto him is not underſtood, where they are not received and learned as a revelation of him, with the myſtery of the will and wiſdom of God in him. For whereas he is our life, and in our living unto God we do not ſo much live as he liveth in us, and the life which we lead in the fleſh is by the faith of him, ſo that we have neither principle nor power of ſpiritual life but in, by, and from him, whatever knowledge we have of the truth, if it do not effect an *union* between him and our ſouls, it will be lifeleſs in us, and unprofitable unto us. It is *learning the truth as it is in Jeſus*, which alone reneweth the image of God in us, Eph. iv. 21.—24. Where it is otherwiſe, where men have notions of evangelical truths, but know not Chriſt in them, whatever they profeſs, when they come really to examine themſelves

ſelves, they will find them of no uſe unto them, but that all things between God and their ſouls are ſtated on natural light and common preſumptions.

CHAP. VII.

Power and efficacy communicated unto the office of Chriſt for the ſalvation of the church from his perſon.

IT is by the exerciſe and diſcharge of the *office of Chriſt*, as the *King*, *Prieſt*, and *Prophet* of the church, that we are redeemed, ſanctified, and ſaved. Thereby doth he immediately communicate all goſpel-benefits unto us, gives us an acceſs unto God here by grace, and in glory hereafter. For he ſaves us as he is the *Mediator* between God and man. But hereon an enquiry may be made, Whence it is that the *acts* and *duties* of this *office* of Chriſt, in their exerciſe and diſcharge, ſhould have ſuch a *power* and *efficacy* with reſpect unto their ſupernatural and eternal ends: for the things which depend upon them, which are effected by them, are all the principal means of the glory of God, and the only concernments of the ſouls of men. And this I ſay is his holy *myſterious perſon*; from thence alone all power and efficacy is derived and tranſfuſed into his offices, and into all that is due in the diſcharge of them.

A truth this is of that importance, that the declaration and demonſtration of it, is the principal deſign of one *entire book* of the holy ſcriptures, namely, of the *epiſtle of Paul the apoſtle unto the Hebrews*. That the glorious excellency of the perſon of Chriſt doth enable him in the diſcharge of his offices, to accompliſh thoſe ends, which none other, though veſted with the ſame offices, could in the exerciſe of them attain unto, is the ſum and ſubſtance of the *doctrinal part* of that diſcourſe. Here therefore we muſt a little fix our meditations; and our intereſt calls us thereunto. For if it be ſo, it is evident that we can receive no good, no benefit by virtue of any office of Chriſt, nor any fruits of their exerciſe, without an actual reſpect

of

of faith unto his perſon, whence all their life and power is derived.

God gave of old both *kings*, *prieſts*, and *prophets* unto the church. He both anointed them unto their offices, directed them in their diſcharge, was preſent with them in their work, and accepted of their duties. Yet by none of them, nor by all of them together, was the church ſupernaturally enlightened, internally ruled, or eternally ſaved, nor could it ſo be. Some of them, as Moſes in particular, had as much power, and as great a preſence of God with him, as any mere man could be made partaker of. Yet was he not in his miniſtry, the Saviour of the church, nor could he be ſo any otherwiſe than *typically* and *temporally*. The miniſtry of them all was ſubſervient unto that end, which by its own power it could not attain.

It is evident therefore, that the redemption and ſalvation of the church do not depend merely on this, that God hath given one to be the *king*, *prieſt*, and *prophet* of the church, by the actings of which offices it is redeemed and ſaved; but on the perſon of him who was ſo given unto us, as is fully atteſted, Iſ. ix. 6. 7. 8.

This muſt be declared.

Two things were required in general unto the *perſon* of Chriſt, that his *offices* might be effectual unto the ſalvation of the church, and without them they could not ſo have been. And they are ſuch as that their *contrivance* in the conſtitution of one and the ſame perſon, no created wiſdom could reach unto. Wherefore, the infinite wiſdom of God is moſt glorioufly manifeſted therein.

I. The firſt of theſe is, that he ſhould have a *nature provided for him*, which originally was not his own. For in his *divine* nature ſingly conſidered, he had no ſuch relation unto them for whom he was to diſcharge his offices, as was neceſſary to communicate the benefit of them, nor could he diſcharge their principal duties. God could not die, nor riſe again, nor be exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour in his *divine nature*. Nor was there that eſpecial alliance between it and ours, as ſhould give us an eſpecial intereſt in what was done thereby.

It was mankind in whoſe behalf he was to exerciſe theſe

theſe *offices*. He was not to bear them immediately with reſpect unto the *angels*, and therefore he took not their nature on him, Heb. ii. 16. οὐ γὰρ δηπου ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβανεται, *He took not the nature of angels unto him*, becauſe he was not to be a Mediator for them, a Saviour unto them. Thoſe of them who had ſinned were left unto everlaſting ruin, and thoſe who retained their original righteouſneſs, needed no redemption. But God *prepared a body for him;* that is, an human nature, Heb. x. 5. The promiſe hereof, namely, that he ſhould *be of the ſeed of the woman*, was the foundation of the church; that is, he was made ſo unto the church, in and by that promiſe, Gen. iii. 15. In the accompliſhment thereof he was made of a woman, that ſo he might be made under the law, Gal. iv. 4. *And he took upon him the ſeed of Abraham*, Heb. ii. 16. *For becauſe the children were partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf took part of the ſame*, verſ. 14. *For in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Prieſt, in things appertaining unto God*, verſ. 17. And this was abſolutely neceſſary unto the diſcharge of his offices, on the twofold account before mentioned. For,

1. Thoſe acts of his offices whereon the ſanctification and ſalvation of the church do principally depend, could not be performed but in and by that nature. Therein alone could he yield obedience unto the law, that it might be *fulfilled in us*, without which we could not ſtand in judgment before God. See Rom. viii. 3. chap. x. 3. 4. Therein alone could he undergo the *curſe of the law*, or be *made a curſe for us*, that the bleſſing might come upon us, Gal. iii. 13. 14. It was neceſſary that as a Prieſt he ſhould have ſomething of his own to offer unto God to make atonement for ſin, Heb. viii. 3. The like may be ſaid of his whole miniſtry on the earth, of all the effects of his incarnation.

2. Herein that *cognation* and *alliance* between him and the church, which were neceſſary to entitle it unto a participation of the benefits of his mediation, do depend. For hereby he became our *Goel*, the next of kin, unto whom belonged the right of redemption, and from whom alone

alone we could claim relief and ſuccour in our loſt condition. This is divinely and at large declared by the apoſtle, Heb. ii. 10.—18. Having at large explained this context in our expoſition of that chapter, and therein declared both the neceſſity and benefit of the cognation between the church and its High Prieſt, I ſhall not here farther inſiſt upon it. See to the ſame purpoſe, Eph. v. 25. 26. 27. Wherefore, had he not been partaker of our nature, we could have received no benefit, not that without which we muſt eternally periſh, by any office that he could have undertaken. This therefore was neceſſary unto the conſtitution of his perſon with reſpect unto his offices. But,

II. There was yet more required thereunto, or to render his *offices* effectual unto their proper ends. Not one of them could have been ſo, had he been no more than a man, had he had no nature but ours. This I ſhall particularly demonſtrate, conſidering them in their uſual diſtribution, unto the glory of his divine perſon, and our own edification in believing.

Firſt, He could not have been the *great and ſingular Prophet of the church*, had he been a man only, though never ſo excellent and glorious, and that for theſe three reaſons.

1. He was to be the Prophet of the *whole catholic church*, that is, of all the elect of God, of all that ſhall be ſaved in all ages and places, from the beginning of the world unto the end thereof. He had a *perſonal miniſtry* for the inſtruction of the church whilſt he was on the earth, but his *prophetical office* was not confined thereunto; for that was limited unto one nation, Matth. xv. 24. Rom. xv. 8. and was for a ſhort ſeaſon only. But the church was never without a prophet; that is, one on whom it was incumbent to reveal unto it, and inſtruct it in the will of God, nor can be ſo unto the conſummation of all things. This is Chriſt alone. For,

1*ſt*, I take it for granted, that from the beginning, from the giving of the firſt promiſe, the Son of God did in an eſpecial manner *undertake the care of the church*, as unto all the ends of the wiſdom, will, and grace of God. And I take it for granted here; becauſe I have proved it at large elſewhere. It evidently followeth on the eternal compact

compact between the Father and him unto this end. In the work which belonged hereunto, that which concerned its inſtruction in the will of God, its ſaving illumination and ſpiritual wiſdom, is of ſuch importance, as that without it, none can be partaker of any other bleſſings whatever. In this inſtruction and illumination conſiſts the diſcharge of the prophetical office of Chriſt.

2*dly*, Upon the account of his ſuſception of his office even before his incarnation, conſidered as God, he is ſaid to act in it ſo as to be *ſent of God* unto his work, Mic. v. 2. *The Ruler of Iſrael, whoſe goings forth have been from of old, from everlaſting. His goings forth* are not his *eternal generation*, which conſiſts in one individual, eternal act of the Father. But it is the egreſs, the exerciſe of his power and care for the church, that is ſo expreſſed. Theſe were from the *beginning*, the firſt foundation of the church, in anſwer unto his everlaſting counſels, Zech. ii. 8. *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, After the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you: and I will ſhake mine hand upon them, and they ſhall be a ſpoil to their ſervants; and ye ſhall know that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me.* He who is ſent calleth himſelf the *Lord of hoſts*, and affirms that he will deſtroy the nations by the ſhaking of his hand, who can be no other but God himſelf. That is, it was the Son of God who was to be incarnate, as is declared in the next words. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and will dwell in the midſt of them, ſaith the Lord. And many nations ſhall be joined unto the Lord in that day, and ſhall be my people: and I will dwell in the midſt of them, and thou ſhalt know that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me unto thee*, verſ. 10. 11. He promiſeth that he will *dwell* in the midſt of the people, which was accompliſhed when the *Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us*, John i. 14.; which was the time of the calling of the Gentiles, when many nations were to be joined unto the Lord: and thoſe that were ſo called, were to be his people; *they ſhall be my people:* and yet in all this he was ſent by the Lord of hoſts; thou ſhalt know *that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me unto thee.* Wherefore, with reſpect unto his ſuſception of his offices towards the church, the *Lord of hoſts*, in the perſon of the Son, is ſaid to be

ſent by *the Lord of hoſts*, that is, in the perſon of the Father. So was he the *Prophet* of the church even before his incarnation, ſent or deſigned by the Father to inſtruct it, to communicate ſpiritual and ſaving light unto it. So he teſtified concerning himſelf unto the Jews, *Before Abraham was, I am*, John viii. 55. Which as it invincibly proves his eternal pre-exiſtence unto his incarnation, ſo it is not only intended. He was ſo before Abraham, as that the care of the church was then and always from the beginning on him. And he diſcharged this office four ways.

(1.) By *perſonal appearances* in the likeneſs of human nature, in the ſhape of a man, as an indication of his future incarnation; and under thoſe appearances inſtructing the church. So he appeared unto Abraham, to Jacob, to Moſes, to Joſhua, as I have proved elſewhere. And thoſe peculiar appearances of the perſon of the Son, for the inſtruction of believers, are a full demonſtration that the care and work of it were committed unto him in a peculiar manner. And I am not without thoughts, although I ſee ſome difficulty in it, *That the whole Old Teſtament, wherein God perpetually treats with men, by an aſſumption of human affections unto himſelf, ſo to draw us with the cords of a man, proceeded from the perſon of the Son, in a preparation for, and proſpect of his future incarnation.*

(2.) By the *miniſtry of angels*. Upon his undertaking to be the Mediator for the church with God, the angels were in a peculiar manner put into dependence on him, even as he became a new and immediate head unto the whole creation. This belonged unto that eſpecial glory which he had with the Father *before the world was*, whereof we have treated before. All things were to be anew gathered into an head in him, *both which are in heaven, and which are on earth*, Eph. i. 10. And he became the *firſt-born of every creature*, Col. i. 15. the Lord and proprietor of them. Hence the whole miniſtry of angels was ſubordinate unto him; and whatever inſtruction was thereby given unto the church, in the mind and will of God, it was immediately from him, as the great Prophet of the church.

(3.) By *ſending his holy Spirit* to inſpire, act, and guide the prophets, by whom God would reveal himſelf. God ſpake unto them by the *mouth of his holy prophets from the beginning*

beginning of the world, Luke i. 70. But it was the *Spirit of Chriſt* that was in them, that ſpake by them, that revealed the things which concerned the redemption and ſalvation of the church, 1 Pet. i. 11. 12. And by this Spirit he himſelf *preached unto thoſe that were diſobedient in the days of Noah*, who are now in priſon for their diſobedience, 1 Pet. iii. 19. 20. For he was ſo the prophet of the church always, as to tender manifold inſtructions unto the periſhing unbelieving world. Hence is he ſaid to *lighten every man that cometh into the world*, John i. 9. by one way or other communicating to them ſome notices of God and his will: for his light ſhineth in, or irradiates darkneſs itſelf; that darkneſs which is come on the minds of men by ſin, though the *darkneſs comprehend it not*, verſ. 5.

(4.) By the *miniſtry of holy men*, acted and moved by his Spirit. So he gave forth the word that was written for an everlaſting rule of faith and obedience unto the church.

Thus were the office and work of inſtructing and illuminating of the church on his hand alone from the beginning, and thus were they by him diſcharged. This was not a work for him who was no more but a man. His human nature had no exiſtence until the fulneſs of time, the latter days, and therefore could effect or operate nothing before. And whereas the apoſtle diſtinguiſheth between the ſpeaking of God *in the Son*, and his ſpeaking *in the prophets*, oppoſing the one to the other, Heb. i. 1. 2. he doth it with reſpect unto his perſonal miniſtry unto the church of the Jews, and not with reſpect unto his being the peculiar fountain of life and light, unto the whole church in all ages.

It is true, we have under the goſpel many unſpeakable advantages from the *prophetical* office of Chriſt, above what they enjoyed under the Old Teſtament. But he was the Prophet of the church equally in all ages. Only he hath given out the knowledge of the mind of God in different degrees and meaſures; that which was moſt perfect, being for many reaſons reſerved unto the times of the goſpel; the ſum whereof is, that God deſigned him unto a pre-eminence above all, in his own perſonal miniſtry.

If any ſhall now enquire, how the Lord Chriſt could be

the Prophet of the church, *before* he took our nature on him, and dwelt among us? I ſhall alſo aſk, how they ſuppoſe him to be the Prophet of the church, now he hath left the world and is gone to heaven; ſo as that we neither ſee him, nor hear him any more? If they ſhall ſay, that he is ſo by *his Spirit*, *his word*, and the *miniſtry* which he hath ordained; I ſay, ſo was he the Prophet of the church before his incarnation alſo. To confine the offices of Chriſt, as to their virtue, power, and efficacy, unto the times of the goſpel only, is utterly to evacuate the firſt promiſe, with the covenant of grace founded thereon. And their minds are ſecretly influenced by a diſbelief of his divine perſon, who ſuppoſe that the reſpect of the church unto Chriſt in faith, love, truſt, and inſtruction, commenceth from the date of his incarnation.

2. The *full comprehenſion of the mind and will of God*, of the whole divine counſel concerning his glory in the ſanctification and ſalvation of the church, could not at once reſide in the mind of any mere creature. Yet was this neceſſary unto him, who was to be the Prophet of the church, that is, the fountain of truth, life, and knowledge unto it. Hence is his name *Wonderful*, *Counſellor*, as he who was participant of all the eternal counſels of God; whereon in him as incarnate, all the treaſures of divine wiſdom and knowledge were hid, Col. ii. 3. In him this could be alone, in whom was life, and the *life was the light of men*, John i. 4. God did reveal his mind and will by angels and men. But as he did it at ſundry times, ſo he did it by ſeveral parts, or various parcels, not only as the church was fit to receive it, but as they were able to communicate it. The whole of the divine counſels could not be comprehended, and ſo not declared by any of them. Hence the *angels* themſelves, notwithſtanding their reſidence in the preſence of God, beholding his face, and all the glorious meſſages wherein they were employed, learned more of his mind after the *perſonal miniſtry* of Chriſt, and the revelation of the myſteries of his counſel therein, than ever they knew before, Eph. iii. 8. 9. 11. 1 Pet. i. 13. And on the account of their imperfection in the comprehenſion of his counſels, it is ſaid that he *chargeth his angels with folly*, Job iv. 15. And the beſt of

of the prophets not only received divine truth by parcels, but comprehended not the depths of the revelations made unto them, 1 Pet. i. 11. 12.

To this purpoſe is that divine teſtimony, John i. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* It is of all the prophets concerning whom it is affirmed, that no man hath ſeen God at any time. So is it evident in the *antitheſis* between Moſes the principal of them, and the Lord Chriſt in the verſe foregoing. *For the law was given by Moſes, but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* Wherefore, no man, no other man or prophet whatever, hath ſeen God at any time; that is, had a perfect comprehenſion of his counſels, his mind and will, as they were to be declared unto the church. This is the privilege of the *only begotten Son*, who is in the boſom of the Father; not only as being his eternal delight and love, but alſo as one acquainted with all his ſecret counſels, as his fellow and participant of all his boſom thoughts.

He ſays, that all *that ever came before him were thieves and robbers, but the ſheep did not hear them*, John x. 5. This ſome of old impiouſly applied unto the prophets of the Old Teſtament; whereas he intended it only of thoſe *falſe prophets*, who pretended of themſelves, that they, any of them were the Meſſiah, the great Shepherd of the ſheep, whom his elect ſheep would not attend unto. But it is true, that all who went before him, neither ſeparately nor jointly had the knowledge of God, ſo as to declare him fully unto the church.

It is the moſt fond and wicked imagination of the Socinians, invented to countenance their diſbelief and hatred of his divine perſon, that during the time of his fleſh, *he was taken up into heaven, and there taught the doctrine of the goſpel*, as Mahomet feigned concerning himſelf and his Alcoran. The reaſon and foundation of his perfect knowledge of God, was his being the only begotten Son in the boſom of the Father; and not a fictitious rapture of his human nature.

To this purpoſe have we his own teſtimony, John iii. 13. *And no man hath aſcended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

heaven. The matter whereof he treats, is the revelation of heavenly things: for finding Nicodemus ſlow in the underſtanding of the doctrine and neceſſity of regeneration, which yet was plain and evident in compariſon of ſome other heavenly myſteries, he aſks of him, *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not,* (things wrought in the earth, and in your own breaſts), *how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?* if I declare unto you the deep counſels of the will of God above? verſ. 12. But hereon a queſtion might ariſe, How he ſhould himſelf come to the knowledge of theſe heavenly things whereof they had never heard before, and which no other man could tell them of, eſpecially conſidering what he had ſaid before, verſ. 11. *We ſpeak that we do know, and teſtify what we have ſeen?* Hereof he gives an account in theſe words. Wherefore, the *aſcending into heaven,* which he denies unto all men whatever, *no man hath aſcended up to heaven,* is an entrance into all the divine heavenly counſels of God; no man either hath, or ever had a full comprehenſion of theſe heavenly things but he himſelf alone. And unto him it is aſcribed on a double account; firſt, *that he came down from heaven;* ſecondly, that when he did ſo, *he yet ſtill continued in heaven;* which two properties give us ſuch a deſcription of the perſon of Chriſt, as declare him a full poſſeſſor of all the counſels of God. *He deſcended from heaven* in his incarnation, whereby he became the Son of man; and he is and was then in heaven, in the eſſence and glory of his divine nature. This is the full of what we aſſert. In the knowledge and revelation of heavenly myſteries unto the calling, ſanctification, and ſalvation of the church, doth the prophetical office of Chriſt conſiſt. This he poſitively affirms could not otherwiſe be, but that *he who came down from heaven,* was alſo at the ſame inſtant *in heaven.* This is that glorious perſon whereof we ſpeak. He who being always in heaven, in the glory and eſſence of his divine nature, came down from heaven, not locally by a mutation of his reſidence, but by diſpenſation in the aſſumption of our nature into perſonal union with himſelf; he alone is meet and able to be the Prophet of the church, in the revelation of the heavenly myſteries of the counſels of the will of

of God. *In him alone were hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. becauſe in him alone *dwelt the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, verſ. 9.

I do not hereby aſcribe an infuſion of *omniſcience*, of infinite underſtanding, wiſdom, and knowledge into the human nature of Chriſt. It was and is a creature finite and limited, nor is a capable ſubject of properties abſolutely infinite and immenſe. Filled it was with light and wiſdom, to the utmoſt capacity of a creature. But it was ſo, not by being changed into a divine nature or eſſence, but by the communication of the Spirit unto it without meaſure. The Spirit of the Lord did reſt upon him, *the Spirit of wiſdom and underſtanding, the Spirit of courage and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord, and made him of quick underſtanding in the fear of the Lord*, Iſ. xi. 25.

3. The Spirit of God dwelling in him, in all the fulneſs of his graces and gifts, gave him an underſtanding peculiar unto himſelf; as above that of all creatures, ſo beneath the eſſential omniſcience of the divine nature. Hence ſome things as he was a man he *knew not*, Mark xiii. 32. but as they were given him by *revelation*, Rev. i. 1. But he is the *Prophet* of the church in his whole entire perſon, and revealed the counſel of God, as he was in heaven in the boſom of the Father. Curſed be he that truſteth in man, that maketh fleſh his arm, as to the revelations of the counſels of God. Here lies the ſafety, the ſecurity, the glory of the church. How deplorable is the darkneſs of mankind in their ignorance of God and heavenly things? In what ways of vanity and miſery have the generality of them wandered ever ſince our firſt apoſtacy from God? Nothing but hell is more full of horror and confuſion, than the minds and ways of men deſtitute of heavenly light. How miſerably did thoſe among them, who boaſted themſelves to be *wiſe*, *wax fooliſh* in their imaginations? How wofully did all their enquiries after the nature and will of God, their own ſtate, duty, and happineſs, iſſue in curioſity, uncertainty, vanity, and falſehood? He who is infinitely good and compaſſionate, did from the beginning give ſome relief in this woful ſtate, by ſuch parcels of divine revelations as he thought meet to communicate

municate unto them by the prophets of old, ſuch as they were able to receive. By them he ſet up a *light ſhining in a dark place*, as the light of ſtars in the night. But it was the riſing of the *Sun of righteouſneſs* alone that diſpelled the darkneſs that was on the earth, the thick darkneſs that was on the people, bringing life and immortality to light by the goſpel. The divine perſon of the Son of God, in whom were all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, who is in the boſom of the Father, hath now made known all things unto the church, giving us the perfect *idea* and certainty of all ſacred truth, and the full aſſurance of things inviſible and eternal.

Three things are neceſſary that we may have the benefit and comfort of divine light or truth. 1*ſt*, The *fulneſs* of its revelation; 2*dly*, The *infallibility* of it; and, 3*dly*, The *authority* from whence it doth proceed. If either of theſe be wanting, we cannot attain unto ſtability and aſſurance in the faith of it, or obedience unto it.

1*ſt*, *Full* it muſt be, to free us from all attempts of *fear* that any thing is detained or hidden from us, that were needful for us to know. Without this the mind of man can never come to reſt in the knowledge of truth. All that he knows may be uſeleſs unto him, for the want of that which he neither doth nor can know, becauſe not revealed. And,

2*dly*, It muſt be *infallible* alſo. For this divine truth whereof we treat, being concerning things *unſeen*, *heavenly*, *eternal* myſteries, tranſcending the reach of human reaſon, nothing but the *abſolute infallibility* of the revealer, can bring the mind of man to aſſurance and acquieſcency. And whereas the ſame truth enjoins unto us duties, many of them contrary unto our inclinations, and croſs unto our ſeveral intereſts, the *great guides of corrupted nature*; the revelation of it muſt proceed from ſovereign authority, that the will may comply with the mind in the embracement of it. All theſe are abſolutely ſecured in the *divine perſon* of the great Prophet of the church. His infinite wiſdom, his infinite goodneſs, his eſſential veracity, his ſovereign authority over all, give the higheſt aſſurance whereof a created underſtanding is capable, that nothing is detained from us, that there is no poſſibility of error or miſtake in what is declared unto us, nor any pretence left

of declining obedience unto the commands of the truth that we do receive. This gives the ſoul *aſſured reſt* and peace in the belief of things which *eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard,* nor can enter into the heart of man to conceive. Upon the aſſurance of this truth alone, can it with joy prefer things inviſible and eternal above all preſent ſatisfactions and deſires. In the perſuaſion hereof, can it forego the *beſt* of preſent enjoyments, and undergo the *worſt* of preſent evils; namely, in the experience of its preſent efficacy, and choice of that future recompence which it doth ſecure. And he believes not the goſpel unto his own advantage, or the glory of God, whoſe faith reſts not in the *divine perſon* of Jeſus Chriſt, the great Prophet of the church. And he who there finds reſt unto his ſoul, dares not admit of any copartners with him as to inſtruction in the mind of God.

3*dly*, It was requiſite unto the office of this great Prophet of the church, and the diſcharge thereof, that he ſhould have *power and authority* to ſend the Holy Spirit to make his revelations of divine truth effectual unto the minds of men. For the church which he was to inſtruct, was not only in darkneſs, by reaſon of *ignorance*, and want of objective light or divine revelations, but was *incapacitated* to receive ſpiritual things in a due manner when revealed. Wherefore, it was the work of this Prophet, not only to make known and declare the doctrines of truth, which are our external directive light, but alſo to *irradiate* and illuminate our minds, ſo as that we might ſavingly apprehend them. And it is no wonder, if thoſe who are otherwiſe minded, who ſuppoſe themſelves able to *receive* ſpiritual things, the things of God in a due manner, upon their *external propoſal* unto them, are regardleſs of the divine perſon of Chriſt, as the Prophet of the church. But hereon they will never have experience of the life and power of the doctrine of the goſpel, if the apoſtle is to be believed, 1 Cor. ii. 9.—12. Now this *internal illumination* of the minds of men unto the acknowledgment of the truth, can be wrought in them only by the Holy Spirit of God, Eph. i. 17. 18. 19. 2 Cor. iii. 18. None therefore could be the *Prophet* of the church, but he who had power to ſend the Holy Spirit to enable it

to receive his doctrine, by the ſaving illumination of the minds of men. And this alone he could do, whoſe Spirit he is, proceeding from him, whom he therefore frequently promiſed ſo to ſend.

Without a reſpect unto theſe things, we cannot really be made partakers of the ſaving benefits and fruits of the prophetical office of Chriſt. And this we can have only in the exerciſe of faith on his *divine perſon*, which is the eternal ſpring from whence this office derives all life and efficacy.

The command of God in reſpect unto him, as the Prophet of the church, is, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed, hear him.* Unleſs we actually regard him by faith as the only begotten Son of God, we can perform no duty aright in the *hearing of him*, nor ſhall we learn the truth as we ought. Hence it is, that thoſe who deny his *divine perſon*, though they pretend to attend unto him as the teacher of the church, do yet learn no truth from him, but embrace pernicious errors in the ſtead thereof. So it is with the Socinians, and all that follow them. For whereas they ſcarcely own any other office of Chriſt but his *prophetical*, looking on him as a man ſent to teach the mind of God, and to confirm his doctrine by his ſufferings, whereon he was afterwards highly exalted of God, they learn nothing from him in a due manner.

But this reſpect unto the perſon of Chriſt, is that which will ingenerate in us all thoſe holy qualifications that are neceſſary to enable us to know the mind and will of God. For hence do *reverence*, *humility*, *faith*, delight, and aſſurance ariſe and flow, without whoſe continual exerciſe in vain ſhall men hope to learn the will of God by the utmoſt of their endeavours. And the want of theſe things is the cauſe of much of that *lifeleſs*, unſanctified knowledge of the doctrine of the goſpel, which is amongſt many. They learn not the truth from Chriſt, ſo as to expect all teachings from his divine power. Hence they never come to know it, either in its *native beauty*, drawing the ſoul into the love and delight of what they know, nor in its *transforming efficacy*, changing the mind into its own image and likeneſs.

Secondly, The ſame alſo is the ſtate of things, with reſpect

ſpect unto his *kingly office and power*. But this I have at large treated on elſewhere, and that much unto the ſame purpoſe; namely, in the *expoſition of the third verſe of the firſt chapter of the epiſtle unto the Hebrews*. Wherefore, I ſhall not here enlarge upon it.

Some ſeem to imagine, that the *kingly power* of Chriſt, towards the church, conſiſts only in *external rule* by the goſpel and the laws thereof, requiring obedience unto the *officers* and *rulers* that he hath appointed therein. It is true, that this alſo belongs unto his kingly power and rule. But to ſuppoſe that it conſiſteth ſolely therein, is an ebullition from the poiſonous fountain of the denial of his *divine perſon*. For if he be not God over all, whatever in words may be pretended or aſcribed unto him, he is capable of no other rule or power. But indeed no one act of his kingly office can be aright conceived or acknowledged, without a reſpect had unto his *divine perſon*. I ſhall inſtance only unto this purpoſe in two things in general.

1. The *extent of his power and rule* gives evidence hereunto. It is over the *whole creation of God*. *All power is given him in heaven and earth*, Matth. xxviii. 18. *All things are put under his feet, he only excepted who put all things under him*, 1 Cor. xv. 27. And he is made *head over all things unto the church*, Eph. i. 22. Not only thoſe who are above the rule of external law, as the holy angels; and thoſe who have *caſt off* all ſuch rule, as the devils themſelves; but all things that in their own nature are not capable of obedience to an external law or rule, as the whole *inanimate creation*, heaven and earth and the ſea, with all things in them and under them, Phil. ii. 10. with the *dead bodies of men* which he ſhall raiſe at the laſt day.

For this power over the whole creation is not only a *moral right* to rule and govern it; but it is alſo accompanied with *virtue*, *force*, or almighty power to act, order, and diſpoſe of it at his pleaſure. So is it deſcribed by the apoſtle from the Pſalmiſt, Heb. i. 10. 11. 12. *Thou, Lord, in the beginning haſt laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They*

ſhall periſh, but thou remaineſt: and they ſhall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a veſture ſhalt thou fold them up, and they ſhall be changed: but thou art the ſame, and thy years fail not. That power is required unto his kingly office, whereby he created all things in the beginning; and ſhall change them all as a man folds up a veſture, in the end. Omnipotency accompanied with eternity and immutability, are required hereunto.

It is a vain imagination to ſuppoſe that this *power* can reſide in a *mere creature*, however glorified and exalted. All eſſential divine properties are concurrent with it; and inſeparable from it. And where are the properties of God, there is the nature of God; for his being and his properties are one and the ſame.

If the Lord Chriſt as *King* of the church be only a mere man, and be as ſuch only to be conſidered, however he may be exalted and glorified, however he may be endowed with honour, dignity, and authority, yet he cannot put forth or act any *real phyſical power* immediately and directly, but where he is preſent. But this is in heaven only; for the *heavens muſt receive him until the time of the reſtitution of all things*, Acts iii. 21. And hereon his rule and power would be the greateſt diſadvantage unto the church that could befal it. For ſuppoſe it immediately under the rule of God even the Father; his omnipotency and omnipreſence, his omniſcience and infinite wiſdom, whereby he could be always preſent with every one of them, know all their wants, and give immediate relief according to the counſel of his will, was a ſtable foundation for faith to reſt upon, and an everlaſting ſpring of conſolation. But now whereas all power, all judgment, all rule is committed unto the *Son*, and the Father doth nothing towards the church but in and by him, if he have not the ſame divine power and properties with him, the foundation of the church's faith is caſt down, and the ſpring of its conſolation utterly ſtopped up.

I cannot believe in him as my heavenly King, who is not able by himſelf, and by the virtue of his preſence with me, to make what changes and alterations he pleaſeth in the minds of men, and in the whole creation of God,

God, to relieve, preſerve, and deliver me, and to raiſe my body at the laſt day.

To ſuppoſe that the Lord Chriſt as the king and head of the church, hath not an *infinite, divine power*, whereby he is able always to relieve, ſuccour, ſave, and deliver it, if it were to be done by the alteration of the whole, or any part of God's creation, ſo as that the fire ſhould not burn, nor the water overwhelm them, nor men be able to retain their thoughts or ability one moment to afflict them; and that their diſtreſſes are not always *effects* of his wiſdom, and never from the *defect* of his power, is utterly to overthrow all faith, hope, and the whole of religion itſelf.

Aſcribe therefore unto the Lord Chriſt in the exerciſe of his *kingly office*, only *a moral power* operative by rules and laws, with the help of external inſtruments; deprive him of omnipreſence, and omniſcience, with infinite divine power and virtue to be acted at his pleaſure in and over the whole creation, and you raze the foundation of all Chriſtian faith and hope to the ground.

There are no true believers who will part with their faith herein for the whole world; namely, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is able by his *divine power* and preſence immediately to aid, aſſiſt, relieve, and deliver them in every moment of their ſurpriſals, fears and dangers, in every trial or duty they may be called unto, in every difficulty they have to conflict withal. And to expect theſe things any otherwiſe but by virtue of his divine nature, is wofully to deceive our own ſouls. For this is the work of God.

2. The *rule* of Chriſt as king of the church is *internal* and *ſpiritual*, over the minds, ſouls and conſciences of all that do believe. There is no *one gracious acting of ſoul* in any one believer at any time in the whole world, either in oppoſition unto ſin, or the performance of duty, but it is influenced and under the guidance of the kingly power of Chriſt. I ſuppoſe we have herein not only the common faith, but alſo the common ſpiritual ſenſe and experience of them all. They know that in their *ſpiritual life* it is he that liveth in them as the efficient cauſe of all its acts, and that without him they can do nothing. Unto him they have reſpect in every the moſt ſe-

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cret and retired actings of grace, not only performed as *under his eye, but by his assistance;* on every occasion do they immediately in the internal actings of their minds look unto him, as one more present with their souls than they are with themselves; and have no thoughts of the least distance of his knowledge or power. And two things are required hereto.

1*st*, That he be καρδιογνώστης, that he have an actual *inspection* into all the frames, dispositions, thoughts, and internal actings of all believers in the whole world, at all times, and every moment. Without this, he cannot bear that *rule* in their souls and consciences which we have described, nor can they act *faith* in him, as their occasions do require. No man can live by faith on Christ, no man can depend on his sovereign power, who is not persuaded, that all the *frames of his heart*, all the *secret groans and sighs of his spirit*, all the *inward labourings of his soul* against sin, and after conformity to himself, are continually under his eye and cognizance. Wherefore it is said, that *all things are naked and open unto his eyes*, Heb. iv. 13.; and he says of himself, that he *searcheth*, that is, knoweth the *hearts and reins of men*, Rev. ii. 23. And if these things are not the peculiar properties of the divine nature, I know nothing that may be so esteemed.

2*dly*, There is required hereunto, an *influence of power* into all the internal actings of the souls of believers; an intimate efficacious operation with them in every duty, and under every temptation. These all of them, do look for, expect, and receive from him, as the King and Head of the church. This also is an effect of divine and infinite power. And to deny these things unto the Lord Christ, is to raze the foundation of Christian religion. Neither *faith* in him, nor *love* unto him, nor *dependence* on him, nor *obedience* unto his authority, can be preserved one moment, without a persuasion of his immediate *intuition* and inspection into the hearts, minds, and thoughts of all men, with a *real influence* into all the actings of the life of God in all them that believe. And the want of the faith hereof, is that which hath disjoined the minds of many from adherence unto him; and hath produced a lifeless

lifeleſs carcaſe of Chriſtian religion, inſtead of the ſaving power thereof.

Thirdly, The ſame may be ſaid concerning his *ſacerdotal office*, and all the acts of it. It was in and by the *human nature* that he offered himſelf a ſacrifice for us. He had *ſomewhat of his own* to offer, Heb. viii. 3. And to this end a *body was prepared for him*, chap. x. 5. But it was not the work of a man by *one offering*, and that *of himſelf*, to expiate the ſins of the whole church, and for ever to perfect them that are ſanctified, which he did, Heb. x. 14. *God was to purchaſe his church with his own blood*, Acts xx. 28. But this alſo I have ſpoken to at large elſewhere.

This is the ſum of what we plead for. We can have no due conſideration of the *offices* of Chriſt, can receive no benefit by them, nor perform any *act of duty* with reſpect unto them, or any of them, unleſs faith in his divine perſon be actually exerciſed as the foundation of the whole. For that is it, whence all their glory, power, and efficacy are derived. Whatever therefore we do with reſpect unto his *rule*, whatever we receive by the *communication of his Spirit* and grace, whatever we *learn* from his *word* by the teachings of his Spirit, whatever benefit we believe, expect, and receive by his *ſacrifice* and interceſſion on our behalf, our faith in them all, and concerning them all, is terminated on his *divine perſon*. The church is ſaved by his *offices*, becauſe they are *his*. This is the ſubſtance of the teſtimony given concerning him, by God even the Father, 1 John v. 10. 11. *This is the witneſs that God hath teſtified concerning his Son, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* Eternal life is given unto us, as it was wrought out and procured by the mediation of Chriſt on our behalf; but yet *in him* it was originally, and *from him* do we receive it in the diſcharge of his office; for this life is in the Son of God.

Hence it is, that all thoſe by whom the *divine perſon of Chriſt* is denied, are forced to give ſuch a deſcription of his *offices*, as that it is utterly impoſſible that the church ſhould be ſaved by the diſcharge of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The faith of the church under the Old Teſtament, in and concerning the perſon of Chriſt.

A Brief view of the *faith of the church under the Old Teſtament*, concerning the divine perſon of Chriſt, ſhall cloſe theſe diſcourſes, and make way for thoſe that enſue, wherein our own duty with reſpect thereunto ſhall be declared.

That the faith of all believers from the foundation of the world had a *reſpect unto him*, I ſhall afterwards demonſtrate; and to deny it, is to renounce both the Old Teſtament and the New. But that this faith of theirs did principally reſpect *his perſon*, is what ſhall here be declared. Therein they knew was laid the foundation of the counſels of God for their deliverance, ſanctification, and ſalvation: otherwiſe it was but little they clearly underſtood of his *office*, or the way whereby he would redeem the church.

The apoſtle Peter, in the confeſſion he made of him, Matth. xvi. 16. exceeded the faith of *the Old Teſtament* in this, that he applied the promiſe concerning the *Meſſiah*, unto that individual perſon; *Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God:* he that was to be the Redeemer and Saviour of the church. Howbeit Peter then knew little of the way and manner whereby he was principally ſo to be: and therefore when he began to declare them unto his diſciples, namely, that they ſhould be by *his death* and *ſufferings*, he in particular was not able to comply with it, but ſaith he, *Maſter, that be far from thee*, verſ. 22. As *fleſh and blood*, that is, his own reaſon and underſtanding, did not reveal or declare him unto Peter to be the Chriſt, the Son of the living God, but the Father which is in heaven; ſo he ſtood in need of freſh aſſiſtance from the ſame *almighty hand*, to believe that he ſhould redeem and ſave his church by his death. And therefore he did refuſe the external revelation and propoſition of it, though made by Chriſt

Chriſt himſelf, until he received internal aid from above. And to ſuppoſe that we have faith now in Chriſt or his death, on any other terms, is an evidence that we have no faith at all.

Wherefore the faith of the ſaints under the Old Teſtament did principally reſpect the *perſon of Chriſt*, both what it was, and what it was to be in the fulneſs of time, when he was to become the *ſeed of the woman*. What his eſpecial work was to be, and the myſtery of the redemption of the church thereby, they referred unto his own wiſdom and grace; only they believed, that *by him* they ſhould be ſaved from the hand of all their enemies, or all the evil that befel them on the account of the *firſt ſin* and apoſtacy from God.

God gave them indeed *repreſentations* and *prefigurations* of his office and work alſo. He did ſo by the *high prieſt* of the law, the *tabernacle*, with all the ſacrifices and ſervices thereunto belonging. All that Moſes did as a faithful ſervant in the houſe of God, was but a *teſtimony of thoſe things which were afterwards to be declared*, Heb. iii. 5. Howbeit, the apoſtle tells us, that all thoſe things had but a *ſhadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things themſelves*, Heb. x. 1. And although they are now to us full of *light* and inſtruction, evidently expreſſing the principal works of Chriſt's mediation, yet were they not ſo unto them. For the *vail* is now taken off from them in their accompliſhment, and a declaration is made of the counſels of God in them by the goſpel. The meaneſt believer may now find out more of the work of Chriſt, in the *types* of the Old Teſtament, than any *prophets* or *wiſe men* could have done of old. Therefore they always earneſtly longed for their accompliſhment; that the day might break, and the *ſhadows* fly away by the riſing of the Sun of righteouſneſs with healing in his wings. But as unto his *perſon*, they had glorious revelations concerning it, and their faith in him was the life of all their obedience.

The *firſt promiſe*, which eſtabliſhed a new intercourſe between God and man, was concerning his *incarnation*, that he *ſhould be the ſeed of the woman*, Gen. iii. 15. that is, that the Son of God ſhould be *made of a woman, made*

under the law, Gal. iv. 4. From the giving of that promiſe, the faith of the whole church was fixed on him, whom *God would ſend in our nature*, to redeem and ſave them. Other way of acceptance with him there was none provided, none declared, but only by faith in this promiſe. The deſign of God in this promiſe, which was to reveal and propoſe the *only way*, which in his wiſdom and grace he had prepared for the deliverance of mankind from the ſtate of ſin and apoſtacy whereinto they were caſt, with the nature of the faith and obedience of the church, will not admit of *any other way of ſalvation*, but only faith in him who was thus promiſed to be a *Saviour*. To ſuppoſe that men might fall off from faith in God, by the revelation of himſelf in this promiſe, and yet be ſaved by attending to inſtructions given by the *works of creation* and providence, is an imagination that will no longer poſſeſs the minds of men, than whilſt they are ignorant of, or do forget what it is to believe and to be ſaved.

The great promiſe made unto Abraham was, that he ſhould *take his ſeed upon him*, in whom all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed, Gen. xii. 3. chap. xv. 18. chap. xxii. 18. which promiſe is expiained by the apoſtle, and applied unto Chriſt, Gal. iii. 10. Hereon *Abraham believed on the Lord, and it was counted unto him for righteouſneſs*, Gen. xv. 6. For he ſaw the day of Chriſt and rejoiced, John viii. 56.

The faith that Jacob inſtructed his ſons in, was, that *the Shiloh ſhould come, and unto him ſhould be the gathering of the nations*, Gen. xlix. 10. Job's faith was, that his *Redeemer was the living One, and that he ſhould ſtand on the earth in the latter day*, Job xix. 25.

The revelations made unto David principally concerned his *perſon* and the glory thereof; ſee Pſal. ii. xlv. lxviii. lxxii. cx. cxviii. eſpecially Pſal. xlvth and lxxii. compared, which give an account of their apprehenſions concerning him.

The faith of Daniel was, that God would *ſhew mercy for the Lord's ſake*, Dan. ix. 17.; and of all the prophets, that the *Redeemer ſhould come to Sion, and unto them that turn from tranſgreſſion in Jacob*, Iſ. lix. 20.

Of the ſame nature were all his *perſonal appearances* under the Old Teſtament, eſpecially that moſt illuſtrious repreſentation

representation made of him unto the prophet Isaiah, chap. vi. and the glorious revelation of his name, chap. ix. 6.

It is true, that both these and other prophets had revelations concerning his *sufferings* also. For *the Spirit of Christ that was in them testified beforehand of his sufferings, and the glory that should ensue*, 1 Pet. i. 11. an illustrious testimony whereunto we have given us, Psal. xxii. and Is. liii. Nevertheless, their conceptions concerning them were dark and obscure. It was his *person* that their faith principally regarded. Thence were they filled with desires and *expectations* of his coming, or his exhibition and appearance in the flesh. With renewed promises hereof did God continually refresh the church in its straits and difficulties. And hereby did God call off the *body of the people* from trust in themselves, or boasting in their present privileges, which they were exceedingly prone unto.

In process of time, this faith which wrought effectually in the *church of Israel*, degenerated into a *lifeless opinion*, that proved the ruin of it. Whilst they really lived in the faith of him as *the Saviour and Redeemer of the church* from all its spiritual adversaries, as he who was to make *an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness*, unto whom all their present ordinances were subservient and directive; all grace, love, zeal, and patient waiting for the accomplishment of the promise, flourished among them. But in process of time growing carnal, trusting in their *own righteousness, and the privileges* which they had, by the law, theirfaith concerning the *person of Christ* degenerated into a corrupt, obstinate opinion, that he should be only *a temporal king and deliverer*; but as unto righteousness and salvation, they were to trust unto themselves and the law. And this prejudicate opinion being indeed a renunciation of all the grace of the *promises* of God, proved their utter ruin. For when he came in the flesh, after so many ages, filled up with continued expectations, they rejected and *despised him* as one that had neither *form nor comeliness* for which he should be desired. So doth it fall out in other churches. That which was *faith* truly spiritual and *evangelical* in their first planting, becomes a *lifeless opinion* in succeeding

ages. The *ſame truths* are ſtill profeſſed, but that profeſſion ſprings not from the ſame cauſes, nor doth it produce the ſame effects in the hearts and lives of men. Hence in proceſs of time, ſome churches continue to have an appearance of the *ſame body* which they were at firſt, but being examined, are like a *lifeleſs*, *breathleſs* carcaſe; wherein the animating ſpirit of grace doth not dwell. And then is any church, as it was with that of the Jews, nigh to deſtruction, when it corrupts formerly profeſſed truths, to accommodate them unto the preſent luſts and inclinations of men.

CHAP. IX.

Honour due to the perſon of Chriſt; the nature and cauſes of it.

MANY other conſiderations of the ſame natute with thoſe foregoing, relating unto the glory and honour of the *perſon of Chriſt*, may be taken from all the fundamental principles of religion. And our duty it is in them all, to *conſider the Apoſtle and High Prieſt of our profeſſion, the author and finiſher of our faith.* I ſhall not inſiſt on more, but proceed unto thoſe principles of truth, which are immediately directive of our *duty* towards him; without diligent attendance whereunto, we do but in vain bear the name of *Chriſtians*. And the ſubſtance of what is deſigned, may be included in the following aſſertion.

The glory, life, and power of Chriſtian religion, as Chriſtian religion, and as ſeated in the ſouls of men, with all the acts and duties which properly belong thereunto, and are therefore peculiarly Chriſtian, and all the benefits and privileges we receive by it, or by virtue of it, with the whole of the honour and glory that ariſe unto God thereby, have all of them their formal nature and reaſon, from their reſpect and relation unto the perſon of Chriſt; nor is he a Chriſtian who is otherwiſe minded.

In the confirmation hereof, it will appear what judgment ought to be paſſed on that enquiry, which after the uninterrupted

uninterrupted profeſſion of the *catholic church* for ſo many ages of a faith unto the contrary, is begun to be made by ſome amongſt us; namely, *of what uſe is the perſon of Chriſt in religion.* For it proceeds on this ſuppoſition, and is determined accordingly, that there is ſomething in religion wherein the *perſon of Chriſt is of no uſe at all.* A vain imagination, and ſuch as is deſtructive unto the whole real intercourſe between God and man, by the one and only Mediator.

The reſpect which we have in *all acts of religion* unto the perſon of Chriſt, may be reduced unto theſe four heads; (1.) *Honour.* (2.) *Obedience.* (3.) *Conformity.* (4.) *The uſe* we make of him, for the attaining and receiving of all goſpel-privileges, all grace and glory. And hereunto the whole of our religion, as it is *Chriſtian* or *evangelical*, may be reduced.

Firſt, The *perſon of Chriſt is the object of divine honour and worſhip.* The formal object and reaſon hereof is the divine nature, and its *eſſential infinite excellencies.* For they are nothing but that reſpect unto the divine Being, which is due unto it from all rational creatures regulated by revelation, and enforced by divine operations. Wherefore the perſon of Chriſt is primarily the object of divine honour and worſhip, upon the account of his *divine nature* and excellencies. And thoſe who denying that nature in him, do yet pretend to *worſhip him with divine and religious adoration*, do but worſhip a *golden calf* of their own ſetting up; for a Chriſt who is not *over all God bleſſed for ever*, is not better. And it implies a contradiction, that any creature ſhould on any account, be the immediate proper object of divine worſhip; unleſs the divine eſſential excellencies be communicated unto it, or tranſfuſed into it, whereby it would ceaſe to be a creature. For that worſhip is nothing but the *aſcription of divine excellencies* unto what is ſo worſhipped.

But we now conſider the Lord Chriſt, in his whole entire perſon, the Son of God incarnate, *God manifeſt in the fleſh.* His infinite condeſcenſion in the aſſumption of our nature, did no way diveſt him of his divine eſſential excellencies. For a time, they were ſhadowed and vailed thereby, from the eyes of men; when he *made himſelf of*

no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant. But he eternally and unchangeably continued *in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal unto him*, Phil. ii. 6. 7. He can no more really and essentially, by any act of condescension or humiliation, cease to be God, than God can cease to be. Wherefore, his being clothed with our nature, derogates nothing from *the true reason* of divine worship due unto him, but adds an *effectual motive* unto it. He is therefore the immediate object of all duties of religion, internal and external. And in the dispensation of God towards us, none of them can be performed in a due manner without a respect unto him.

This then in the first place is to be confirmed; namely, that all divine honour is due *unto the Son of God incarnate*, that is, the person of Christ.

John v. 23. It is the will of the Father, *That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that sent him.* Some considerations on this divine testimony will confirm our position. It is of the Son incarnate that the words are spoken; as all judgment was committed unto him by the Father, as he was *sent by him*, vers. 22. that is, of the whole person of Christ in the exercise of his mediatory office. And with respect hereunto it is that the mind of God is peculiarly revealed. The will whereby God manifesteth his *will*, that all men should thus *honour the Son*, as they honour the Father, is by committing all power, authority, and judgment unto him, vers. 20. 21. 22. *For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.* Not that these things are the *formal reason* and cause of the divine honour which is to be given him; but they are reasons of it, and motives unto it, in that they are evidences of his being the Son of God.

But it may be said, what need is there that the Father should so interpose an act of his will and sovereign pleasure, as to this *honouring of the Son*, seeing the sole cause

and reaſon of this divine honour is the *divine nature*, which the Son is no leſs partaker of than the Father? I anſwer, (1.) He doth not in this command intend the honour and worſhip of Chriſt abſolutely as God, but *diſtinctly as the Son*, which peculiar worſhip was not known under the Old Teſtament, but was now declared neceſſary in the committing all power, authority, and judgment unto him. This is the *honour* whereof we ſpeak. (2.) He doth it, leſt any ſhould conceive, that *as he was now ſent of the Father*, and that in the *form of a ſervant*, this honour ſhould not be due unto him. And the world was then far from thinking that it was ſo, and many I fear are yet of the ſame mind.

He is therefore to be honoured by us, according to the will of God, καθὼς *in like manner* as we honour the Father. (1.) With the *ſame honour*; that is, divine, ſacred, religious, and ſupreme. To honour the Father with other honour, is to diſhonour him. When men deſign to give glory and honour to God which is not truly divine, it is idolatry. For this honour in truth is nothing but the aſcription of all infinite divine excellencies unto him. Whereon when men aſcribe unto him that which *is not ſo*, they fall into *idolatry* by the worſhip of their own imaginations. So was it with the Iſraelites, when they thought to have given glory to God, by making a *golden calf* whereon they proclaimed a feaſt unto JEHOVAH, Exod. xxxii. 5. And ſo was it with the Heathens in all their images of God, and the glory which they deſigned to give him thereby, as the apoſtle declares, Rom. i. 23. 25. This is one kind of idolatry, as the other is, the aſcribing unto creatures, any thing that is proper and peculiar unto God, any divine excellency. And we do not honour *God the Father* with one kind of honour, and the Son with another. That were not to honour the Son καθὼς *as* we honour the Father, but in a way infinitely different from it. (2.) In the *ſame manner*, with the ſame faith, love, reverence, and obedience, always, in all things, in all acts and duties of religion whatever.

This *diſtinct honour* is to be given unto the perſon of the Son by virtue of this command of the Father, though originally on the account of his *oneneſs* in nature with the Father.

Father. And our duty herein is preſſed with the higheſt enforcement; *He that honcurs not the Son, honours not the Father. He who denieth the Son* (herein), *hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father alſo,* 1 John ii. 23. *For this is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life: and this life is in the Son. He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life,* chap. v. 11. 12. If we are wanting herein, whatever we pretend, we do not worſhip nor honour God at all.

And there is reaſon to give this caution; reaſon to fear that this great fundamental principle of our religion, is, if not *diſbelieved,* yet not *much attended unto* in the world. Many who profeſs a reſpect unto the *divine Being,* and the worſhip thereof, ſeem to have little regard unto the *perſon of the Son* in all their religion. For although they may admit of a cuſtomary interpoſition of his name in their religious worſhip; yet the ſame diſtinct veneration of him as of the Father, they ſeem not to underſtand, or to be exerciſed in. Howbeit all the acceptance of our perſons and duties with God, depends on this one condition, *That we honour the Son, even as we honour the Father.* To honour the Son as we ought to honour the Father, is that which makes us Chriſtians, and which nothing elſe will ſo do.

This honour of the perſon of Chriſt may be conſidered in the *duties* of it, wherein it doth conſiſt; and in the *principle,* life, or ſpring of theſe duties.

The duties whereby we aſcribe and expreſs divine honour unto Chriſt, may be reduced unto two heads. (1.) *Adoration.* (2.) *Invocation.*

1*ſt*, Adoration *is the proſtration of ſoul before him as God, in the acknowledgment of his divine excellencies, and the aſcription of them unto him.* It is expreſſed in the Old Teſtament by השתחוה, that is, *humbly to bow down* ourſelves or our ſouls unto God. The LXX renders it conſtantly by προσκυνέω; which is the word uſed in the New Teſtament unto the ſame purpoſe. The *Latins* expreſſed it uſually by *adoro.* And thoſe words, though of other derivations, are of the ſame ſignification with that in the Hebrew; and they do all of them include ſome *ex-*

ternal

ternal sign of inward reverence, or a readiness thereunto. Hence is that expression, *He bowed down his head and worshipped.* See Psal. xcv. 6. And these *external signs* are of two sorts. (1) Such as are *natural* and occasional. (2.) Such as are *solemn*, stated or instituted. Of the first sort are the lifting up of our eyes and hands towards heaven upon our thoughts of him; and sometimes the casting down of our whole persons before him, which deep thoughts with reverence will produce. *Outward instituted signs* of this internal adoration are all the *ordinances of evangelical worship.* In and by them do we solemnly profess and express our inward veneration of him. Other ways may be invented to the same purpose, but the scripture knows them not, yea condemns them. Such are the veneration and adoration of the pretended *images* of him, and of the *host*, as they call it, among the *Papists.*

This *adoration* is due continually to the person of Christ, and that as in the exercise of the office of mediation. It is due unto him from the whole rational creation of God. So is it given in charge unto the angels above. For when he brought the First-begotten into the world, he said, προσκυνησάτωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ, (that is, לו כל אלהים השתחוה *worship him, all ye gods*, Psal. xcvii. 7.) *Let all the angels of God worship him*, adore him, bow down before him, Heb. i. 6. See our exposition of that place; the design of the whole chapter being to express the divine honour that is due unto the person of Christ, with the grounds thereof. This is the command given also unto the church: *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him*, Psal. xlv. 11.

A glorious representation hereof, whether in the church above, or in that militant here on the earth, is given us, Rev. v. 6. — 14. *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every*

one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of ſaints. And they ſung a new ſong, ſaying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us unto God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt-made us unto our God kings and prieſts: and we ſhall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beaſts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands; ſaying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and ſuch as are in the ſea, and all that are in them, heard I, ſaying, Bleſſing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beaſts ſaid Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worſhipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

The eſpecial *object* of divine adoration, the *motives* unto it, and the *nature* of it, or what it conſiſteth in, are here declared.

1. The *object* of it is Chriſt, not *ſeparately*, but *diſtinctly* from the Father, and jointly with him. And he is propoſed, (1.) As having fulfilled the work of his mediation in his incarnation and oblation; as a *Lamb ſlain.* (2.) In his glorious exaltation, *in the midſt of the throne of God.* The principal thing that the Heathen of old obſerved concerning Chriſtian religion, was that in it, *Praiſes were ſung to Chriſt as unto God.*

2. The *motives* unto this adoration are the unſpeakable benefits which we receive by his mediation; *Thou art worthy, for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us unto God,* &c.

Hereon the *ſame* glory, the *ſame* honour is aſcribed unto him as unto God the Father; *Bleſſing, honour, glory* and *power*, be unto him that ſits on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

3. The *nature* of this adoration is deſcribed to conſiſt in three things. (1.) *Solemn proſtration.* And *the four living*

ving creatures ſaid, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worſhipped him that liveth for ever and ever. So alſo is it deſcribed, chap. iv. 10 11 (2.) In the *aſcription of all divine honour and glory*, as is at large expreſſed, ver. 11. 12. 13. (3.) In the way of expreſſing the deſign of their ſouls in this adoration which is by their praiſes; *they ſung a new ſong*; that is, of praiſe, for ſo are all thoſe *pſalms* which have that title of a *new ſong*. And in theſe things, namely, ſolemn proſtration of ſoul in the acknowledgement of divine excellencies, aſcriptions of glory and honour with praiſe, doth religious adoration conſiſt. And they belong not unto the great holy ſociety of them who worſhip above and here below, whoſe hearts are not always ready unto this ſolemn *adoration of the Lamb*, and who are not on all occaſions exerciſed therein.

And this adoration of Chriſt doth differ from the adoration of God abſolutely conſidered, and of God as the Father, not in its *nature*, but merely on the account of its *eſpecial motives*. The principal motive unto the adoration of *God abſolutely conſidered*, is the work of creation, the manifeſtation of his glory therein, with all the effects of his power and goodneſs thereon enſuing. So it is declared, Rev. iv. 8. 9. 10. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are, and were created.* And the principal motive unto the adoration and worſhip of God *as the Father*, is that *eternal love*, grace and goodneſs, which he is the fountain of in a peculiar manner, Eph. i. 4. 5. But the great *motive* unto the adoration of Chriſt is the *work of redemption*, Rev. v. 12. *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing.* The reaſon whereof is given, ver. 9. 10. *For thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us unto God by thy blood, and haſt made us unto our God kings and prieſts.* The adoration is the ſame, ver. 13. *Bleſſing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for evermore.* But the immediate *motives* of it are different, as its objects are diſtinct.

Herein no ſmall part of the life of Chriſtian religion

doth conſiſt. The humbling of our ſouls before the Lord Chriſt, from an apprehenſion of his divine excellencies, the aſcription of glory, honour, praiſe, with thankſgiving unto him, on the great motive of the work of redemption, with the bleſſed effects thereof, are things wherein the life of faith is continually exerciſed. Nor can we have any evidence of an intereſt in that bleſſedneſs which conſiſts in the eternal aſſignation of all glory and praiſe unto him in heaven, if we are not exerciſed unto this worſhip of him, here on earth.

2*dly*, *Invocation* is the ſecond general branch of *divine honour*, of that honour which is due and paid unto the Son, as unto the Father. This is the firſt exerciſe of divine faith, the breath of the ſpiritual life. And it conſiſteth in two things, or hath two parts. (1.) An *aſcription* of all divine properties and excellencies unto him whom we invocate. This is eſſential unto prayer, which without it is but vain babling. Whoever cometh unto God hereby, muſt believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him. (2.) There is in it alſo a *repreſentation* of our wills, affections and deſires of our ſouls unto him on whom we call, with an expectation of being heard and relieved, by virtue of his infinitely divine excellencies. This is the proper acting of faith with reſpect unto ourſelves; and hereby it is our duty to give honour unto the perſon of Chriſt.

When he himſelf died in the fleſh, he committed his departing ſoul by *ſolemn invocation* into the hands of his Father, Pſal. xxxi. 5. Luke xxiii. 4. *Father, into thy hands I commit my ſpirit.* And to evidence that it is the will of God, that we ſhould honour the Son, as we honour the Father, even as the Son himſelf in his human nature, who is our example, honoured the Father; he who firſt died in the faith of the goſpel, bequeathed his departing ſoul into the hands of *Jeſus Chriſt* by *ſolemn invocation*, Acts vii. 59. *They ſtoned Stephen,* ἐπικαλούμενον, *ſolemnly invocating, and ſaying, Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit.* And having by faith and prayer, left his own ſoul ſafe in the hand of the Lord Jeſus, he adds one petition more unto him, wherewith he died, *Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge*, ver. 60. Herein did he give divine honour

nour unto Chriſt in the eſpecial *invocation* of his name, in the higheſt inſtances that can be conceived. In his firſt requeſt wherein he committed his departing ſoul into his hands, he aſcribed unto him divine omniſcience, omnipreſence, love and power. And in the latter for his enemies, divine authority and mercy to be exerciſed in the pardon of ſin. In his example is the rule eſtabliſhed, for the eſpecial invocation of Chriſt for the effects of divine power and mercy.

Hence the apoſtle deſcribeth the *church* or believers, and diſtinguiſheth it, or them, from all others, by the diſcharge of this duty, 1 Cor. i. 2. *With all that call on the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, both their Lord and ours.* To call on the name of the Lord Jeſus expreſſeth ſolemn invocation in the way of religious worſhip. The Jews did call on the name of God. All others in their way called on the names of their gods. This is that whereby the church is diſtinguiſhed from them all; *it calls on the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

He requires, that as we *believe on God*, that is, the Father, ſo we ſhould *believe on him alſo*, and therein honour the Son, as we honour the Father, John xiv. 1. The nature of this faith, and the manner how it is exerciſed on Chriſt, we ſhall declare afterwards. But the apoſtle treating of the nature and efficacy of this invocation, affirms that we *cannot call on him in whom we have not believed*, Rom. x. 14. Whence it follows on the contrary, that he on whom we *are bound to believe*, *on him* it is our duty to call. So the whole ſcripture is cloſed with a prayer of the church unto the Lord Chriſt, expreſſing their faith in him; *Even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus*, Rev. xxii. 20.

There is not any one reaſon of prayer, not any one motive unto it, not any conſideration of its uſe or efficacy, but render this *peculiar invocation of Chriſt* a neceſſary duty. Two things in general are required to render the duty of invocation lawful and uſeful. Firſt, that it have a proper *object*; ſecondly, that it have prevalent *motives* and encouragements unto it. Theſe in concurrence are the formal reaſon and ground of all religious worſhip in general, and of prayer in particular. So are they laid down as the foundation of all religion, Exod. xx. 2. 3. *I*

am the Lord thy God, that is, the proper object of all religious worſhip; *which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage*, which being ſummarily and typically repreſentative of all divine benefits, temporal, ſpiritual and eternal, is the great motive thereunto. The want of both theſe in all mere creatures, ſaints and angels, makes the invocation of them, not only uſeleſs, but idolatrous. But they both eminently concur in the perſon of Chriſt, and his actings towards us. All the perfections of the divine nature are in him, whence he is the proper object of religious invocation. On this account when he acted in and towards the church, as the great *Angel of the covenant*, God inſtructed the people unto all religious obſervance of him, and obedience unto him, Exod. xxiii. 21. *Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions: for my name is in him.* Becauſe the name of God was in him, that is, the divine nature with ſovereign authority to puniſh or pardon ſin, therefore was all religious obedience due unto him. And no motives are wanting hereunto. All that the Lord Chriſt hath done for us, and all the principles of love, grace, compaſſion, and power from whence what he hath ſo done did proceed, are all of this nature. And they are accompanied with the encouragement of his relation unto us, and charge concerning us. Take away this duty, and the peculiar advantage of Chriſtian religion is deſtroyed.

We have lived to ſee the utmoſt *extremes* that Chriſtian religion can divert into. Some with all earneſtneſs deſpreſs *the formal invocation of ſaints and angels* as our duty. And ſome will not grant that it is *lawful* for us ſo to call on Chriſt himſelf.

The Socinians grant generally that it is *lawful* for us to call on Chriſt; but they deny that it is *our duty* at any time ſo to do. But as they own that it is not *our duty* ſo on their principles it cannot be *lawful*. Denying his divine perſon, they leave him not the proper object of prayer. For prayer without an aſcription of divine excellencies, as omniſcience, omnipreſence, and almighty power unto him whom we invocate, is but vain babbling that hath nothing of the nature of true prayer in it. And

to make ſuch aſcriptions unto him who by nature is not God, is idolatrous.

The ſolemn *ordinary worſhip* of the church, and ſo of private believers, in their families and cloſets, is under an eſpecial directory and guidance. For *the perſon of the Father*, as the eternal fountain of power, grace and mercy, is the formal object of our prayers, unto whom our ſupplications are directed. The divine nature abſolutely conſidered, is the object of natural worſhip and invocation: but it is the ſame divine nature in the perſon of the Father, that is the proper object of evangelical worſhip and invocation. So our Saviour hath taught us to call on God under the name and notion of a Father, Matth. vi. 9. that is, his God, and our God, his Father, and our Father, John xx. 17. And this invocation is to be, by and in the name of the Son Jeſus Chriſt, through the aid of the Holy Spirit. He is herein conſidered as the *Mediator* between God and man, as the Holy Ghoſt is he by whom ſupplies of grace enabling us unto the acceptable performance of our duties, are actually communicated unto us. This is the way whereby God will be glorified. This is the myſtery of our religion, that we worſhip God according to the *oeconomy* of his wiſdom and grace, wherein he doth diſpenſe of himſelf unto us in the perſons of the Father, Son, and Spirit. Otherwiſe he will not be honoured or worſhipped by us. And thoſe who in their worſhip or invocation do attempt an approach unto the divine nature as abſolutely conſidered, without reſpect unto the diſpenſation of God in the diſtinct perſons of the Holy Trinity, do reject the myſtery of the goſpel, and all the benefits of it. So is it with many. And not a few, who pretend a great devotion unto God, do ſupply other things into the room of Chriſt, as *ſaints and angels*, rejecting alſo the aids of the Spirit to comply with imaginations of their own, whoſe aſſiſtance herein they more approve of.

But this is the nature and method of ordinary ſolemn evangelical invocation. So it is declared, Eph. ii. 18. *Through him we have an acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father.* It is the Father unto whom we have our acceſs, whom we peculiarly invocate; as it is expreſſed, chap. iii. 14. 15. 16. *For this cauſe I bow my knees unto the Fa-*

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ther of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, &c. But it is *through him*, that is, by Chriſt in the exerciſe of his mediatory office, that we have this acceſs unto the Father; we aſk in his name, and for his ſake, John xiv. 13. 14. chap. xvi. 23. 24. They did ſo of old, though not in that expreſs exerciſe of faith which we now attain unto, Dan. ix. 17. *Hear, O Lord, and have mercy for the Lord's ſake.* All this are we enabled unto by *one Spirit*; through the aids and aſſiſtance of the Spirit of grace and ſupplication, Rom. viii. 26. 27. So that prayer is our crying, *Abba, Father, by the Spirit of the Son*, Gal. iv. 6. This is farther declared, Heb. iv. 15. 16. chap. x. 19. 20. Herein is the Lord Chriſt conſidered not abſolutely with reſpect unto his divine perſon, but with reſpect unto his office, that *through him our faith and hope might be in God*, 1 Pet. i. 20.

Wherefore it being our duty, as hath been proved, *to invocate the name of Chriſt* in a particular manner, and this being the ordinary ſolemn way of the worſhip of the church, we may conſider on what occaſions, and in what ſeaſons this *peculiar invocation of Chriſt*, who in his divine perſon is both our God and our Advocate, is neceſſary for us, and moſt acceptable unto him.

1. Times of great *diſtreſſes in conſcience through temptations and deſertions*, are ſeaſons requiring an application unto Chriſt by *eſpecial invocation*. Perſons in ſuch conditions, when their ſouls, as the pſalmiſt ſpeaks, are *overwhelmed in them*, are continually ſolicitous about *compaſſion and deliverance*. Some relief, ſome refreſhment they often find in pity and compaſſion from them who either have been in the ſame condition themſelves, or by ſcripture-light do know the terror of the Lord in theſe things. When their complaints are deſpiſed, and their troubles aſcribed unto other cauſes than what they are really ſenſible of and feel within themſelves, as is commonly done by *phyſicians of no value*, it is an aggravation of their diſtreſs and ſorrow. And they greatly value every ſincere endeavour for relief, either by counſel or prayer. In this ſtate and condition the Lord Chriſt in the goſpel is propoſed as full of *tender compaſſion*, as he alone who is able to relieve

relieve them. In that himſelf hath ſuffered being tempted, he is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and knows how to have compaſſion on them that are out of the way, Heb. ii. 18. chap. iv. 15. chap. v. 6. So is he alſo, as he alone who is able to ſuccour, to relieve and to deliver them. *He is able to ſuccour them that are tempted,* Heb. ii 18. Hereon are they drawn, conſtrained, encouraged to make applications unto him by prayer, that he would deal with them according to his compaſſion and power. This is a ſeaſon rendering the diſcharge of this duty neceſſary. And hereby have innumerable ſouls found conſolation, refreſhment, and deliverance. A time of trouble is a time of the eſpecial exerciſe of faith in Chriſt. So himſelf gives direction, John xiv. 1. *Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* Diſtinct actings of faith on Chriſt, are the great means of ſupportment and relief in trouble. And it is by eſpecial invocation, whereby they put forth and exert themſelves.

An inſtance hereof as unto temptation, and the diſtreſs wherewith it is attended, we have in the apoſtle Paul. He had a *thorn in the fleſh, a meſſenger of Satan* to buffet him. Both expreſſions declare the deep ſenſe he had of his temptation, and the perplexity wherewith it was accompanied. *For this cauſe he beſought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him,* 2 Cor. xii. 7. 8. He applied himſelf ſolemnly unto prayer for its removal, and that frequently. And it was the Lord, that is, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto whom he made his application. For ſo the name *Lord* is to be interpreted, if there be nothing contrary in the context, as the name of God, is of the Father, by virtue of that rule, 1 Cor. viii. 6. 7. *To us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And it is evident alſo in the context. The anſwer he received unto his prayer was, *My grace is ſufficient for thee, for my power is made perfect in weakneſs.* And whoſe power that was, who gave him that anſwer, he declares in the next words: *Moſt gladly therefore will I glory in my weakneſs, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon me,* that is, the power of him on whom he called who gave him that anſwer, *my power is made perfect in weakneſs.*

2. Times of *gracious diſcoveries* either of the glory of Chriſt in himſelf, or of his love unto us, are ſeaſons that call for this duty. The glory of Chriſt in his perſon and offices is always the ſame. And the revelation that is made of it in the ſcripture varieth not. But as unto our perception and apprehenſion of it, whereby our hearts and minds are affected with it in an eſpecial manner, there are apparent ſeaſons of it, which no believers are unacquainted withal. Sometimes ſuch a ſenſe of it is attained under the diſpenſation of the word, wherein as Chriſt on the one hand *is ſet forth evidently crucified before our eyes*, ſo on the other he is glorioufly exalted. Sometimes it is ſo in prayer, in meditation, in contemplation on him. As an ability was given unto the bodily ſight of Stephen, to ſee upon the opening of the heavens, the *glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at his right hand*, Acts vii. 56. 57.; ſo he opens the vail ſometimes, and gives a clear affecting diſcovery of his glory unto the minds and ſouls of believers: and in ſuch ſeaſons are they drawn forth and excited unto invocation and praiſe. So Thomas being ſurpriſed with an apprehenſion and evidence of his divine glory and power after his reſurrection, (wherein he was declared to be the Son of God with power, Rom. i. 4. cried unto him, *My Lord and my God*, John xx. 28.); there was in his words both a profeſſion of his own faith, and a ſolemn invocation of Chriſt. When therefore we have real diſcoveries of the glory of Chriſt, we cannot but ſpeak to him, or of him. *Theſe things ſaid Iſaiah, when he ſaw his glory, and ſpake of him*, John xii. 41. And Stephen upon a view of it in the midſt of his enraged enemies, teſtified immediately, *I ſee the heavens opened, and the Son of man ſtanding at the right hand of God.* And thereby was he prepared for that *ſolemn invocation* of his name, which he uſed preſently after, *Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit*, Acts vii. 56. 59. And ſo alſo upon his appearance as the *Lamb* to open the book of prophecies, wherein there was an eminent manifeſtation of his glory, ſeeing none elſe could be found in heaven or earth, or under the earth, that was able to open the book, or ſo much as to look thereon, Rev. v. 3. *the four and twenty elders fell down before him*, and preſenting all the prayers

ers of the ſaints, *ſang a new ſong of praiſe unto him*, verſ. 8. 9. 10. This is our duty, this will be our wiſdom, upon affecting diſcoveries of the *glory of Chriſt*; namely, to apply ourſelves unto him by invocation or praiſe; and thereby will the refreſhment and advantage of them abide upon our minds.

So is it alſo as unto his *love*. The love of Chriſt is always the ſame and equal unto the church. Howbeit there are peculiar ſeaſons of the manifeſtation and application of a ſenſe of it unto the ſouls of believers. So it is when it is *witneſſed* unto them, or *ſhed abroad* in their hearts by the Holy Ghoſt. Then is it accompanied with a *conſtraining power*, to oblige us to live unto him who died for us, and roſe again, 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. And of our ſpiritual life unto *Chriſt*, *invocation* of him is no ſmall portion. And this ſenſe of his love we might enjoy more frequently than for the moſt part we do, were we not ſo much wanting unto ourſelves and our own concerns. For although it be an act of ſovereign grace in God, to grant it unto us, and affect us with it, as it ſeems good unto him; yet is our duty required to diſpoſe our hearts unto its reception. Were we diligent in caſting out all that *filthineſs and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs*, which corrupts our affections, and diſpoſes the mind to abound in vain imaginations; were our hearts more taken off from the love of the world, which is excluſive of a ſenſe of divine love; did we more meditate on Chriſt and his glory, we ſhould more frequently enjoy theſe *conſtraining* viſits of his love than now we do. So himſelf expreſſeth it, Rev. iii. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and ſup with him, and he with me.* He makes intimation of his love and kindneſs unto us. But oft-times we neither hear his voice when he ſpeaks, nor do open our hearts unto him. So do we loſe that gracious refreſhing ſenſe of his love which he expreſſeth in that promiſe, *I will ſup with him, and he ſhall ſup with me.* No tongue can expreſs that heavenly communion and bleſſed intercourſe which is intimated in this promiſe. The expreſſion is *metaphorical*, but the grace expreſſed is *real*, and more valued than the whole world, by all that have

experience of it. This ſenſe of the love of Chriſt, and the effect of it in communion with him, by prayer and praiſes, is divinely ſet forth in the book of Canticles. The church therein is repreſented as the *ſpouſe* of Chriſt; and as a faithful ſpouſe ſhe is always either ſolicitous about his love, or rejoicing in it. And when ſhe hath attained a ſenſe of it, ſhe aboundeth in invocation, admiration and praiſe. So doth the church of the New Teſtament upon an apprehenſion of his *love*, and the unſpeakable fruits of it. *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 for ever and ever, Amen*, Rev. i. 5. 6. This therefore is another ſeaſon that calls for this duty.

3. *Times of perſecution for his name's ſake, and for the profeſſion of the goſpel*, are another ſeaſon rendering this peculiar invocation of Chriſt both comely and neceſſary. Two things will befal the minds of believers in ſuch a ſeaſon. (1.) That their thoughts will be greatly exerciſed *about him*, and converſant with him. They cannot but continually think and meditate on *him* for whom they ſuffer. None ever ſuffered *perſecution* on juſt grounds, with ſincere ends, and in a due manner, but it was ſo with them. The invincible reaſons they have to ſuffer for him, taken from his perſon, love, grace and authority, from what he is in himſelf, what he hath done for them, and what account of all things is to be given unto him, do continually preſent themſelves unto their minds. Wilderneſſes, priſons and dungeons have been filled with thoughts of Chriſt and his love. And many in former and later ages have given an account of their communion and holy intercourſe with the Lord Chriſt under their reſtraints and ſufferings. And thoſe who at any time have made an *entrance into ſuch a condition*, will all of them give in the teſtimony of their own experience in this matter. (2.) Such perſons have deep and fixed apprehenſions of the *eſpecial concernment* which the Lord Chriſt hath in them as unto their preſent condition; as alſo of his *power* to ſupport them, or to work out their deliverance. They know and conſider, *That in all their afflictions,*

afflictions, he is afflicted, ſuffers in all their ſufferings, is perſecuted in all their perſecutions. That in them all he is full of love, pity and unſpeakable compaſſion towards them; that his grace is ſufficient for them, that his power ſhall be perfected in their weakneſs, to carry them through all their ſufferings unto his and their own glory. In theſe circumſtances, it is impoſſible for them who are under the conduct of his Spirit, not to make *eſpecial applications* continually unto him, for thoſe aids of grace, for thoſe pledges of love and mercy, for thoſe ſupplies of conſolation and ſpiritual refreſhments which their condition calls for. Wherefore in this ſtate, the *invocation of Chriſt* is the refuge and ſheet-anchor of the ſouls of them who truly believe in him. So it was unto all the holy martyrs of old, and in latter ages.

This doctrine and duty is not for them who *are at eaſe.* The afflicted, the tempted, the perſecuted, the ſpiritually diſconſolate will prize it, and be found in the practice of it. And all thoſe holy ſouls, who in moſt ages, on the account of the profeſſion of the goſpel, have been reduced unto *outwardly unrelieveable diſtreſſes,* have, as was ſaid, left their teſtimony unto this duty, and the benefits of it. The refreſhment which they found therein, was a ſufficient balance againſt the weight of all outward calamities, enabling them to rejoice under them with *joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* This is the church's reſerve againſt all the trials it may be exerciſed withal, and all the dangers whereunto it is expoſed. Whilſt believers have liberty of acceſs *unto him* in their ſupplications, who hath all power in his hand, who is full of ineffable love and compaſſion towards them, eſpecially as ſuffering for his ſake, they are *more than conquerors* in all their tribulations.

4. *When we have a due apprehenſion of the eminent actings of any grace in Chriſt Jeſus, and withal a deep and abiding ſenſe of our own want of the ſame grace,* it is a ſeaſon of eſpecial application unto him by prayer for the increaſe of it. All graces as unto their habit were *equal* in Chriſt; they were all in him in the higheſt degree of perfection. And every one of them did he exerciſe in its due manner and meaſure on all juſt occaſions. But outward cauſes and circumſtances, gave *opportunity* unto the exerciſe of

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ſome of them, in a way more eminent and conſpicuous than others were exerciſed in. For inſtance; ſuch were his unſpeakeable condeſcenſion, ſelf-denial, and patience in ſufferings, which the apoſtle unto this purpoſe inſiſts upon, Phil. ii. 5. 6. 7. 8. Now the great deſign of all believers is to be like Jeſus Chriſt, in all grace, and all the exerciſe of it. He is in all things their pattern and example. Wherefore when they have a view of the glory of any grace as it was exerciſed in Chriſt, and withal a ſenſe of their own defect and want therein, (conformity unto him being their deſign), they cannot but apply themſelves unto him in *ſolemn invocation*, for a farther communication of that grace unto them, from his ſtores and fulneſs. And theſe things mutually promote one another in us if duly attended unto. A due ſenſe of *our own defect* in any grace, will farther us in the proſpect of the *glory of that grace* in Chriſt. And a view, a due contemplation of the glorious exerciſe of *any grace in him*, will give us light to diſcover our own *great defect* therein, and want thereof. Under a ſenſe of both, an immediate application unto Chriſt by prayer, would be an unſpeakable furtherance of our growth in grace, and conformity unto him. Nor can there be any more effectual way or means to *draw ſupplies of grace* from him, to draw water from the wells of ſalvation. When in an holy admiration of, and fervent love unto any grace as eminently exerciſed in and by him, with a ſenſe of our own want of the ſame grace, we aſk it of him in faith, he will not deny it unto us. So the diſciples upon the preſcription of a difficult duty, unto whoſe due performance a good meaſure of *faith* was required; out of a ſenſe of the *all-fulneſs* of him, and their own defect in that grace which was neceſſary unto the peculiar duty there preſcribed, immediately pray unto him, ſaying, *Lord, increaſe our faith*, Luke xvii. 5. The ſame is the caſe with reſpect unto any temptation that may befal us, wherewith he was exerciſed, and over which he prevailed.

5. The *time of death, whether natural, or violent for his ſake*, is a ſeaſon of the ſame nature. So Stephen recommended his departing ſoul into his hands with ſolemn prayer; *Lord Jeſus*, ſaid he, *receive my ſpirit*. To the

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ſame purpoſe have been the prayers of many of his faithful martyrs in the flames, and under the ſword. In the ſame manner doth the faith of innumerable holy ſouls work in the midſt of their deathbed groans. And the more we have been in the exerciſe of faith on him in our lives, the more ready will it bé in the approaches of death, to make its reſort unto him in a peculiar manner.

And it may be other inſtances of an alike nature may be given unto the ſame purpoſe.

An anſwer unto an inquiry which may poſſibly ariſe from what we have inſiſted on, ſhall cloſe this diſcourſe. For whereas the Lord Jeſus Chriſt *as Mediator* doth intercede with the Father for us, it may be inquired, *whether we may pray unto him, that he would ſo intercede on our behalf*; whether this be comprized in the duty of invocation, or prayer unto him.

Anſw. (1.) There is no *preſident* nor *example* of any ſuch thing, of any ſuch prayer in the ſcripture. And it is not ſafé for us to venture on duties not *exemplified* therein. Nor can any inſtance of a neceſſary duty be given, of whoſe performance we have not an *example* in the ſcripture. (2.) In the invocation of Chriſt, we *honour the Son, even as we honour the Father.* Wherefore his divine perſon is therein the formal object of our faith. We conſider him not therein as acting in his *mediatory office* towards God for us, but as he who hath the abſolute power and diſpoſal of all the good things we pray for. And in our invocation of him, our faith is fixed on him, and terminated on his perſon. But as he is in the *diſcharge of his mediatory office*, through him *our faith and hope is in God*, 1 Pet. i. 21. He who is the Mediator, or Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, as God and man in one perſon, is the object of all divine honour and worſhip. His perſon, and both his natures in that perſon, is ſo the object of religious worſhip. This is that which we are in the proof and demonſtration of. Howbeit it is his *divine nature*, and not his diſcharge of the office of mediation, that is the *formal reaſon* and object of divine worſhip. For it conſiſts in an aſcription of infinitely divine excellencies and properties unto him whom we ſo worſhip. And to do this on any account but of the *divine nature*, is in itſelf a contradiction, and in them that do it *idolatry*.

Had

Had the Son of God never been *incarnate*, he had been the object of all divine worship. And could there have been a mediator between God and us, who was not God also, he could never have been the object of any divine worship or invocation. Wherefore Christ the Mediator, God and man in one person, is in all things to be honoured, even as we honour the Father; but it is as he is *God equal with the Father*, and not *as* Mediator, in which respect he is inferior unto him. With respect unto his divine, person we ask immediately of himself in our supplications; as he is Mediator, we ask of the Father in his name. The different actings of faith on him, under the same distinction, shall be declared in the next chapter.

CHAP. X.

The principle of the assignation of divine honour unto the person of Christ, in both the branches of it; which is faith in him.

THE principle and spring of this assignation of divine honour unto Christ in both the branches of it, is *faith* in him. And this hath been the foundation of all acceptable religion in the world since the entrance of sin. There are some who deny *that faith in Christ* was *required from the beginning*, or was necessary unto the worship of God, or the justification and salvation of them that did obey him. For whereas it must be granted, that *without faith it is impossible to please God*, which the apostle proves by instances from the foundation of the world, Heb. xi. they suppose it is faith in God under the general notion of it, without any respect unto Christ, that is intended. It is not my design to contend with any, nor expressly to confute such ungrateful opinions, such pernicious errors. Such this is, which being pursued in its proper tendency, strikes at the very foundation of Christian religion. For it at once deprives us of all contribution of light and truth from the Old Testament. Somewhat I have spoken before of the faith of the saints of old concerning him. I shall now therefore only confirm the truth, by some *principles* which are fundamental in the faith of the gospel.

1. The

1. The firſt promiſe, Gen. iii. 15. truly called Πρωτευαγγέλιον, was revealed, propoſed, and given, as containing and expreſſing the only means of delivery from that apoſtaſy from God, with all the effects of it, under which our firſt parents, and all their poſterity were caſt by ſin. The *deſtruction of Satan* and his work in his introduction of the ſtate of ſin, by a *Saviour* and *deliverer*, was prepared and provided for, in it. This is the very foundation of the faith of the church, and if it be denied, nothing of the *oeconomy* or diſpenſation of God towards it from the beginning can be underſtood. The whole doctrine and ſtory of the Old Teſtament muſt be rejected as uſeleſs, and no foundation be left in the *truth of God*, for the introduction of the new.

2. It was the *perſon of Chriſt*, his incarnation and mediation, that were promiſed under the name of the *ſeed of the woman*, and the work he ſhould do in *breaking the head of the ſerpent*, with the way whereby he ſhould do it, *in ſuffering*, by his power. The accompliſhment hereof was in God's ſending his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, in the fulneſs of time, made under the law, or by his manifeſtation in the fleſh, to deſtroy the works of the devil. So is this promiſe interpreted, Gal. iii. 10. chap. iv. 4. Heb. ii. 14. 15. 16. 1 John iii. 8.

This cannot be denied but upon one of theſe two grounds.

(1.) That nothing is intended in that divine revelation, but only a *natural enmity* that is between mankind and ſerpents. But this is ſo fooliſh an imagination, that the Jews themſelves, who conſtantly refer this place to the *Meſſiah*, are not guilty of. All the whole truth concerning God's diſpleaſure on the ſin of our firſt parents, with what concerneth the nature and conſequents of that ſin, is everted hereby. And whereas the foundation of all God's future dealing with them and their poſterity is plainly expreſſed herein, it is turned into that which is *ludicrous*, and of very little concernment in human life. For ſuch is the *enmity* between mankind and ſerpents, which not one in a million know any thing of, or are troubled with. This is but to lay the *axe of atheiſm* unto all religion built on divine revelation. Beſides, on this ſuppoſition there is in the words not the leaſt intimation

of any relief, that God tendered unto our parents for *their delivery* from the ſtate and condition whereinto they had caſt themſelves by their ſin and apoſtaſy. Wherefore they muſt be eſteemed to be left abſolutely under the *curſe*, as the angels were that fell, which is to root all religion out of the world. For amongſt them who are abſolutely under the curſe without any remedy, there can be no more than is in hell. Or,

(2.) It muſt be, becauſe *ſome other way of deliverance and ſalvation*, and not that by Chriſt, is here propoſed and promiſed. But whereas they were to be wrought by the *ſeed of the woman*, if this were not that Chriſt in whom we do believe, there was another promiſed, and he is to be rejected And this is fairly at once to blot out the whole ſcripture as a fable. For there is not a line of doctrinal truth in it, but what depends on the traduction of Chriſt from this firſt promiſe.

3. This promiſe was *confirmed*, and the *way of the deliverance* of the church by virtue of it declared, in the *inſtitution of expiatory ſacrifices*. God in them and by them declared from the beginning, that without *ſhedding of blood* there was no remiſſion; that atonement for ſin was to be made by ſubſtitution and ſatisfaction. With reſpect unto them the Lord Chriſt was called *the Lamb of God*, even as he took away the ſins of the world by the ſacrifice of himſelf, John i. 29. For we *were redeemed with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot*, 1 Pet. i. 19. Wherein the Holy Spirit refers unto the inſtitution and nature of ſacrifices from the beginning. And he is thence repreſented in heaven as a *Lamb that had been ſlain*, Rev. iv. 6. the glory of heaven ariſing from the fruits and effects of his ſacrifice. And becauſe of the repreſentation thereof in all the former ſacrifices, is he ſaid to be a *Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*, Rev. xiii. 8.

And it is ſtrange to me, that any who deny not the *expiatory ſacrifice of Chriſt*, ſhould doubt whether the original of theſe ſacrifices were of divine inſtitution, or the invention of men. And it is ſo amongſt others for the reaſons enſuing.

(1.) On the ſuppoſition that they were of *mens finding out*,

out, and *voluntary obſervation*, without any previous divine revelation, it muſt be granted that the foundation of all acceptable religion in the world, was laid in, and reſolved into the wiſdom and wills of men, and not into the wiſdom, authority and will of God. For that the great ſolemnity of religion, which was as the centre and teſtimony of all its other duties, did conſiſt in theſe *ſacrifices* even before the giving of the law, will not be denied. And in the giving of the law, God did not on this ſuppoſition confirm and eſtabliſh his *own inſtitutions* with additions unto them of the ſame kind, but ſet his ſeal and approbation unto the *inventions of men*. But this is contrary unto natural light, and the whole current of ſcripture-revelations.

(2.) All *expiatory ſacrifices* were from the beginning, *types* and repreſentations of the ſacrifice of Chriſt, whereon all their uſe, efficacy, and benefit among men, all their acceptance with God, did depend. Remove this conſideration from them, and they were as *irrational a ſervice*, as unbecoming the divine nature, as any thing that reaſonable creatures could fix upon They are to this day, as reaſonable a ſervice as ever they were, but that only their reſpect unto the ſacrifice of Chriſt is taken from them. And what perſon of any ordinary underſtanding, could now ſuppoſe them a *meet ſervice* whereby to glorify the divine nature? Beſides, all *expiatory ſacrifices* were of the ſame nature, and of the ſame uſe, both before and after the giving of the law. But that all thoſe afterwards were *typical* of the ſacrifice of Chriſt, the apoſtle demonſtrates at large in his epiſtle unto the Hebrews. The inquiry therefore is, whether this bleſſed prefiguration of the Lord Chriſt and his ſacrifice, as he was *the Lamb of God* taking away the ſins of the world, was an effect of the wiſdom, goodneſs, and will of God, or of the wills and inventions of men. And let it be conſidered alſo, that theſe men who are ſuppoſed to be the authors of this wonderful repreſentation of the Lord Chriſt and his ſacrifice, did indeed know little of them, or as the aſſerters of this opinion imagine, nothing at all. To ſuppoſe that thoſe who knew no more of Chriſt than they could learn from the *firſt promiſe*, which as ſome think was nothing at all,

ſhould of their own heads find out and appoint this *divine ſervice*, which conſiſted only in the prefiguration of him and his ſacrifice, and that God ſhould not only *approve of it*, but allow it as the principal means for the eſtabliſhment and exerciſe of the faith of all believers for four thouſand years, is to indulge unto thoughts deviating from all rules of ſobriety. He that ſees not a divine wiſdom in this *inſtitution*, hath ſcarce ſeriouſly exerciſed his thoughts about it. But I have elſewhere conſidered the cauſes and original of theſe ſacrifices, and ſhall not therefore farther inſiſt upon them.

4. Our firſt parents and all their holy poſterity *did believe this promiſe*, or did embrace it as the only way and means of their *deliverance from the curſe* and ſtate of ſin, and were thereon juſtified before God. I confeſs we have not infallible aſſurance of any who did ſo in particular, but thoſe who are mentioned by name in ſcripture, as Abel, Enoch, Noah, and ſome others. But to queſtion it concerning others alſo, as of our *firſt parents* themſelves, is fooliſh and impious. This is done by the Socinians, to promote another deſign, namely, that none were juſtified before God on the belief *of the firſt promiſe*, but on their walking according to the light of nature, and their obedience unto ſome eſpecial revelations about temporal things; the vanity whereof hath been before diſcovered. Wherefore our *firſt parents* and their poſterity did ſo believe the firſt promiſe, or they muſt be ſuppoſed either to have been kept under the curſe, or elſe to have had, and to make uſe of ſome other way of deliverance from it. To imagine the firſt is impious; for the apoſtle affirms, that they had this *teſtimony that they pleaſed God*, Heb. xi. 5. Which under the curſe, none can do; for that is God's diſpleaſure. And in the ſame place he confirms their faith, and juſtification thereon, with a *cloud of witneſſes*, chap. xii. 2. To affirm the latter is groundleſs. And it includes a ſuppoſal of the relinquiſhment of the wiſdom, grace and authority of God in that divine revelation, for men to betake themſelves to none knows what. For that there was in this *promiſe* the way expreſſed which God in his wiſdom and grace had provided for their deliverance, we have proved before. To forſake this way, and to

to betake themſelves unto any other, whereof he had made no mention or revelation unto them, was to reject his authority and grace.

As for thoſe who are otherwiſe minded, it is incumbent on them directly to prove theſe three things.

(1.) That *there is another way*, that there are other means for the juſtification and ſalvation of ſinners, than that revealed, declared, and propoſed in that firſt promiſe. And when this is done, they muſt ſhew to what end on that ſuppoſition the promiſe itſelf was given, ſeeing the end of it is evacuated.

(2.) That upon a ſuppoſition that God had revealed in the promiſe the way and means of our deliverance from the curſe and ſtate of ſin, *it was lawful unto men to forſake it*, and to betake themſelves unto another way, without any ſupernatural revelation for their guidance. For if it was not, their relinquiſhment of the promiſe was no leſs apoſtaſy from God in the revelation of himſelf in a way of grace, than the firſt ſin was, as to the revelation of himſelf in the works of nature. Only the one revelation was by inbred principles, the other by external declaration, nor could it otherwiſe be. Or,

(3.) That there was *ſome other way* of the participation of the benefits of this promiſe, beſides faith in it, or in him who was promiſed therein; ſeeing the apoſtle hath declared, that no promiſe will profit them *by whom it is not mixed with faith*, Heb. iv. 2. Unleſs theſe things are plainly proved, which they will never be, whatever men declaim about univerſal objective grace in the documents of nature, it is but a vain imagination.

5. The declaration of this promiſe before the giving of the law, with the nature and ends of it, as alſo the uſe of ſacrifices whereby it was confirmed, was *committed unto the ordinary miniſtry of our firſt parents* and their godly poſterity, and the *extraordinary miniſtry of the prophets* which God raiſed up among them. For God ſpake of our redemption by Chriſt, by the *mouth of his holy prophets from the beginning of the world*, Luke i. 70. No greater duty could be incumbent on them by the light of nature, and the expreſs revelation of the will of God, than that they ſhould in their ſeveral capacities, communicate the knowledge

knowledge of this *promiſe* unto all in whom they were concerned. To ſuppoſe that our firſt parents who received this promiſe, and thoſe unto whom they firſt declared it, looking on it as the only foundation of their acceptance with God, and deliverance from the curſe, were negligent in the *declaration and preaching of it*, is to render them brutiſh, and guilty of a ſecond apoſtaſy from God. And unto this principle which is founded in the light of nature, there is countenance given by revelation alſo. For Enoch did propheſy of the things which were to accompany the accompliſhment of this promiſe, Jude ver. 15. And *Noah was a preacher of the righteouſneſs* to be brought in by it, 2 Pet. ii. 5. as he was an *heir of the righteouſneſs* which is by faith in himſelf, Heb. xi. 7.

6. *All the promiſes* that God gave afterwards unto the church under the Old Teſtament, before and after giving the law, all the *covenants* that he entered into with particular perſons, or the whole congregation of believers, were all of them *declarations and confirmations of this firſt promiſe*, or the way of ſalvation by the mediation of his Son, becoming the ſeed of the woman to break the head of the ſerpent, and to work out the deliverance of mankind. As moſt of theſe promiſes were expreſsly *concerning him*, ſo all of them in the counſel of God were confirmed in him, 2 Cor. i. 20. And as there are depths in the ſcripture of the Old Teſtament concerning him which we cannot fathom; and things innumerable ſpoken of him or in his perſon which we conceive not; ſo the principal deſign of the whole is the declaration of him and his grace. And it is unprofitable unto them who are otherwiſe minded. Sundry promiſes concerning temporal things were on various occaſions ſuperadded unto this great ſpiritual promiſe of life and grace. And the enemies of the perſon and mediation of Chriſt, do contend, that men are juſtified by their faith and obedience with reſpect unto thoſe *particular revelations*, which were only concerning temporal things. But to ſuppoſe that all thoſe revelations and promiſes were not built upon, and reſolved into, did not include in them the grace and mercy of this firſt promiſe, is to make them curſes inſtead of bleſſings, and deprivations of that grace which

was infinitely better than what on this ſuppoſition was contained in them. The truth is, they were all *additions* unto it, and confirmations of it, nor had any thing of ſpiritual good in them, but upon a ſuppoſition of it. In ſome of them there was an *ampliation of grace* in the more full declaration of the nature of this promiſe, as well as an application unto their perſons unto whom they were made. Such was the promiſe made unto Abraham, which had a direct reſpect unto Chriſt, as the apoſtle proveth, Gal. iii. 4.

7. Thoſe who *voluntarily*, through the *contempt of God and divine grace*, fell off from the knowledge and faith of this promiſe, whether at once and by choice, or gradually through the love of ſin, were in no better condition than thoſe have been, or would be, who have ſo fallen off, or ſhould ſo *apoſtatize* from Chriſtian religion after its revelation and profeſſion. And although this proved in proceſs of time, both before and after the flood, to be the condition of the generality of mankind, yet is it in vain to ſeek after the means of ſalvation among them, who had *voluntarily rejected* the only way which God had revealed and provided for that end. God thereon *ſuffered all nations to walk in their own ways*, Acts xiv. 16. *winking at the times of their ignorance*, not calling them to repentance, chap. xvii. 30.; yea, he gave them *up unto their own hearts luſts, and they walked in their own counſels*, Pſal. lxxxi. 12. And nothing can be more derogatory unto the wiſdom and holineſs of God, than to imagine that he would grant other ways of ſalvation unto them, who had rejected that *only one* which he had provided, which was by faith in Chriſt as revealed in that firſt promiſe.

8. From theſe conſiderations, which are all of them unqueſtionable principles of truth, two things are evident.

(1.) That there was *no way* of the juſtification and ſalvation of ſinners, revealed and propoſed from the foundation of the world, but only by Jeſus Chriſt, as declared in the firſt promiſe.

(2.) That there was *no way* for the participation of the benefits of that promiſe, or of his work of mediation, but by *faith in him* as ſo promiſed. There was therefore faith in him required from the foundation of the world; that is,

from

from the entrance of ſin. And how this faith reſpected his perſon hath been before declared. Now *faith in him* as *promiſed* for the works and ends of his mediation, and faith in him as actually *exhibited*, and as having accomplished his work, are eſſentially the ſame, and differ only with reſpect unto the *œconomy* of times which God diſpoſed at his pleaſure. Hence the efficacy of his mediation was the ſame unto them who then ſo believed, as it is now unto us after his actual exhibition in the fleſh.

But yet it is acknowledged, that as unto the *clearneſs* and *fulneſs* of the revelation of the myſtery of the wiſdom and grace of God in him, as unto the *conſtitution of his perſon* in his incarnation, and therein the determination of the individual perſon promiſed from the beginning, through the actual accompliſhment of the work which he was promiſed for; faith in him as the foundation of that divine honour which it is our duty to give unto him, is far more *evidently* and *manifeſtly revealed* and required in the goſpel, or under the New Teſtament, than it was under the Old. See Eph. iii. 8.—11. The reſpect of faith now unto Chriſt, is that which renders it truly *evangelical*. To believe in him, to believe on his name, is that ſignal eſpecial duty which is now required of us.

Wherefore the ground of the actual *aſſignation of divine honour* unto the perſon of Chriſt in both branches of it, *adoration and invocation*, is faith in him. So he ſaid unto the blind man whoſe eyes he opened, *Believeſt thou on the Son of God?* John ix. 35. And he ſaid, *Lord, I believe, and he worſhipped him*, ver. 38. All divine worſhip or adoration, is a conſequent effect and fruit of faith. So alſo is *invocation*; for *how ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed?* Rom. x. 14. Him, in whom we believe, we ought to adore and invocate. For theſe are the principal ways whereby divine faith doth act itſelf. And ſo to adore or invocate any, in whom we ought not to believe, is idolatry.

This faith therefore on the perſon of Chriſt is *our duty*. Yea, ſuch a duty it is, as that our eternal condition doth more peculiarly depend on the performance or non-performance of it, than on any other duty whatever. For conſtantly under thoſe terms is it preſcribed unto us. He

that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him, John iii. 36. Wherefore the nature and exerciſe of this faith muſt be inquired into.

Firſt, There is a *faith* which is exerciſed towards thoſe by whom the mind and will of God is revealed. So it is ſaid of the Iſraelites, *they believed the Lord and Moſes,* Exod. xiv. 33. that is, that he was ſent of God, was no deceiver, that it was the word and will of God which he revealed unto them. So 2 Chron. xx. 20. *Believe in the Lord your God, ſo ſhall ye be eſtabliſhed; believe his prophets, ſo ſhall ye proſper.* It was not the *perſons* of the prophets, but their *meſſage* that was the object of the faith required. It was to believe *what they ſaid,* as from God, not to believe *in them,* as if they were God. So is it explained by the apoſtle, Acts xxvi. 27. *King Agrippa, believeſt thou the prophets? I know that thou believeſt.* He believed that they were ſent of God, and that the word they ſpake was from him; otherwiſe there was no *believing of them* who were dead ſo many ages before.

And this is all the faith in Chriſt himſelf which ſome will allow. To believe in Chriſt, they ſay, *is only to believe the doctrine of the goſpel* revealed by him. Hence they deny that any could believe in him, before his coming into the world, and the declaration of the mind of God in the goſpel made by him. An aſſent unto the truth of the goſpel as revealed by Chriſt, is with them the whole of that faith in Chriſt Jeſus which is required of us.

Of all that *poiſon* which at this day is diffuſed in the minds of men, corrupting them from the myſtery of the goſpel, there is no part that is more pernicious than this one perverſe imagination, that to *believe in Chriſt,* is nothing at all but to *believe the doctrine of the goſpel,* which yet we grant is included therein. For as it allows the conſideration of no office in him, but that of a *Prophet,* and that not as veſted and exerciſed in his divine perſon, ſo it utterly overthrows the whole foundation of the relation of the church unto him, and ſalvation by him.

That which ſuits my preſent deſign, is to evince that it is the *perſon of Chriſt* which is the firſt and principal object

of that faith wherewith we are required to believe in him; and that ſo to do, is not only to aſſent unto the truth of the doctrine revealed by him, but alſo to place our *truſt and confidence in him*, for mercy, relief, and protection, for righteouſneſs, life and ſalvation, for a bleſſed reſurrection, and eternal reward. This I ſhall firſt manifeſt from ſome few of thoſe multiplied teſtimonies, wherein this truth is declared, and whereby it is confirmed, as alſo with ſome arguments taken from them; and then proceed to declare the ground, nature, and exerciſe of this faith itſelf.

1. As unto the teſtimonies confirming this truth, it muſt be obſerved of them all in general, that where-ever *faith* is required towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, it is ſtill called believing *in him*, or *on his name*, according as faith in God abſolutely is every where expreſſed. If no more be intended but only the belief of the doctrine revealed by him, then whoſe doctrine ſoever we are obliged to believe, we may be rightly ſaid to *believe in them*, or to believe on their name. For inſtance, we are obliged to believe the doctrine of Paul the apoſtle, the revelations made by him, and that on the hazard of our eternal welfare, by the unbelieving of them. Yet that we ſhould be ſaid to *believe in Paul*, is that which he did utterly deteſt, 1 Cor. i. 13. 15.

For the places themſelves the reader may conſult among others, John i. 12. chap. iii. 16. 18. 36. chap. vi. 29. 35. 41. chap. vii. 38. 39. Acts xiv. 23. chap. xvi. 31. chap. xix. 4. chap. xxiv. 24. chap. xxvi. 18. Rom. iii. 26. chap. ix. 33. chap. x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 6. 1 John v. 10. 13. There is not one of theſe but ſufficiently confirms the truth. Some few others not named may be briefly inſiſted on.

John xiv. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* The diſtinction made between God and him, limits the name of God unto the perſon of the Father. Faith is required in them both, and that diſtinctly; *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* And it is the ſame faith of the ſame kind, to be exerciſed in the ſame way and manner, that is required, as is plain in the words. They will not admit of

of a double faith, of one ſort in God, and of another in Chriſt, or of a diſtinct way of their exerciſe.

Wherefore as faith divine is fixed on, and terminated in the perſon of the Father, ſo is it likewiſe diſtinctly in and on the perſon of the Son; and it was to evidence his divine nature unto them, which is the ground and reaſon of their faith, that he gave his command unto his diſciples. This he farther teſtifies, ver. 9. 10. 11. And as unto the *exerciſe* of this faith, it reſpected the relief of their ſouls under troubles, fears, and diſconſolations: *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* To believe in him unto the relief of our ſouls againſt troubles, is not to aſſent merely unto the doctrine of the goſpel, but alſo to place our *truſt and confidence* in him, for *ſuch* ſupplies of grace, for *ſuch* an exerciſe of the acts of his divine power, as whereby we may be ſupported and delivered. And we have herein the whole of what we plead; divine faith acted diſtinctly in, and terminated on the perſon of Chriſt, and that with reſpect unto ſupplies of grace and mercy from him in a way of divine power.

So he ſpeaks unto Martha, John xi. 25. 26. 27. *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live; and whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me, ſhall never die. Believeſt thou this?* whereunto ſhe anſwers, *Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Chriſt the Son of God.* His perſon was the object of her faith, and her belief in him compriſed a truſt for all ſpiritual and eternal mercies.

I ſhall add one more, wherein not only the thing itſelf, but the eſpecial ground and reaſon of it is declared, Gal. ii. 20. *The life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* That faith he aſſerts which is the cauſe and ſpring of our ſpiritual life; that life unto God, which we lead in the fleſh, or whilſt we are in the body not yet admitted unto ſight and enjoyment; of this faith the Son of God is both the author and the object, the latter whereof is here principally intended. And this is evident from the reaſon and motive of it, which are expreſſed. This faith I live by, am in the continual exerciſe of, becauſe he *loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* For this is that which doth powerfully influence our hearts to fix our faith in him and

on him. And that perſon who ſo loved us, is the ſame in whom we do believe. If his perſon was the *ſeat* of his own love, it is the *object* of our faith. And this faith is not only our duty, but our life. He that hath it not, is dead in the ſight of God.

But I hope it is not yet neceſſary to multiply teſtimonies to prove it our duty to believe in Jeſus Chriſt; that is, to believe in the perſon of the Son of God, for other *faith* in Chriſt there is none; yet I ſhall add one or two conſiderations in the confirmation of it.

1*ſt*, There is no more neceſſary hereunto, namely, to prove the perſon of Chriſt, the Son of God, to be the proper and diſtinct object of faith divine, than what we have already demonſtrated concerning the ſolemn invocation of him. For ſaith the apoſtle, *how ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed?* Rom. x. 14. It holds on either ſide. We cannot, we ought not to call on him in whom we do not, we ought not to believe; and in whom we do believe, on him we ought to call. Wherefore if it be our duty to call on the name of Chriſt, it is our duty to believe in the perſon of Chriſt. And if to believe in Chriſt be no more but to believe the doctrine of the goſpel which he hath revealed, then every one whoſe doctrine we are obliged to believe, on them we ought to call alſo. And on this ground we may call on the names of the prophets and apoſtles, as well as on the name of Jeſus Chriſt, and be ſaved thereby. But whereas *invocation* or prayer proceedeth from faith, and that prayer is for mercy, grace, life, and eternal ſalvation, faith muſt be fixed on the perſon ſo called on as able to give them all unto us, or that prayer is in vain.

2*dly*, Again, that we are *baptized* into the name of Jeſus Chriſt, and that diſtinctly with the Father, is a ſufficient evidence of the neceſſity of faith in his perſon. For we are therein given up unto univerſal ſpiritual ſubjection of ſoul unto him, and dependence on him. Not to believe in him, on his name, that is, his perſon, when we are ſo given up unto him, or *baptized* into him, is virtually to renounce him. But to put a preſent cloſe unto this conteſt. Faith in Chriſt is that grace whereby the church is united unto him, incorporated into one myſtical body with him.

him. It is thereby that he *dwells in them*, and they in him. By this alone are all ſupplies of grace derived from him unto the whole body. Deny his perſon to be the proper and immediate object of this faith, and all theſe things are utterly overthrown, that is, the whole ſpiritual life and eternal ſalvation of the church.

2. This faith in the perſon of Chriſt, which is the foundation of all that divine honour in ſacred adoration and invocation which is aſſigned unto him, may be conſidered two ways. (1.) As it reſpects his perſon abſolutely. (2.) As he is conſidered in the diſcharge of the office of mediation.

1*ſt*, In the firſt ſenſe faith is placed abſolutely and ultimately on the perſon of Chriſt, even as on the perſon of the Father. *He counts it no robbery* herein to be equal with the Father. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe the divine nature itſelf is the proper and immediate object of this faith, and all the acts of it. This being one and the ſame in the perſon of the Father and of the Son, as alſo of the Holy Spirit, two things do follow thereon. (1.) That each perſon is *equally* the object of our faith, becauſe equally participant of that nature which is the formal reaſon and object of it. (2.) It follows alſo, that in acting faith on, and aſcribing therewithal divine honour unto any one perſon, the other are not excluded, yea, they are *included* therein. For by reaſon of the mutual inbeing of the divine perſons, in the unity of the ſame nature, the object of all ſpiritual worſhip is undivided. Hence are thoſe expreſſions of the ſcriptures; *He that hath ſeen the Son, hath ſeen the Father; he that honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father, for he and the Father are one.*

And to clear our preſent deſign, three things may be obſerved from hence, namely, that the divine nature, with all its eſſential properties, is the formal reaſon, and only ground of divine faith. As,

1. That the Lord Chriſt is not the *abſolute and ultimate object* of our faith, any otherwiſe but under this conſideration, of his being partaker of the nature of God, of his being in the form of God, and equal unto him. Without this, to place our faith in him would be

robbery

robbery and ſacrilege; as is all the pretended faith of them, who believe not his divine perſon.

2. There is no derogation from the honour and glory of the Father, not the leaſt diverſion of any one ſingle act of duty from him, nor from the Holy Spirit, by the eſpecial actings of faith on the perſon of Chriſt. For all divine honour is given ſolely unto the divine nature. And this being abſolutely the ſame in each perſon, in the honouring of one, they are all equally honoured. He that honoureth the Son, he therein honoureth the Father alſo.

3. Hence it appears what is that *eſpecial acting of faith* on the perſon of Chriſt which we intend, and which in the ſcripture is given in charge unto us, as indiſpenſably neceſſary unto our ſalvation. And there are three things to be conſidered in it.

(1.) That his *divine nature* is the proper formal object of this faith, on the conſideration whereof alone, it is fixed on him. If you aſk a reaſon why I believe on the Son of God; if you intend what cauſe I have for it, what motives unto it: I ſhall anſwer, it is becauſe of what he hath done for me, whereof afterwards; ſo doth the apoſtle, Gal. ii. 20. But if you intend, what is the *formal reaſon*, ground and warrant whereon I thus believe in him, or place my truſt and confidence in him, I ſay it is only this, that he is *over all God bleſſed for ever*; and were he not ſo, I could not believe in him. For to believe in any, is to expect from him that to be done for me, which none but God can do.

(2.) That the *entire perſon* of Chriſt as God and man, is the immediate object of our faith herein. The divine nature is the *reaſon* of it; but his divine perſon is the *object* of it. In placing our faith on him, we conſider him as God and man in one and the ſame perſon. We believe in him becauſe he is God; but we believe in him as he is God and man in one perſon.

And this conſideration of the perſon of Chriſt, namely, as he is God and man, in our acting of faith on him, is that which renders it *peculiar*, and limits or determines it unto his perſon; becauſe he only is ſo; the Father is not, nor the Holy Spirit. That faith which hath the

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perſon of God and man for its object, is peculiarly and diſtinctly placed on Chriſt.

(3.) The motives unto this diſtinct acting of faith on his perſon, are always to be conſidered, as thoſe alſo which render this faith peculiar. For the things which Chriſt hath done for us, which are the motives of our faith in him, were *peculiar* unto him alone, as in the plase before quoted, Gal. ii. 20. Such are all the works of his mediation, with all the fruits of them whereof we are made partakers. So God in the *firſt command*, wherein he requires all faith, love and obedience from the church, enforced it with the conſideration of a ſignal benefit which it had received, and therein a type of all ſpiritual and eternal mercies, Exod. xx. 23.

Hence two things are evident which clearly ſtate this matter.

1. That faith which we place upon, and the honour which we give thereby unto the perſon of Chriſt, is equally placed on, and honour equally given thereby unto the other perſons of the Father, and the Holy Spirit, with reſpect *unto that nature* which is the formal reaſon and cauſe of it. But it is peculiarly fixed on Chriſt, with reſpect unto his perſon as God and man, and the motives unto it, in the acts and benefits of his mediation.

2. *All of Chriſt* is conſidered and glorified in this acting of faith on him. His *divine nature* as the formal cauſe of it; his *divine entire perſon* God and man, as its proper object; and the *benefits* of his mediation, as the eſpecial motives thereunto.

This faith in the perſon of Chriſt is the ſpring and fountain of our ſpiritual life. We live by the faith of the Son of God. In and by the actings hereof is it preſerved, increaſed, and ſtrengthened: *For he is our life*, Col. ii. 4. And all ſupplies of it are derived from him by the actings of faith in him. We receive the forgiveneſs of ſins, and an inheritance among them that are ſanctified, *by the faith that is in him*, Acts xxvi. 18. Hereby *do we abide in him*, without which we can do nothing, John xv. 5. Hereby is our peace with God maintained; *for he is our peace*, Eph. ii. 14. and in him we have peace, according to his promiſe, John xvi. 33. All ſtrength for

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the mortification of sin, for the conquest of temptations, all our increase and growth in grace, depend on the constant actings of this faith in him.

The way and method of this faith is that which we have described. A due apprehension of the love of Christ, with the effects of it in his whole mediatory work on our behalf, especially in his giving himself for us, and our redemption by his blood, is the great *motive* thereunto. They whose hearts are not deeply affected herewith, can never believe in him in a due manner. *I live,* saith the apostle, by the faith of the Son of God, *who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Unless a sense hereof be firmly implanted in our souls; unless we are deeply affected with it, our faith in him would be weak and wavering, or rather none at all. The due remembrance of what the blessed Lord Jesus hath done for us, of the ineffable love which was the spring, cause and fountain of what he so did, thoughts of the mercy, grace, peace, and glory which he hath procured thereby, are the great and unconquerable *motives* to fix our faith, hope, trust and confidence in him.

His *divine nature* is the ground and warrant for our so doing. This is that from whence he is the due and proper object of all divine faith and worship. From the power and virtue thereof do we expect and receive all those things which in our believing on him we seek after. For none but God can bestow them on us, or work them in us. There is in all the actings of our faith on him, the voice of the confession of Thomas, *My Lord and my God.*

His divine person wherein he is God and man, wherein he hath that nature which is the *formal* object of divine worship, and wherein he wrought all those things which are the *motives* thereunto, is the object of this faith, which gives its difference and distinction from faith in God in general, and faith in the person of the Father, as the fountain of grace, love, and power.

2*dly*, Faith is acted on Christ under the formal notion of *Mediator between God and man.* So it is expressed, 1 Pet. i. 21. *Who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.* And this acting of faith towards Christ, is

is not contrary unto that before deſcribed, nor inconſiſtent with it, though it be diſtinct from it. To deny the perſon of Chriſt to fall under this double conſideration, of a divine perſon abſolutely, wherein he is *over all God bleſſed for ever*, and as *manifeſted in the fleſh*, exerciſing the office of Mediator between God and man, is to renounce the goſpel. And according unto the variety of theſe reſpects, ſo are the actings of faith various; ſome on him abſolutely on the motives of his mediation; ſome on him as Mediator only. And how neceſſary this variety is unto the life, ſupportment, and comfort of believers, they all know in ſome meaſure who are ſo. See our *Expoſition on Heb.* i. 1. 2. 3. Sometimes faith conſiders him *as on the throne*; ſometimes as *ſtanding at the right hand of God*; ſometimes as *over all God bleſſed for ever*; ſometimes as *the Mediator between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus*. Sometimes his glorious power; ſometimes his infinite condeſcenſion is their relief.

Wherefore in the ſenſe now intended, he is conſidered as the ordinance, as the ſervant of God, *who raiſed him up from the dead, and gave him glory*. So our faith reſpects not only his perſon, but all the acts of his office. It is *faith in his blood*, Rom. iii. 25. It is the will of God, that we ſhould place our faith and truſt in him and them, as the only means of our acceptance with him, of all grace and glory from him. This is the proper notion of a Mediator. So is he not the ultimate object of our faith, wherein it reſts, but God through him. *Through him have we an acceſs in one Spirit unto the Father*, Eph. ii. 18. So he is the way whereby we go to God, John xiv. 6. See Heb. x. 19. 20. 21. And this alſo is faith in him, becauſe he is the immediate though not the ultimate object of it, Acts xxvi. 18.

This is that which renders our faith in God *evangelical*. The eſpecial nature of it ariſeth from our reſpect unto God in Chriſt, and through him. And herein faith principally regards Chriſt in the diſcharge of his *ſacerdotal office*. For although it is alſo the principle of all obedience unto him in his other offices, yet as unto fixing our faith in God through him, it is his *ſacerdotal office* and the effects

of it, that we reſt upon and truſt unto. It is through him as the *High Prieſt* over the houſe of God, as he who hath made for us a new and living way into the holy place, that we draw nigh to God, Heb. iv. 14. 15. 16. chap. x. 19. 21. 22. 1 John i. 2.

No comfortable refreſhing thoughts of God, no warrantable or acceptable boldneſs in an approach and acceſs unto him, can any one entertain or receive, but in this exerciſe of faith on Chriſt as the Mediator between God and man. And if in the practice of religion, this regard of faith unto him, this acting of faith on God through him, be not the principle whereby the whole is animated and guided, *Chriſtianity* is renounced, and the vain cloud of natural religion embraced in the room of it. Not a *verbal* mention of him, but the *real* intention of heart to come unto God by him is required of us; and thereinto all expectation of acceptance with God, as unto our perſons or duties is reſolved.

We have had great endeavours of late by the Socinians to ſet forth and adorn a *natural religion*, as if it were ſufficient unto all ends of our living unto God. But as moſt of its pretended ornaments are ſtolen from the goſpel, or are framed in an emanation of light from it, ſuch as nature of itſelf could not riſe up unto; ſo the whole proceeds from a diſlike of the mediation of Chriſt, and even wearineſs of the profeſſion of faith in him. So is it with the minds of men, who were never affected with ſupernatural revelations, with the myſtery of the goſpel, beyond the owning of ſome notions of truth, who never had experience of its power in the life of God.

But here lies the trial of faith truly *evangelical*. In ſteady beholding of the Sun of righteouſneſs proves it genuine and from above. And let them take heed who find their hearts remiſs or cold in this exerciſe of it. When men begin to ſatisfy themſelves with general hopes of mercy in God, without a continual reſpect unto the interpoſition and mediation of Chriſt, whereinto their hope and truſt is reſolved, there is a decay in their faith, and proportionably in all other *evangelical* graces alſo. Herein lies the myſtery of Chriſtian religion, which the world ſeems to be almoſt weary of.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Obedience unto Chriſt, the nature and cauſes of it.

ALL holy *obedience*, both internal and external, is that which we propoſed as the ſecond part of our *religious regard* unto the perſon of Chriſt. His great injunction unto his diſciples is, *That they keep his commandments*, without which, none are ſo.

Some ſay the Lord Chriſt is to be conſidered as a *lawgiver*, and the goſpel as a *new law* given by him, whereby our obedience unto him is to be regulated. Some abſolutely deny it, and will not grant the goſpel in any ſenſe to be a *new law*. And many diſpute about theſe things, whilſt *obedience* itſelf is on all hands generally neglected. But this is that wherein our principal concernment doth lie. I ſhall not therefore at preſent immix myſelf in any needleſs diſputations. Thoſe things wherein the nature and neceſſity of our *obedience* unto him is concerned, ſhall be briefly declared.

The *law* under the Old Teſtament taken generally had two parts. Firſt, the *moral* preceptive part of it; and ſecondly, *the inſtitutions of worſhip* appointed for that ſeaſon. Theſe are jointly and diſtinctly called the *law*.

In reſpect unto the firſt of theſe, the Lord Chriſt gave *no new law*, nor was the old abrogated by him, which it muſt be if another were given in the room of it, unto the ſame ends: for the introduction of a *new law* in the place of, and unto the end of a former, is an actual abrogation of it. Neither did he add any *new precepts* unto it, nor give any *counſels* for the performance of duties in matter or manner beyond what it preſcribed. Any ſuch ſuppoſition is contrary to the wiſdom and holineſs of God in giving the law, and inconſiſtent with the nature of the law itſelf. For God never required leſs of us in the law than *all that was due unto him*. And his preſcription of it, included all circumſtances and cauſes that might render any duty at any time neceſſary in the nature or degrees of it. Whatever at any time may become the duty of any perſon

towards God, in the ſubſtance or degrees of it, it is made ſo by the law. All is included in that ſummary of it, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyſelf.* Nothing can be the duty of men but what and when it is required by the *love of God or our neighbour.* Wherefore no *additions* were made unto the *preceptive* part of the law by our Saviour, nor *counſels* given by him for the performance of more than it did require.

In this regard the *goſpel is no new law*, only the duties of the moral and eternal law, are plainly declared in the doctrine of it, enforced in its motives, and directed as to their manner and end. Nor in this ſenſe did the Lord Chriſt ever declare himſelf to be a *new lawgiver*; yea he declares the contrary, that he came to confirm the old, Matth. v. 17.

Secondly, the *law* may be conſidered, as containing the *inſtitutions of worſhip*, which were given in Horeb by Moſes, with other ſtatutes and judgements. It was in this ſenſe aboliſhed by Chriſt. For the things themſelves were appointed, but unto the *time of reformation.* And thereon as the ſupreme Lord and Lawgiver of the goſpel-church, he gave *a new law of worſhip*, conſiſting in ſeveral inſtitutions and ordinances of worſhip thereunto belonging. See Heb. iii. 3. 4. 5. 6. and our Expoſition of that place.

Obedience unto the Lord Chriſt may be conſidered with reſpect unto both theſe; the *moral law*, which he confirmed; and the *law of evangelical worſhip*, which he gave and appointed. And ſome few things may be added to clear the nature of it.

1. *Obedience* unto Chriſt doth not conſiſt merely *in doing the things which he requireth.* So far the church under the Old Teſtament was obliged to yield obedience unto Moſes; and we are yet ſo unto the prophets and apoſtles. This is done, or may be ſo, with reſpect unto any ſubordinate directive cauſe of our obedience, when it is not formally ſo denominated from his authority. All *obedience* unto Chriſt proceeds from an expreſs ſubjection of our ſouls and conſciences unto him.

2. No *religious obedience* could be due unto the Lord Chriſt

Chriſt directly, by the rule and command of the moral law, were he not *God by nature* alſo. The reaſon and foundation of all the obedience required therein, is, *I am the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt have no other gods before me.* This contains the formal reaſon of all religious obedience. The Socinians pretend highly unto obedience to the precepts of Chriſt. But all obedience unto Chriſt himſelf they utterly overthrow. The obedience they pretend unto him, is but obeying God the Father according to his commands. But they take away the foundation of all obedience unto his *perſon*, by denying his divine nature. And all religious obedience unto any, who is not God by nature, is *idolatry*. Wherefore all obedience unto God due by the moral law, hath reſpect unto the perſon of Chriſt, as one God with the Father and Holy Spirit, bleſſed for ever.

3. There is a peculiar reſpect unto him in all moral obedience as Mediator.

1*ſt*, In that by the *ſupreme authority* over the church wherewith he was veſted, he hath confirmed all the commands of the *moral law*, giving them new enforcements, whence he calls them *his commands*. *This*, ſaith he, *is my commandment, that you love one another*; which yet was the Old commandment of the moral law; *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*. Hence the apoſtle calls it an *old* and *new* commandment, 1 John ii. 7. 8.

The law was given unto the church under the Old Teſtament in the *hand of a mediator*, that is, of Moſes, Gal. iii. 19. It had an original power of obliging all mankind unto obedience from its firſt inſtitution or preſcription in our creation; which it never loſt nor abated in. Howbeit the church was obliged to have a reſpect unto it, as it was given unto them, *ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator*. See Mal. iv. 4. Hereon many things hard and difficult did enſue, which we are now freed from. We are not obliged unto the obſervance of the *moral law* itſelf, as given in the hand of that mediator, which gave it the formal reaſon of a *covenant* unto that people, and had other ſtatutes and judgements inſeparable from it. But the ſame law continueth ſtill in its original authority

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and power, which it had from the beginning, to oblige all indiſpenſably unto obedience.

Howbeit as the *church of Iſrael as ſuch* was not obliged unto obedience unto the moral law abſolutely conſidered, but as it was given unto *them peculiarly* in the hand of a mediator, that is, of Moſes; no more is the evangelical church *as ſuch*, obliged by the original authority of that law, but as it is confirmed unto us in the hand of our Mediator. This renders all our *moral obedience* evangelical: for there is no duty of it, but we are obliged to perform it in faith through Chriſt, on the motives of the love of God in him, of the benefits of his mediation, and the grace we receive by him; whatever is otherwiſe done by us is not acceptable unto God.

They do therefore for the moſt part but deceive themſelves and others, who talk ſo loudly about *moral duties*. I know of none that are acceptable unto God, which are not only *materially*, but *formally* ſo, and no more.

If the obligation they own unto them, be only the original power of the moral law or the law of our creation, and they are performed in the ſtrength of that law unto the end of it, they are no way accepted of God. But if they intend the duties, which the moral law requireth, proceeding from, and performed by *faith in Chriſt*, upon the grounds of the love of God in him, and grace received from him, then are they duties purely *evangelical*. And although the law hath never loſt, nor ever can loſe its original power of obliging us unto univerſal obedience as we are *reaſonable creatures*, yet is our obedience unto it as *Chriſtians*, as *believers*, immediately influenced by its confirmation unto the *evangelical church* in the hand of our Mediator. For,

2dly, God hath given unto the Lord Chriſt *all power* in his name to require this obedience from all that receive the goſpel. Others are left under the original authority of the law either as implanted in our natures at their firſt creation, as are the Gentiles, or as *delivered by Moſes*, and written in tables of ſtone, as it was with the Jews, Rom. ii. 12. 13. 14. But as to them that are called unto the faith of the goſpel, *the authority of Chriſt* doth immediately affect their minds and conſciences. *He feeds* or rules

rules his people *in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God*, Mic. v. 4. All the authority and majesty of God is in him, and with him; so of old, as the great *Angel of God's presence*, he was in the church in the wilderness with a delegated power, Exod. xxiii. 20. 21. 22. *Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak*; the name of God the Father is so in him, that is, he is so partaker of the *same nature* with him, that his *voice* is the voice of the Father. *If thou obey his voice, and do all that I speak.* Nevertheless he acts herein as the angel of God, with power and authority *delegated* from him. So is he still immediately present with the church requiring obedience in the name and majesty of God.

3dly, All judgement upon and concerning this obedience is committed unto him by the Father. *For the Father judgeth no man*, (that is, immediately as the Father); *but hath committed all judgement unto the Son*, John v. 22. He hath *given him authority to execute judgement, because he is the Son of man*, ver. 27. And his judgement is the judgement of God; for the Father who judgeth none immediately in his own person, judgeth all in him, 1 Pet. i. 17. *If you call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth every one according to his work.* He doth so in and by the Son, unto whom all judgement is committed. And unto him are we to have regard in all our obedience, unto whom we must give our account concerning it, and by whom we are and must be finally judged upon it. To this purpose speaks the apostle, Rom. xiv. 10. 11. 12. *We must all stand before the judgement-seat of Christ: for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So every one of us shall give an account of himself to God.* He proveth, that we shall all *stand before the judgement-seat of Christ*, or be judged by him, by a testimony of scripture that we shall be all so judged by God himself; and give an account of ourselves unto him. And as this doth undeniably

deniably prove and confirm the *divine nature* of Christ, without the faith whereof, there is neither cogency in the apostle's testimony, nor force in his arguing; so he declares that God judgeth us only in and by him. In this regard of our moral obedience unto Christ, lies the way whereby God will be glorified.

Secondly, All things are yet more plain *with respect unto institutions of divine worship*. The appointment of all divine ordinances under the New Testament, was his especial province and work, as the Son and Lord over his own house. And obedience unto him in the observance of them is that which he gives in especial charge unto all his disciples, Matth. xxviii. 18. 19. 20. And it is nothing but a loss of that subjection of soul and conscience unto him, which is indispensably required of all believers, that hath set the minds of so many at liberty to *do and observe* in divine worship what they please, without any regard unto his institutions. It is otherwise with respect unto *moral duties*. For the things of the moral law, have an obligation on our consciences, antecedent unto the enforcement of them by the authority of Christ, and there holds us fast. But as unto things of the latter sort, our consciences can no way be affected with a sense of them, or a necessity of obedience in them, but by the sole and immediate authority of Christ himself. If a sense hereof be lost in our minds, we shall not abide in the observance of his commands.

CHAP. XII.

The especial principle of obedience unto the person of Christ which is love. Its truth and reality vindicated.

THAT which doth enliven and animate the obedience whereof we have discoursed, is *love*. This himself makes the foundation of all that is acceptable unto him. *If*, saith he, *you love me, keep my commandments*, John xiv. 15. As he distinguisheth between love and obedience, so he asserts the former as the foundation of the latter.

ter. He accepts of no obedience unto his commands, that doth not proceed from love unto his person. That is no love which is not fruitful in obedience, and that is no obedience which proceeds not from love. So he expresseth on both sides: *If a man love me, he will keep my words: and he that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings*, ver. 23. 24.

In the Old Testament the *love of God* was the life and substance of all obedience. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, thy mind and strength*, was the sum of the law. This includes in it all obedience, and where it is genuine, will produce all the fruits of it. And where it was not, no multiplication of duties was accepted with him. But this in general we do not now treat of.

That the *person of Christ* is the especial object of this divine love, which is the fire that kindles the sacrifice of our obedience unto him; this is that alone which at present I design to demonstrate.

The apostle hath recorded a very severe denunciation of divine wrath against all that *love him not: If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, Maran-atha*, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. And what was added unto the curse of the law, we may add unto this of the gospel; *and all the people shall say, Amen*, Deut. xxvii. 26. And on the other hand, he prays for grace, on all that *love him in sincerity*, Eph. ii. 26. Wherefore none who desire to retain the name of Christians, can deny in words at least, but that we ought with all our hearts *to love the Lord Jesus Christ*.

I do not so distinguish *love* from obedience as though it were not itself a part, yea, the chiefest part of our obedience. So is faith also, yet is it constantly distinguished from obedience properly so called. This alone is that which I shall demonstrate, namely, that *there is, and ought to be in all believers, a divine gracious love unto the person of Christ, immediately fixed on him, whereby they are excited unto, and acted in all their obedience unto his authority*. Had it been only pleaded, that many who pretend love unto Christ, do yet evidence that they love him not, it is that which the scripture testifieth, and continual experience

doth proclaim. If an application of this charge had been made unto them, whose sincerity in their profession of love unto him can be no way evicted, it ought to be borne with patience, amongst other reproaches of the same kind that are cast upon them. And some things are to be premised unto the confirmation of our assertion.

1. It is granted, that there may be *a false pretence of love* unto Christ. And as this pretence is ruinous unto the souls of them in whom it is, so it oft-times renders them prejudicial and troublesome unto others. There ever were, and probably ever will be hypocrites in the church. And a *false pretence of love* is of the essential form of hypocrisy. The first great act of hypocrisy with respect unto Christ, was treachery vailed with a double pretence of love. He cried *Hail, Master; and kissed him* who betrayed him. His words and actions proclaimed love, but deceit and treachery were in his heart. Hence the apostle prays for grace *on them who love the Lord Jesus* ἐν ἀφθαρσία; without dissimulation or doubling, without pretences and aims at other ends, without a mixture of corrupt affections; that is sincerity, Eph. vi. 24. It was prophesied of him, that many who were strangers unto his grace, should lie unto him, Psal. xviii. 44. (יְכַחֲשׁוּ לִי בְּנֵי נֵכָר) *feignedly submit*, or yield feigned obedience unto him. So is it with them who profess love unto him, yet are enemies of his *cross: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly: -and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things*, Phil. iii. 18. 19. All that are called Christians in the world, do, by owning that denomination, profess a love unto Jesus Christ. But greater enemies, greater haters of him he hath not among the children of men, than many of them are. This falsely pretended love is worse than avowed hatred. Neither will the pretence of it stand men in stead at the last day. No other answer will be given unto the plea of it, be it in whom it will, but *Depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity*. Whereas therefore he himself hath prescribed this rule unto all who would be esteemed his disciples, *If you love me, keep my commandments*, we may safely conclude, that all who live in a neglect of his commands, whatever they pretend or profess, *they love him not*. And the satisfaction which

which men, through much darkneſs, and many corrupt prejudices, have attained unto in the profeſſion of Chriſtian religion, without an internal ſincere love unto Chriſt himſelf, is that which ruins religion and their own ſouls.

2. As there is a *falſe pretence of love* unto Chriſt, ſo there is, or may be a *falſe love* unto him alſo. The perſons in whom it is, may in ſome meaſure be ſincere, and yet their love unto Chriſt may not be pure, nor ſincere, ſuch as anſwers the principles and rules of the goſpel. And as many deceive others, ſo ſome deceive themſelves in this matter. They may think that they love Chriſt, but indeed do not ſo. And this I ſhall manifeſt in ſome few inſtances.

(1.) That *love is not ſincere* and incorrupt, which proceedeth not from, which is not a fruit of faith. Thoſe who do not firſt really believe on Chriſt, can never ſincerely love him. It is *faith* alone that *worketh by love* towards Chriſt and all his ſaints: if therefore any do not believe with that faith which unites them unto Chriſt, which within purifies the heart, and is outwardly effectual in duties of obedience, whatever they may perſuade themſelves concerning love unto Chriſt, it is but a vain deluſion. Where the faith of men is dead, their love will not be living and ſincere.

(2.) That love is not ſo, which ariſeth from *falſe ideas* and repreſentations that men make of Chriſt, or have made of him in their minds. Men may draw *images* in their minds of what they moſt fancy, and then dote upon them. So ſome think of Chriſt only as a glorious perſon exalted in heaven at the right hand of God, without farther apprehenſions of his natures and offices. So the *Roman miſſionaries* repreſented him unto ſome of the Indians, concealing from them his croſs and ſufferings. But every falſe notion concerning his perſon or his grace, what he is, hath done, or doth, corrupts the love that is pretended unto him. Shall we think that they love Chriſt by whom his divine nature is denied? or that thoſe do ſo who diſbelieve the reality of his human nature? or thoſe by whom the union of both in the ſame perſon is rejected? There cannot be true *evangelical love* unto a falſe Chriſt, ſuch as theſe imaginations do fancy.

(3.) So is that love, which is not in all things as to causes, motives, measures, and ends *regulated by the scripture*. This alone gives us the nature, rules, and bounds of sincere spiritual love. We are no more to love Christ, than to fear and worship him according unto our own imaginations. From the scripture are we to derive all the principles and motives of our love. If either the acts or effects of it will not endure a trial thereby, they are false and counterfeit, and many such have been pretended unto, as we shall see immediately.

(4.) That is so unquestionably which fixeth itself on *undue objects*, which, whatever is pretended, are neither Christ, nor means of conveying our love unto him. Such is all that love which the Romanists express in their devotion unto *images*, as they fancy, of Christ, *crucifixes*, pretended *relics of his cross*, and the nails that pierced him, with the like superstitious representations of him, and what they suppose he is concerned in. For although they express their devotion with great appearance of ardent affections, under all outward signs of them, in adorations, kissings, prostrations, with sighs and tears; yet all this while it *is not Christ* which they thus cleave unto, but a cloud of their own imaginations, wherewith their carnal minds are pleased and affected. That is no God which a man heweth out of a tree, though he form it for that end, though he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, *Deliver me, for thou art my God*, Is. xliv. 17. The authors of this superstition, whereby the love of innumerable poor souls is depraved and abused, do first frame in their minds, what they suppose may solicit or draw out the natural and carnal affections of men unto it, and then outwardly represent it as an object for them. Wherefore some of their representations of him are *glorious*, and some of them *dolorous*, according as they aim to excite affections in carnal minds. But, as I said, these things are not Christ, nor is he any way concerned in them.

(5.) I acknowledge there have been great pretences of such *a love unto* Christ as cannot be justified. Such is that which some of the devotionists of the *Roman church*, have endeavoured rather to express out of their fancy, than declare

declare out of their experience. *Raptures*, *ecſtaſies*, *ſelf-annihilations*, *immediate adheſions* and *enjoyments*, without *any act of the underſtanding*, and with a multitude of other ſwelling words of vanity, they labour to ſet off what they fancy to be divine love. But there want not evidences of truth, ſufficient to defeat theſe pretences, be they never ſo ſpecious or glorious. For,

(1.) As it is by them deſcribed, it *exceedeth all ſcripture-precedents*. For men to aſſume unto themſelves an apprehenſion that they love Chriſt in another manner and kind, in an higher degree at leaſt, and thence to enjoy more intimacy with him, more love from him, than did any of the apoſtles, John, or Paul, or Peter, or any other of thoſe holy ones, whoſe love unto him is recorded in the ſcripture, is intolerable vanity and preſumption. But no ſuch things as theſe *devoto*'s pretend unto, are mentioned, or in the leaſt intimated concerning them, and their love to their Lord and Maſter. No man will pretend unto more love than they had, but ſuch as have none at all.

(2.) It is no way directed, warranted, approved by any *command*, *promiſe*, or *rule of the ſcripture*. As it is without *precedent*, ſo is it without *precept*. And hereby, whether we will or no, all our graces and duties muſt be tried, as unto any acceptation with God. Whatever pretends to exceed the direction of the word, may ſafely be rejected; cannot ſafely be admitted. Whatever *enthuſiaſms* or pretended inſpirations may be pleaded, for the ſingular practice of what is preſcribed in the ſcripture, yet none can be allowed for an approved principle of what is not ſo preſcribed. Whatever exceeds the bounds thereof, is reſolved into the teſtimony of every diſtempered imagination. Nor will it avail that theſe things amongſt them are ſubmitted unto the *judgement of the church*. For the church hath no rule to judge by but the ſcripture; and it can paſs but one judgement of what is not warranted thereby, namely, that it is to be rejected.

(3.) As it is deſcribed by thoſe who applaud it, it is not ſuited unto the *ſober ſedate actings of the rational faculties of our ſouls*. For whereas all that God requireth of us, is, that we love him with all our ſouls and all our minds,

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these men cry up a divine love by an *immediate adhesion of the will and affections unto God, without any actings of the mind and understanding at all.* Love indeed is the regular acting of our whole souls, by all their faculties and rational powers, in an adherence unto God. But these men have fancied a divine love for them whom they would admire and extol, which disturbs all their regular actings, and renders them of little or no use in that which, without their due exercise, is nothing but fancy. And hence it is, that, under pretence of this love, sundry persons among them, yea all that have pretended unto it, have fallen into such *ridiculous excesses* and open delusions, as sufficiently discover the vanity of the love itself pretended by them.

Wherefore we plead for *no other love unto the person of Christ*, but what the scripture warrants as unto its nature, what the gospel requireth of us as our duty, what the natural faculties of our minds are suited unto, and given us for, what they are enabled unto by grace, and without which, in some degree of sincerity, no man can yield acceptable obedience unto him.

These things being premised, that which we assert, is, *that there is, and ought to be in all believers, a religious gracious love unto the person of Christ*, distinct from, and the reason of, their obedience unto his commands; that is, it is distinct from all other commands; but is also itself commanded and required of us in a way of duty.

That there is in the church such a love unto the person of Christ, the scripture testifies both in the precepts it gives for it, and the examples of it. And all those who truly believe cannot apprehend that they understand any thing of faith, or love of Christ, or themselves, by whom it is called in question. If therefore I should enlarge on this subject, a great part of the doctrine of the scripture from first to last must be represented, and a transcript of the hearts of belivers, wherein this love is seated and prevalent, be made according to our ability. And there is no subject that I could more willingly enlarge upon; but I must at present contract myself in compliance with my design. Two things only I shall demonstrate. (1.) That the *person of Christ is the object of divine love.* (2.) What is the

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nature of that love in us; what are the grounds of it, and the motives unto it, in them that do believe.

1. In reference unto the firſt of theſe, the enſuing poſition ſhall be the ſubject of the remainder of this chapter.

The perſon of Chriſt is the principal object of the love of God, and of the whole creation participant of his image. The reaſon why I thus extend the aſſertion, will appear in the declaration of it.

(1.) No ſmall part of the eternal bleſſedneſs of the holy God, conſiſteth in the *mutual love of the Father and the Son, by the Spirit*. As he is the only-begotten of the Father, he is the firſt neceſſary, adequate, complete object of the whole love of the Father. Hence he ſays of himſelf, that *from eternity he was by him, as brought up with him, and was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him*, Prov. viii. 30. Which place was opened before. In him was the ineffable, eternal, unchangeable delight and complacency of the Father, as the full object of his love. The ſame is expreſſed in that deſcription of him, John i. 18. *The only-begotten Son, who is in the boſom of the Father*. His being the only-begotten Son declares his eternal relation unto the perſon of the Father, of whom he was begotten in the entire communication of the whole divine nature. Hereon he is in the *boſom of the Father*; in the eternal embraces of his love, as his only-begotten Son. The Father loves, and cannot but love his own nature and eſſential image in him.

Herein originally is God love. *For God is love*, 1 John iv. 8. This is the fountain and *prototype* of all love, as being eternal and neceſſary. All other acts of love are in God but emanations from hence, and effects of it. As *he doth good, becauſe he is good*, ſo he loveth, becauſe he is love. He is love eternally and neceſſarily in this love of the Son; and all other workings of love are but acts of his will, whereby ſomewhat of it is outwardly expreſſed. And all love in the creation was introduced from this fountain, to give a ſhadow and reſemblance of it.

Love is that which contemplative men have always almoſt adored. Many things have they ſpoken to evince it to be the light, life, luſtre, and glory of the whole creation.

tion. But the original and pattern of it, was always hid from the wisest *philosophers* of old. Something they reached after about God's love unto himself, with rest and complacency in his own infinite excellencies. But of this ineffable mutual love of the Father and the Son, both in and by that Spirit, which proceeds from them both, they had neither apprehension nor conjecture. Yet as herein doth the principal part (if we may so speak) of the blessedness of the holy God consist, so is it the only fountain and *prototype* of all that is truly called love. A blessing and glory which the creation had never been made partaker of, but only to express, according to the capacity of their several natures, this infinite and eternal love of God. For God's love of himself, which is natural and necessary unto the divine Being, consists in the mutual complacency of the Father and the Son by the Spirit. And it was to express himself, that God made any thing without himself. He made the heavens and the earth to express his being, goodness, and power. He created *man in his own image*, to express his holiness and righteousness; and he implanted *love* in our natures, to express this eternal mutual love of the holy persons of the Trinity. But we must leave it under the vail of infinite incomprehensibleness; though admiration and adoration of it be not without the highest spiritual satisfaction.

Again, he is the *peculiar object of the love of the Father*, of the love of God, as he is *incarnate*, as he hath taken on him, and hath now discharged the work of mediation, or continues in the discharge of it; that is, the *person of Christ as God-man*, is the peculiar object of the divine love of the Father. The person of Christ in his divine nature is the adequate object of that love of the Father which is *ad intra*, a natural necessary act of the divine essence in its distinct personal existence: and the person of Christ as *incarnate*, as clothed with human nature, is the first and full object of the love of the Father in those acts of it which are *ad extra*, or are towards any thing without himself. So he declares himself in the prospect of his future incarnation and work, *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth*, Isa. xlii. 1. The delight of the soul of God, his rest and complacency

complacency, which are the great effects of love, are in the Lord Chriſt as his elect and ſervant in the work of mediation. And the teſtimony hereof he renewed twice from heaven afterwards, Matth. iii. 17. *Lo, a voice from heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed;* as it is again repeated, Matth. xvii. 5. All things are diſpoſed to give a due ſenſe, unto us, of this love of God unto him. The teſtimony concerning it is *twice repeated* in the ſame words from heaven. And the words of it are *emphatical* unto the utmoſt of our comprehenſion. *My Son, my Servant, mine Elect, my beloved Son in whom I reſt, in whom I delight,* and am well pleaſed. It is the will of God to leave upon our hearts a ſenſe of this his love unto Chriſt; for this voice came from heaven, not for his ſake, who was always filled with a ſenſe of this divine love, but for ours, that we might believe it.

This he pleaded as the foundation of all the truſt repoſed in him, and all the power committed unto him: *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand,* John iii. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and ſheweth him all things that himſelf doth,* John v. 20. And the ſenſe or due apprehenſion of it, is the foundation of Chriſtian religion. Hence he prays, that we may *know that God hath loved him,* John xvii. 23. 26.

In this ſenſe, the perſon of Chriſt is the πρῶτον δεκτικον, the firſt recipient ſubject of all that divine love which extends itſelf unto the church. It is all, the *whole of it,* in the firſt place fixed upon him, and by and through him is communicated unto the church. Whatever it receives in grace and glory, it is but the ſtreams of this fountain, love unto himſelf. So he prays for all his diſciples, *that the love,* ſaith he, *wherewith thou haſt loved me, may be in them, and I in them,* John xvii. 26. They can be partakers of no other love, neither in itſelf nor in its fruits, but that alone wherewith the Father firſt loved him. He loveth him for us all, and us no otherwiſe but as in him. *He makes us accepted in the Beloved,* Eph. i. 6. He is the Beloved of the Father, κατ' ἐξοχήν; as in all things he was to have the pre-eminence, Col. i. 18. The love of the body is derived unto it from the love unto the head. And in the love of him doth God love the whole church,

and no otherwise. He loves none but as united unto him, and participant of his nature.

Wherefore the love of the Father unto the Son, as the only-begotten, and the essential image of his person, wherein the ineffable delight of the divine nature doth consist, was the fountain and cause of all love in the creation, by an act of the will of God for its representation. And the love of God the Father unto the person of Christ as *incarnate*, being the first adequate object of divine love wherein there is any thing *ad extra*, is the fountain and especial cause of all gracious love towards us and in us. And our love unto Christ being the only outward expression and representation of this love of the Father unto him, therein consists the principal part of our renovation into his image. Nothing renders us so like unto God as our love unto Jesus Christ, for he is the principal object of his love; in him doth his soul rest, in him is he always well pleased. Where-ever this is wanting, whatever there may be besides, there is nothing of the image of God. He that loves not Jesus Christ, let him be *anathema Maran-atha*; for he is unlike unto God, his carnal mind is enmity against God.

Among those who are in the *image of God*, the *angels* above are of the first consideration. We are indeed as yet much in the dark unto the things that are *within the vail*. They are *above* us as unto our present capacity, and *hid from us*, as unto our present state. But there is enough in the scripture to manifest the adhesion of *angels* unto the person of Christ by divine love. For love proceeding from sight, is the life of the church above; as love proceeding from faith is the life of the church below. And this life the angels themselves do live. For,

1. They were all, unto their inexpressible present advantage and security for the future, brought into that recovery and *recapitulation* of all things which God hath made in him. He hath *gathered together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him*, Eph. i. 10. The things in heaven, and things in earth, angels above, and men below, were originally united in the love of God. God's love unto them, whence springs their mutual love between themselves, was a bond of union

union between them, rendering them one complete *family of God* in heaven and earth, as it is called, Eph. iii. 15. On the entrance of ſin, whereby mankind forfeited their intereſt in the love of God, and loſt all love unto him, or any thing for him, this *union* was utterly diſſolved, and mutual enmity came into the place of its principle in love. God is pleaſed to *gather up* theſe divided parts of his *family* into one, in one head, which is Chriſt Jeſus. And as there is hereby an union eſtabliſhed again between *angels* and the church in love, ſo their adherence unto the head, the centre, life, and ſpring of this union, is by love, and no otherwiſe. It is not faith, but love that is the bond of this union between Chriſt and them; and herein no ſmall part of their bleſſedneſs and glory in heaven doth conſiſt.

2. That *worſhip*, adoration, ſervice, and obedience which they yield unto him, are all in like manner animated with love and delight. In love they cleave unto him, in love they worſhip and ſerve him. They had a command *to worſhip him* on his nativity, Heb. i. 6.; and they did it with joy, exultation, and praiſes, all effects of love and delight, Luke ii. 13. 14. And as they continue about the *throne of God*, they ſay with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing*, Rev. v. 11. 12. Their continual aſcription of glory and praiſe unto him, is an effect of reverential love and delight. And from thence alſo is their concernment in his goſpel and grace, Eph. iii. 9. 10. 1 Pet. i. 12. Nor without this love in the higheſt degree, can it be conceived how they ſhould be bleſſed and happy in their continual employment. For they are all *miniſtering ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter for the heirs of ſalvation*, Heb. i. 14. Were they not acted herein by their fervent love unto Chriſt, they could have no delight in their own miniſtry.

We have not, we cannot have in this world a full comprehenſion of the nature of *angelical love*. Our notions are but dark and uncertain in things whereof we can have no experience. Wherefore we cannot have here a clear intuition into the nature of the love of ſpirits, whilſt our

own is mixed with what derives from the actings of the animal spirits of our bodies also. But the blessedness of angels doth not consist in the endowments of their nature, that they are great in power, light, knowledge, and wisdom. For, notwithstanding these things, many of them became *devils*. But the excellency and blessedness of the *angelical state* consist in these two things. (1.) That they are disposed, and able constantly, inseparably, universally, uninterruptedly to cleave unto God in love. And as they do so unto God, so they do unto the person of Christ, and through him as their head unto God, even the Father. (2.) Add hereunto that gracious reflex sense which they have of the glory, dignity, eternal sweetness and satisfaction which ariseth from hence, and we have the sum of *angelical blessedness*.

3. The *church of mankind* is the other part of the rational creation, whereon the image of God is renewed. Love unto the person of Christ proceeding from faith, is their life, their joy, and glory.

It was so unto the *church under the Old Testament*. The whole *book of Canticles* is designed to no other purpose, but variously to shadow forth, to insinuate and represent the mutual love of Christ and the church. Blessed is he who understands the sayings of that book, and hath the experience of them in his heart. The forty-fifth psalm, among others, is designed unto the same purpose. All the glorious descriptions which are given of his person in the residue of the prophets, were only means to excite love unto him, and desires after him. Hence is he called חמדת כל גוים, Hag. ii. 7. *The desire of all nations*. He alone who is desirable unto, and the only beloved of the church, gathered out of all nations.

The clear revelation of the person of Christ, so as to render him the direct object of our love, with the causes and reasons of it, is one of the most eminent privileges of the New Testament. And it is variously attested in precepts, promises, instances, and solemn approbations.

Where-ever he supposeth or requireth this love in any of his *disciples*, it is not only as their duty, as that which they were obliged unto by the precepts of the gospel, but as that, without which no other duty whatever is accepted by

by him. *If*, ſaith he, *ye love me, keep my commandments*, John xiv. 15. He ſo requires love unto himſelf, as not to expect or approve of any obedience unto his commands without it. It is a great and bleſſed duty, to *feed the ſheep and lambs of Chriſt*; yet will not he accept of it, unleſs it proceeds out of love unto his perſon: *Simon ſon of Jonas, loveſt thou me, feed my lambs*, John xxi. 15. 16. 17. Three times did he repeat the ſame words to him, who had failed in his love towards him, by denying him thrice. Without this love unto him, he requires of none to feed his ſheep, nor will accept of what they pretend to do therein. It were a bleſſed thing, if a due apprehenſion hereof did always abide with them that are called unto that work.

Hereunto doth he annex thoſe bleſſed *promiſes*, which comprize the whole of our peace, ſafety, and conſolation in this world. *He* (ſaith he) *that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt myſelf unto him*, John xiv. 21. And ver. 23. *My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* What heart can conceive, what tongue can expreſs the glory of theſe promiſes, or the leaſt part of the grace that is contained in them? Who can conceive aright of the divine condeſcenſion, love, and grace that are expreſſed in them? How little a portion is it that we know of God in theſe things? But if we value them not, if we labour not for an *experience* of them, according unto our meaſure, we have neither lot nor portion in the goſpel. The preſence and abode of God with us as a Father, manifeſting himſelf to be ſuch unto us, in the infallible pledges and aſſurances of our adoption; the preſence of Chriſt with us, revealing himſelf unto us, with all thoſe ineffable mercies wherewith theſe things are accompanied, are all contained in them. And theſe promiſes are peculiarly given unto them that love the perſon of Chriſt, and in the exerciſe of love towards him.

Hereunto are deſigned the goſpel Gerizim and Ebal, the denunciation of bleſſings and curſes. As bleſſings are declared to be their portion *who love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*, Eph. vi. 24. ſo thoſe who love him not, have the ſubſtance of all curſes denounced againſt them, even *anathema Maran-atha*, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. So far ſhall ſuch perſons

perſons be, whatever they may profeſs of outward obedience unto the goſpel, from any bleſſed intereſt in the promiſes of it, as that they are juſtly liable unto final exciſion from the church in this world, and eternal malediction in that which is to come.

It is evident therefore, that *the love of the church* of believers unto the perſon of Chriſt, is not a diſtempered fancy, not a deluding imagination, as ſome have blaſphemed, but that which the nature of their relation unto him makes neceſſary; that wherein they expreſs their renovation into the image of God, that which the ſcripture indiſpenſably requires of them, and whereon all their ſpiritual comforts do depend. Theſe things being ſpoken in general, the particular nature, effects, operations, and motives of this divine love muſt now be farther inquired into.

CHAP. XIII.

The nature, operations, and cauſes of divine love, as it reſpects the perſon of Chriſt.

THAT we may the better underſtand that love unto the perſon of Chriſt which we plead for, ſome things muſt be premiſed concerning the *nature of divine love* in general, and thereon its application unto the particular actings and exerciſe of it which we inquire into, will be plain and eaſy.

God hath endued our nature with a faculty and ability of fixing our *love* upon himſelf. Many can underſtand nothing of love, but the adherence of their minds and ſouls unto things viſible and ſenſible, capable of a preſent natural enjoyment. For things unſeen, eſpecially ſuch as are eternal and infinite, they ſuppoſe they have a *veneration*, a religious reſpect, a devout adoration; but how they ſhould *love them*, they cannot underſtand. And the apoſtle doth grant, that there is a greater difficulty in loving things *that cannot be ſeen*, than in loving thoſe which are always viſibly preſent unto us, 1 John iv. 20. Howbeit this *divine love* hath a more fixed ſtation and prevalency

valency in the minds of men, than any other kind of love whatever. For,

1. The principal end why God endued our natures with that great and ruling affection, that hath the most eminent and peculiar power and interest in our souls, was, in the first place, that it might be *fixed on himself*, that it might be the instrument of our adherence unto him. He did not create this affection in us, that we might be able by it to cast ourselves into the embraces of things natural and sensual. No affection hath such power in the soul to cause it to cleave unto its object, and to work it unto a conformity unto it. Most other affections are transient in their operations, and work by a transport of nature, as anger, joy, fear, and the like. But love is capable of a constant exercise, is a spring unto all other affections, and unites the soul, with an efficacy not easy to be expressed, unto its object. And shall we think that God who *made all things for himself*, did create this ruling affection in and with our natures, merely that we might be able to turn from him, and cleave unto other things, with a power and faculty above any we have of adherence unto him? Wherefore, at our first creation, and in our primitive condition, *love* was the very soul and quickening principle of the life of God, and on our adherence unto him thereby, the continuance of our relation unto him did depend. The law, rule, and measure of it was, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul.* For this end did God create this affection in us. Not only our persons in their nature and being, but in all their powers and faculties, were fitted and prepared unto this end, of living unto God, and coming unto the enjoyment of him. And all their exercise on created objects was to be directed unto this end. Wherefore the placing of our love on any thing before God, or above him, is a formal expression of our apostasy from him.

2. *Divine excellencies* are a proper adequate object of our love. The will indeed can adhere unto nothing in love, but what the understanding apprehends as unto its truth and being. But it is not necessary that the understanding do fully comprehend the whole nature of that which the will doth so adhere unto. Where a discovery

is

is made unto and by the mind *of real goodneſs* and amiableneſs, the will there can cloſe with its affections. And theſe are apprehended as abſolutely the moſt perfect in the divine nature and holy properties of it. Whereas, therefore, not only that which is the *proper object of love* is in the divine excellencies, but it is there only perfectly and abſolutely, without the mixture of any thing that ſhould give it an allay, as there is in all creatures, they are the moſt ſuitable and adequate object of our love.

There is no greater diſcovery of the depravation of our natures by ſin, and degeneracy of our wills from their original rectitude, than that, whereas we are ſo prone to the love of other things, and therein do ſeek for ſatisfaction unto our ſouls, where it is not to be obtained, it is ſo hard and difficult to raiſe our hearts unto the love of God. Were it not for that depravation, he would always appear as the only ſuitable and ſatisfactory object unto our affections.

3. The eſpecial object of divine gracious love, is the *divine goodneſs*. *How great is his goodneſs, how great is his beauty?* Zech. ix. 17. Nothing is amiable, or a proper object of love, but what is *good*, and as it is ſo. Hence divine goodneſs, which is infinite, hath an abſolutely-perfect amiableneſs accompanying of it. Becauſe his goodneſs is inexpreſſible, his beauty is ſo. How great is his goodneſs, how great is his beauty? Hence are we called to give *thanks unto the Lord, and to rejoice in him*, which are the effects of love, *becauſe he is good*, Pſal. cvi. 1. cxxxvi. 1.

Neither is *divine goodneſs* the eſpecial object of our love as abſolutely conſidered. But we have a reſpect unto it as comprehenſive of all that mercy, grace, and bounty which are ſuited to give us the beſt relief in our preſent condition, and an eternal future reward. Infinite goodneſs exerting itſelf in all that mercy, grace, faithfulneſs and bounty which are needful unto our relief and bleſſedneſs in our preſent condition, is the proper object of our love. Whereas therefore this is done only in Chriſt, there can be no true love of the *divine goodneſs*, but in and through him alone.

The goodneſs of God as a creator, preſerver, and rewarder,

warder, was a sufficient, yea, the *adequate object* of all love antecedently unto the entrance of sin and misery. In them, in God under those considerations might the soul of man find full satisfaction as unto its present and future blessedness. But since the passing of sin, misery, and death upon us, our love can find no amiableness in any goodness, no rest, complacency, and satisfaction in any, but what is effectual in that grace and mercy by Christ, which we stand in need of, for our present recovery and future reward. Nor doth God require of us that we should love him otherwise, but as he *is in Christ, reconciling the word unto himself.* So the apostle fully declares it. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John iv. 9. 10. 16. God is love, of a nature infinitely good and gracious, so as to be the only object of all divine love. But this love can no way be known, or be so manifested unto us, as that we may and ought to love him, but by his *love in Christ,* his sending of him, and loving us in him. Before this, without this, we do not, we cannot love God. For *herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* This is the cause, the spring and fountain of all our love unto him. They are but empty notions and imaginations, which some speculative persons please themselves withal, about love unto the divine goodness absolutely considered. For however infinitely amiable it may be in itself, it is not so really unto them, it is not suited unto their state and condition, without the consideration of the communications of it unto us, in Christ.

4. These things being premised, we may consider the *especial nature* of this divine love, although I acknowledge that the least part of what believers have an experience of in their own souls, can be expressed at least by me. Some few things I shall mention, which may give us a shadow of it, but not the express image of the thing itself.

1. *Desire of union* and enjoyment is the first vital act of

this love. The ſoul, upon the diſcovery of the excellencies of God, earneſtly deſires to be *united* unto them, to be brought near unto that enjoyment of them whereof it is capable, and wherein alone it can find reſt and ſatisfaction. This is eſſential unto all love; it *unites the mind* unto its object, aud reſts not but in enjoyment. God's love unto us ariſeth out of the overflowing of his own immenſe goodneſs, whereof he will communicate the fruits and effects unto us. God is love, and herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his only-begotten Son. Yet alſo doth this love of God tend to the bringing of us *unto him*, not that he may enjoy us, but that he may be enjoyed by us. This anſwers the deſire of enjoyment in us, Job xiv. 15. *Thou ſhalt call me*, (that is, out of the duſt at the laſt day), *thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hands*. God's love will not reſt, until it hath brought us unto himſelf. But our love unto God ariſeth from a ſenſe of our own wants, our inſufficiency to come unto reſt in ourſelves, or to attain unto bleſſedneſs by our own endeavours. In this ſtate ſeeing *all in God*, and expecting all from the ſuitableneſs of his excellencies unto our reſt and ſatisfaction, our ſouls cleave unto them, with a deſire of the neareſt union whereof our natures are capable. We are made for him, and cannot reſt until we come unto him.

Our goodneſs *extends not* unto God; we cannot profit him by any thing that we are, or can do. Wherefore his love unto us hath not reſpect originally unto any good in ourſelves, but is a gracious free act of his own. He doth good for no other reaſon but becauſe he is good. Nor can his infinite perfections take any cauſe for their original actings without himſelf. He wants nothing that he would ſupply by the enjoyment of us. But we have *indigency* in ourſelves to cauſe our love to ſeek an object without ourſelves. And ſo his *goodneſs*, with the mercy, grace, and bounty included therein, is the cauſe, reaſon, and object of our love. We love them for themſelves; and becauſe we are wanting and indigent, we love them with a deſire of union and enjoyment, wherein we find that our ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs doth conſiſt. Love in general unites the mind unto the object, the perſon loving

loving unto the thing or person beloved. So is it expressed in an instance of human temporary changeable love, namely, that of Jonathan to David. *His soul was knit to the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul,* 1 Sam. xviii. 1. Love had so effectually united them, as that the soul of David was as his own. Hence are those expressions of this divine love, by *cleaving unto God, following hard after him, thirsting, panting* after him, with the like intimations of the most earnest endeavours of our nature after union and enjoyment.

When the soul hath a view by faith (which nothing else can give it) of the *goodness* of God as manifested in Christ, that is, of the essential excellencies of his nature as exerting themselves in him, it reacheth after him with its most earnest embraces, and is restless until it comes unto perfect fruition. It sees in God, the fountain of life, and would drink of the *rivers of his pleasures,* Psal. xvi. 8. 9. that in his *presence is fulness of joy,* and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore, Psal. xvi. 11. It longs and pants to drink of that fountain, to bathe itself in that river of pleasures; and wherein it comes short of present enjoyment, it lives in hopes that when we *awake, it shall be satisfied with his likeness,* Psal. xvii. 15. There is nothing grievous unto a soul filled with this love, but what keeps it from the full enjoyment of these excellencies of God. What doth so, naturally and necessarily it groans under. Such is our present state in the body, wherein in some sense we are *absent from the Lord,* 2 Cor. v. 4. 8. 9. And what doth so morally in the deviations of its will and affections, as *sin,* it hates and abhors, and loaths itself for. Under the conduct of this love, the whole tendency of the soul is unto the enjoyment of God; it would be lost in itself, and found in him; nothing in itself, and all in him. Absolute complacency herein, that God is what he is, that he should be what he is, and nothing else, and that as such we may be united unto him, and enjoy him according to the capacity of our natures, is the life of divine love.

2. It is a love of *assimulation.* It contains in it a desire and intense endeavour to be *like unto God,* according unto our capacity and measure. The soul sees all goodness,

and consequently all that is amiable and lovely in God, the want of all which it finds in itself. The fruition of this goodness is that which it longs for as its utmost end, and *conformity* unto it as the means thereof. There is no man who loves not God sincerely, but indeed he would have him to be somewhat that he is not, that he might be the more like unto him. This such persons are pleased withal whilst they can fancy it in any thing, Psal. l. 21. They that love him, would have him *be all that he is, as he is, and nothing else*, and would be themselves like unto him. And as love hath this tendency, and is that which gives disquietment unto the soul when and wherein we are unlike unto God; so it stirs up constant endeavours after *assimulation* unto him, and hath a principal efficacy unto that end. Love is the principle that actually *assimulates* and conforms us unto God, as faith is the principle which originally disposeth thereunto. In our renovation into the image of God, the *transforming power* is radically seated in faith, but *acts itself* by love. Love proceeding from faith, gradually changeth the soul into the likeness of God; and the more it is in exercise, the more is that change effected.

To labour after conformity unto God by outward actions only, is to make an *image of the living God*, hewed out of the stock of a dead tree. It is from this vital principle of *love* that we are not forced into it as by engines, but naturally grow up into the likness and image of God. For when it is duly affected with the excellencies of God in Christ, it fills the mind with thoughts and contemplations on them, and excites all the affections unto a delight in them. And where the soul acts itself constantly in the mind's contemplation, and the delight of the affections, it will produce *assimulation* unto the object of them. To love God is the only way and means to be like unto him.

3. It is a *love of complacency*, and therein of *benevolence*. Upon that view which we have by spiritual light and faith of the divine goodness, exerting itself in the way before described, our souls do approve of all that is in God, applaud it, and adore it, and acquiesce in it. Hence two great duties do arise, and hereon do they depend. First, *joyful ascriptions* of glory and honour unto God. All praise and

thanksgiving,

thanksgiving, all blessing, all assignation of glory unto him, because of his excellencies and perfections, do arise from our satisfactory complacency in them. *The righteous rejoice in the Lord, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness*, Psal xcvii. 12. They are so pleased and satisfied at the remembrance of God's holiness, that it fills their hearts with joy, and causeth them to break forth in praises. Praise is nothing but an outward expression of the inward complacency of our hearts, in the divine perfections and their operations. And secondly, love herein acts itself by *benevolence*, or the constant inclination of the mind unto all things, wherein the glory of God is concerned. It wills all the things wherein the name of God may be sanctified, his praises made glorious, and his will done in earth as it is in heaven. As God says of his own love unto us, *that he rejoiceth in it with singing, and resteth in it*, Zeph. iii. 17. as having the greatest complacency in it, rejoicing over us with his *whole heart and his whole soul*, Jer. xxxii. 41.; so, according unto our measure, do we by love rest in the glorious excellencies of God, rejoicing in them, with our whole hearts and our whole souls.

4. This divine love is a *love of friendship*. The communion which we have with God therein, is so intimate, and accompanied with such spiritual *boldness*, as gives it that denomination. So Abraham was called the *friend of God*, Is. xli. 8. James ii. 23. And because of that mutual trust which is between friends, *the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant*, Psal. xxv. 14. For as our Saviour teacheth us, *servants*, that is, those who are so, and no more, *know not what their lord doth*; he rules them, commands them, or requires obedience from them. But as unto his *secret*, his *design*, and purpose, his counsel and love, they know nothing of it. But saith he unto his disciples, *I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you*, John xv. 15. He proves them to be rightly called his friends, because of the communication of the secret of his mind unto them.

This is the great difference between them who are *only servants* in the house of God, and those who are *so servants*,

vants, as to be friends alſo. The ſame commands are given unto all equally, and the ſame duties are required of all equally, in as much as they are *equally ſervants*. But thoſe who are no more but ſo, know nothing of the *ſecret counſel*, love, and grace of God, in a due manner. For the natural man receiveth not the things that are of God. Hence all their obedience is *ſervile*. They know neither the principal motives unto it, nor the ends of it. But they who are *ſo ſervants*, as to be *friends alſo*, know what their lord doth; the ſecret of the Lord is with them, and he ſhews them of his covenant. They are admitted into an intimate acquaintance with the mind of Chriſt, (*we have the mind of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. ii. 16.), and are thereon encouraged to perform the obedience of *ſervants*, with the love and delight of *friends*.

The ſame love of friendſhip is expreſſed, by that intimate *converſe* with, and eſpecial *reſidence* that is between God and believers; God dwelleth in them, and they dwell in God, for God is love, 1 John iv. 16. *If a man*, ſaith the Lord Chriſt, *love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*, John xiv. 23. *And if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come unto him, and ſup with him, and he with me*, Rev. iii. 20. Theſe are not an empty ſound of words; there is ſubſtance under them, there is truth in them. Thoſe whoſe hearts are duly exerciſed in and unto the love of God, have experience of the refreſhing approaches both of the Father and of the Son unto their ſouls, in the communications of a ſenſe of their love, and pledges of their abode with them.

Theſe things have I briefly premiſed concerning the nature of *divine love*, that we may the better apprehend what we underſtand by it, in the application of it unto the perſon of Chriſt. For,

1. The *Formal object* of this love, is the *eſſential properties of the divine nature*, its infinite goodneſs in particular. Where-ever theſe are, there is the object and reaſon of this love. But they are all of them in the *perſon of the Son*, no leſs than in the perſon of the Father. As therefore we love the Father on this account, ſo are we to love the Son alſo. But,

2. The

2. The *person of Christ* is to be considered as he was incarnate or clothed with our nature. And this takes nothing off from the *formal reason* of this love, but only makes an addition unto the motives of it. This indeed for a season vailed the lovelinefs of his divine excellencies, and so turned aside the eyes of many from him. For when he took on him *the form of a servant, and made himself of no reputation,* he had unto them, who looked on him with carnal eyes, *neither form nor comlinefs* that he should be desired or beloved. Howbeit, the entire person of Christ God and man, is the object of this divine love, in all the acts of the whole exercise of it. That single effect of infinite wisdom and grace in the union of the divine and human natures, in the one person of the Son of God, renders him the object of this love in a *peculiar* manner. The way whereby we may attain this peculiar love and the motives unto it, shall close these considerations.

A due consideration of, and meditation on the proposal of the person of Christ unto us in the scripture, are the *proper foundation of this love.* This is the formal reason of our faith in him, and love unto him. He is so proposed unto us in the scripture, that we may *believe* in him, and *love him,* and for that very end. And in particular with respect unto our *love,* to ingenerate it in us, and to excite it unto its due exercise, are those excellencies of his person as the principal effect of divine wisdom and goodness, which we have before insisted on, frequently proposed unto us. To this end is he represented as *altogether lovely,* and the especial glories of his person are delineated, yea, drawn to the life in the holy records of the Old and New Testaments. It is no work of *fancy* or *imagination;* it is not the feigning images in our minds, of such things as are meet to satisfy our carnal affection, to excite and act them; but it is a due adherence unto that object which is represented unto faith in the proposal of the gospel. Therein, as in a glass, do we behold the glory of Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, and have our souls filled with transforming affections unto him.

The whole *book of Canticles* is nothing but a mystical declaration of the *mutual love* between Christ and the church. And it is expressed by all such ways and means

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as may repreſent it intenſe, fervent, and exceeding all other love whatever, which none I ſuppoſe will deny, at leaſt on the part of Chriſt. And a great part of it conſiſts in ſuch deſcriptions of the *perſon of Chriſt* and his love, as may render him *amiable* and deſireable unto our ſouls, even *altogether lovely*. To what end doth the Holy Spirit ſo *graphically* deſcribe and repreſent unto us the beauty and deſireableneſs of his perſon, if it be not to ingenerate love in us unto him. All want of love unto him on this propoſal, is the effect of prevalent unbelief. It is pretended, that the deſcriptions given of Chriſt in this *book*, are *allegorical*, from whence nothing can be gathered or concluded. But God forbid we ſhould ſo reflect on the wiſdom and love of the Holy Spirit unto the church, that he hath propoſed unto the faith of the church, an *empty ſound and noiſe of words* without mind or ſenſe. The expreſſions he uſeth are *figurative*, and the whole nature of the diſcourſe, as unto its outward ſtructure, is *allegorical*. But the things intended are real and ſubſtantial, and the *metaphors* uſed in the expreſſion of them, are ſuited, in a due attendance unto the *analogy* of faith, to convey a ſpiritual underſtanding and ſenſe of the things themſelves propoſed in them. The church of God will not part with the unſpeakable advantage and conſolation, thoſe ſupports of faith, and incentives of love, which it receives by that divine propoſal of the perſon of Chriſt and his love which is made therein, becauſe ſome men have no experience of them, nor underſtanding in them. The faith and love of believers, is not to be regulated by the ignorance and boldneſs of them, who have neither the one nor the other.

The title of the forty-fifth pſalm is, שִׁיר יְדִידוֹת, *A ſong of loves*; that is, of the mutual love of Chriſt and the church. And unto this end that our ſouls may be ſtirred up unto the moſt ardent affections towards him, is a deſcription given us of his perſon, as altogether lovely. To what other end is he ſo evidently delineated in the whole harmony of his divine beauties by the pencil of the Holy Spirit?

Not to inſiſt on particular teſtimonies, it is evident unto all whoſe eyes are opened to diſcern theſe things, that there is no property of the divine nature which is peculiarly

liarly amiable, such as are *goodness*, *grace*, *love*, and *bounty*, with infinite power and holiness, but it is represented and proposed unto us in the person of the Son of God, to this end, that we should love him above all, and cleave unto him. There is nothing in the *human nature*, in that fulness of grace and truth which dwelt therein, in that inhabitation of the Spirit which was in him without measure, in any thing of those *all things* wherein he hath the *pre-eminence*, nothing in his love, condescension, grace, and mercy, nothing in the work that he fulfilled, what he did and suffered therein; nothing in the benefits we receive thereby; nothing in the power and glory that he is exalted unto at the right hand of God, but it is set forth in the scripture and proposed unto us, that believing in him we may *love him* with all our hearts and souls. And besides all this, that singular, that infinite effect of divine wisdom, whereunto there is nothing like in all the works of God, and wherewith none of them may be compared, namely, the *constitution of his person by the union of his natures* therein, whereby he becomes *unto us* the image of the invisible God, and wherein all the blessed excellencies of his distinct natures are made most illustriously conspicuous, in becoming one entire principle of all his mediatory operations on our behalf, is proposed unto us as the complete object of our faith and love. This is that person, whose loveliness and beauty all the angels of God, all the holy ones above do eternally admire and adore. In him are the infinite treasures of divine wisdom and goodness continually represented unto them. This is he, who is the joy, the delight, the love, the glory of the church below. *Thou whom our souls do love*, is the title whereby they know him and converse with him, Cant. i. 7. chap. iii. 1. 4. This is he who is the desire of all nations, the Beloved of God and men.

The mutual intercourse on this ground of love between Christ and the church, is the *life and soul* of the whole creation; for on the account hereof all things consist in him.

There is more glory under the eye of God, in the sighs, groans, and mournings of poor souls filled with the *love of Christ*, after the enjoyment of him according to his

promiſes, in their fervent prayers for his manifeſtation of himſelf unto them, in the refreſhments and unſpeakable joys which they have in his gracious viſits and embraces of his love, than in the thrones and diadems of all the monarchs on the earth. Nor will they themſelves part with the ineffable ſatisfactions which they have in theſe things, for all that this world can do for them, or unto them. *Mallem ſuere cum Chriſto, quam regnare cum Cæſare.* Theſe things have not only rendered priſons and dungeons more deſirable unto them than the moſt goodly palaces on future accounts; but have made them really places of ſuch *refreſhment* and joys, as men ſhall ſeek in vain to extract out of all the comforts that this world can afford.

O curvæ in terris animæ et cœleſtium inanes.

Many there are who not comprehending, not being affected with that divine ſpiritual deſcription of the perſon of Chriſt which is given us by the Holy Ghoſt in the ſcripture, do feign unto themſelves *falſe repreſentations* of him by *images and pictures*, ſo to excite carnal and corrupt affections in their minds. By the help of their outward ſenſes, they reflect on their imaginations the ſhape of an human body, caſt into poſtures and circumſtances dolorous or triumphant, and ſo by the working of their fancy raiſe a *commotion* of mind in themſelves, which they ſuppoſe to be love unto Chriſt. But all theſe idols are teachers of lies. The true beauty and amiableneſs of the perſon of Chriſt, which is the formal object and cauſe of *divine love*, is ſo far from being repreſented herein, as that the mind is thereby wholly diverted from the contemplation of it. For no more can be ſo pictured unto us, but what may belong unto a mere man, and what is arbitrarily referred unto Chriſt, not by faith, but by corrupt imagination.

The *beauty of the perſon of Chriſt* as repreſented in the ſcripture, conſiſts in things inviſible unto the eyes of fleſh. They are ſuch as no hand of man can repreſent or ſhadow. It is the eye of faith alone that can ſee this *King in his beauty*. What elſe can contemplate on the *uncreated glories* of his divine nature? can the hand of man repreſent the

the union of his natures in the same person, wherein he is peculiarly amiable? what eye can discern the mutual communications of the properties of his different natures in the same person which depends thereon, whence it is that *God laid down his life for us, and purchased his church with his own blood?* In these things, O vain man, doth the loveliness of the person of Christ unto the souls of believers consist, and not in those strokes of art which fancy hath guided a skilful hand and pencil unto. And what eye of flesh can discern the *inhabitation of the Spirit* in all fulness in the human nature? Can his condescension, his love, his grace, his power, his compassion, his offices, his fitness, and ability to save sinners, be deciphered on a tablet, or engraven on wood or stone? However such pictures may be adorned, however beautified and enriched, they are not *that Christ* which the soul of the spouse doth love; they are not any means of representing his love unto us, or of conveying our love unto him; they only divert the minds of superstitious persons from the Son of God, unto the embraces of a cloud, composed of fancy and imagination.

Others there are who abhor these *idols*, and when they have so done commit *sacrilege*. As they reject images, so they seem to do all love unto the person of Christ, distinct from other acts of obedience, as a fond imagination. But the most superstitious love unto Christ, that is, love acted in ways tainted with superstition, is better than none at all. But with what eyes do such persons read the scriptures? with what hearts do they consider them? what do they conceive is the intention of the Holy Ghost in all those *descriptions* which he gives us of the person of Christ, as *amiable* and desirable above all things, making therewithal a proposal of him unto our affections, inciting us to receive him by faith, and to cleave unto him in love? yea, to what end is our nature endued with this affection? unto what end is the power of it renewed in us by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, if it may not be fixed on this most proper and excellent object of it?

This is the foundation of our love unto Christ, namely, the *revelation and proposal of him unto us in the scripture*, as altogether lovely. The discovery that is made therein

of the glorious excellencies and endowments of his perſon, of his love, his goodneſs, and grace, of his worth and work, is that which engageth the *affections of believers* unto him. It may be ſaid, that if there be ſuch a *propoſal of him* made unto all promiſcuouſly, then all would equally diſcern his amiableneſs, and be affected with it, who aſſent equally unto the truth of that revelation. But it hath always fallen out otherwiſe. In the days of his fleſh, ſome that looked on him could ſee neither *form nor comelineſs in him* wherefore he ſhould be deſired. Others ſaw his glory, *the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* To ſome he is *precious*, unto others he is *diſallowed and rejected;* a ſtone which the builders refuſed, when others brought it forth, crying, *Grace, grace* unto it, as the head of the corner. Some can ſee nothing but weakneſs in him; unto others the wiſdom and power of God do evidently ſhine forth in him. Wherefore it muſt be ſaid, that notwithſtanding that open plain repreſentation that is made of him in the ſcripture, unleſs the Holy Spirit give us eyes to diſcern it, and circumciſe our hearts, by the cutting off corrupt prejudices, and all effects of unbelief, implanting in them by the efficacy of his grace, this bleſſed affection of love unto him, all theſe things will make no impreſſion on our minds.

As it was with the people on the *giving of the law*; notwithſtanding all the great and mighty works which God had wrought among them, yet having not given them *a heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear*, which he affirms that he had not done, Deut. xxix. 4; they were not moved unto faith or obedience by them. So is it in the preaching of the goſpel. Notwithſtanding all the bleſſed revelation that is made of the excellencies of the perſon of Chriſt therein, yet thoſe into whoſe hearts God doth not ſhine, to give the knowledge of his glory in his face, can diſcern nothing of it, nor are their hearts affected with it.

We do not therefore in theſe things *follow cunningly deviſed fables;* we do not indulge unto our own fancies and imaginations; they are not *unaccountable raptures* or *ecſtaſies* which are pretended unto; nor ſuch an artificial concatenation of thoughts, as ſome, ignorant of theſe things

things do boaſt that they can give an account of. Our love to Chriſt ariſeth alone from the revelation that is made of him in the ſcripture, is ingenerated, regulated, meaſured, and is to be judged thereby.

CHAP. XIV.

Motives unto the love of Chriſt.

THE *motives* unto this love of Chriſt, is the laſt thing on this head of our *religious reſpect* unto him, that I ſhall ſpeak unto.

When God required of the church the firſt and higheſt act of religion, the ſole foundation of all others, namely, to *take him as their God*, to own, believe, and truſt in him alone as ſuch, which is wholly due unto him for what he is, without any other conſideration whatever; yet he thought meet to add a *motive* unto the performance of that duty, from what he had done for them, Exod. xx. 1. 2. The ſenſe of the firſt command is, that we ſhould take him alone for our God; for he is ſo, and there is no other. But in the preſcription of this duty unto the church, he minds them of the benefits which they had received from him, in *bringing them out of the houſe of bondage.*

God in his wiſdom and grace ordereth all the cauſes and reaſons of our duty, ſo as that all the rational powers and faculties of our ſouls may be exerciſed therein. Wherefore he doth not only *propoſe himſelf* unto us, nor is Chriſt merely propoſed unto us as the proper object of our affections, but he calls us alſo unto the conſideration of all thoſe things that may ſatisfy our ſouls that it is the moſt juſt, neceſſary, reaſonable, and advantageous courſe for us ſo to fix our affections on him.

And theſe conſiderations are taken from all that he did for us, with the reaſons and grounds why he did it. We love him principally and *ultimately* for what he *is*; but nextly and immediately for what he *did*. What he did for us, is firſt propoſed unto us, and it is that which our ſouls are firſt affected withal. For they are originally act-

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ed in all things by a ſenſe of the *want* which they have, and a deſire of the *bleſſedneſs* which they have not. This directs them unto what he hath done for ſinners, but that leads immediately unto the conſideration of what he is in himſelf. And when our love is fixed on him, or his perſon, then all thoſe things, wherewith from a ſenſe of our own wants and deſires we were firſt affected, become *motives* unto the confirming and increaſing of that love. This is the conſtant method of the ſcripture; it firſt propoſeth unto us what the Lord Chriſt hath done for us, eſpecially in the diſcharge of his *ſacerdotal office*, in his oblation and interceſſion, with the benefits which we receive thereby. Hereby it leads us unto his perſon, and preſſeth the conſideration of all other things to engage our love unto him. See Phil. ii. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. with chap. iii. 8. 9. 10. 11.

The *motives* unto the love of Chriſt are ſo great, ſo many, ſo diffuſed through the whole diſpenſation of God in him unto us, as that they can by no hand be fully expreſſed, let it be allowed never ſo much to enlarge in the declaration of them; much leſs can they be repreſented in that ſhort diſcourſe, whereof but a very ſmall part is allotted unto their conſideration, ſuch as ours is at preſent. The ſtudying, the collection of them, or ſo many of them as we are able, the meditation on them, and improvement of them, is among the principal *duties* of our whole lives. What I ſhall offer is the reduction of them unto theſe two heads. (1.) The *acts of Chriſt*, which is the ſubſtance of them. And, (2.) The *ſpring and fountain* of thoſe acts, which is the life of them.

1. In general, they are all the acts of his *mediatory office*, with all the fruits of them whereof we are made partakers. There is not any thing that he *did* or *doth* in the diſcharge of his mediatory office, from the firſt ſuſception of it in his incarnation in the womb of the bleſſed virgin, unto his preſent interceſſion in heaven, but is an effectual *motive* unto the love of him, and as ſuch is propoſed unto us in the ſcripture. Whatever he did or doth, with or towards us in the name of God, as the King and Prophet of the church, whatever he did or doth with God for us as our

our High Prieſt, it all ſpeaks this language in the hearts of them that believe; *O love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity.*

The conſideration of what Chriſt thus did and doth for us, is inſeparable from that of the benefits which we receive thereby. A due mixture of both theſe, of what he did for us, and what we obtain thereby, compriſeth the ſubſtance of theſe motives. *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me. Who loved us, and waſhed us in his own blood, and made us kings and prieſts unto God. For thou waſt ſlain, and haſt bought us unto God with thy blood.* And both theſe are of a tranſcendent nature, requiring our love to be ſo alſo. Who is able to comprehend the glory of the mediatory actings of the Son of God, in the aſſumption of our nature, in what he did and ſuffered therein? and for us, eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive, what we receive thereby. The leaſt benefit, and that obtained by the leaſt expence of trouble or charge, deſerveth love, and leaveth the brand of a crime, where it is not ſo entertained. What then do the greateſt deſerve, and thoſe procured by the greateſt expence; even the price of the blood of the Son of God?

If we have any faith concerning theſe things, it will produce *love*, as that love will obedience. Whatever we profeſs concerning them, it ſprings from *tradition* and *opinion*, and not from faith, if it engage not our ſouls into the love of him. The frame of heart which enſues on the real faith of theſe things, is expreſſed, Pſal. ciii. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul: and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diſeaſes. Who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindneſs and tender mercies. Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things: ſo that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.* Let men pretend what they will, there needs no greater, no other evidence, to prove that any one doth not really believe the things that are reported in the goſpel concerning the mediatory actings of Chriſt, or that he hath no experience in his own ſoul and conſcience of the fruits and effects of them, than this,

that

that his heart is not engaged by them unto the moſt *ardent love towards his perſon.*

He is no Chriſtian who lives not much in the meditation of the *mediation of Chriſt*, and the eſpecial acts of it. Some may more abound in that work than others, as it is fixed, formed and regular. Some may be more able than others to diſpoſe their thoughts concerning them, into method and order. Some may be more diligent than others in the obſervation of times for the ſolemn performance of this duty. Some may be able to riſe to higher and clearer apprehenſions of them than others. But as for thoſe, the bent of whoſe minds doth not lie towards thoughts of them, whoſe hearts are not on all *occaſions* retreating unto the remembrance of them, who embrace not all opportunities to call them over as they are able; on what grounds can they be eſteemed *Chriſtians?* How do they live by the faith of the Son of God? Are the *great things of the goſpel*, of the mediation of Chriſt, propoſed unto us, as thoſe which we may think of when we have nothing elſe to do, that we may meditate upon, or neglect at our pleaſure, as thoſe wherein our concernment is ſo ſmall, as that they muſt give place unto all other occaſions or diverſions whatever? Nay, if our minds are not filled with theſe things; if Chriſt doth not *dwell plentifully in our hearts by faith*; if our ſouls are not poſſeſſed with them, and in their whole inward frame and conſtitution ſo caſt into this mould, as to be led by a natural complacency unto a converſe with them, we are ſtrangers unto the life of faith. And if we are thus converſant about theſe things, they will engage our hearts into the *love of the perſon of Chriſt*. To ſuppoſe the contrary, is indeed to deny the truth and reality of them all, and to turn the goſpel into a fable.

Take one inſtance from among the reſt; namely, his *death*. Hath he the heart of a Chriſtian, who doth not often meditate on the death of his Saviour, who doth not derive his life from it? Who can look into the goſpel, and not fix on thoſe lines which either immediately and directly, or through ſome other paths of divine grace and wiſdom, do lead him thereunto? And can any have believing thoughts concerning the death of Chriſt, and not

have his heart affected with *ardent love* unto his perſon? Chriſt in the goſpel *is evidently ſet forth, crucified before us.* Can any by the eye of faith look on this bleeding dying Redeemer, and ſuppoſe love unto his perſon to be nothing but the work of fancy or imagination? They know the contrary, who always bear about in the body, *the dying of the Lord Jeſus;* as the apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 Cor. iv. 10. As his whole name, in all that he did, is an *ointment poured forth,* for which *the virgins love him,* Cant. i. 3.; ſo this precious perfume of his death, is that wherewith their hearts are raviſhed in a peculiar manner.

Again; as there can be no faith in Chriſt, where there is no *love* unto him, on the account of his mediatory acts; ſo, where it is not, the want of it caſteth perſons under the higheſt guilt of *ingratitude* that our nature is liable unto. The higheſt aggravation of the ſin of *angels,* was their *ingratitude* unto their Maker. For whereas by his mere will and pleaſure they were ſtated in the higheſt excellency, pre-eminence, and dignity, that he thought good to communicate unto any creatures, or it may be, that any mere created nature is capable of in itſelf; they were unthankful for what they had ſo received from undeſerved goodneſs and bounty, and ſo caſt themſelves into everlaſting ruin. But yet the ſins of men in their *ingratitude* towards Chriſt on the account of what he hath done for them, is attended with an *aggravation* above that of the angels. For although the angels were originally inſtated in that condition of dignity, which in this world we cannot attain unto, yet were they not redeemed and recovered from miſery, as we are.

In all the croud of evil and wicked men, that the world is peſtered withal, there are none by common conſent ſo ſtigmatized for unworthy villany, as thoſe who are *ſignally* ungrateful, for ſingular benefits. If perſons are unthankful *unto* them, if they have not the higheſt *love for them,* who redeem them from ignominy and death, and inſtate them in a plentiful inheritance, (if any ſuch inſtances may be given), and that with the greateſt expence of labour and charge; mankind without any regret doth tacitly condemn them unto greater miſeries than thoſe which they were delivered from. What then will be the condition

of them, whoſe hearts are not ſo affected with the mediation of Chriſt, and the fruits of it, as to engage the beſt, the choiceſt of their affections unto him? the goſpel itſelf will be *a ſavour of death* unto ſuch ungrateful wretches.

2. That which the ſcripture principally inſiſteth on as the *motives* of our love unto Chriſt, is his *love unto us*, which was the principle of all his mediatory actings in our behalf.

Love is that *jewel* of human nature which commands a valuation where-ever it is found. Let other circumſtances be what they will, whatever diſtances between perſons may be made by them, yet *real love* where it is evidenced ſo to be, is not deſpiſed by any but ſuch as degenerate into profligate brutality. If it be ſo ſtated as that it can produce no outward effects advantageous unto them that are beloved, yet it commands a reſpect as it were, whether we will or no, and ſome return in its own kind. Eſpecially it doth ſo, if it be altogether *undeſerved*, and ſo evidenceth itſelf to proceed from a goodneſs of nature, and an inclination unto the good of them on whom it is fixed. For whereas the eſſential nature of love conſiſteth in willing good unto them that are beloved; where the act of the will is real, ſincere and conſtantly exerciſed, without any defect of it on our part; no reſtraints can poſſibly be put upon our minds from going out in ſome *acts of love* again upon its account, unleſs all their faculties are utterly depraved, by habits of brutiſh and filthy luſts. But when this love, which is thus undeſerved, doth alſo abound in effects *troubleſome* and *chargeable* in them in whom it is, and highly *beneficial* unto them on whom it is placed, if there be any ſuch affection left in the nature of any man, it will prevail unto a reciprocal love. And all theſe things are found in the love of Chriſt, unto that degree and height, as nothing parallel unto it can be found in the whole creation. I ſhall briefly ſpeak of it under two general heads.

1. The ſole ſpring of all the mediatory actings of Chriſt, both in the ſuſception of our nature, and in all that he did and ſuffered therein, was his own *mere love and grace* working by pity and compaſſion. It is true, he undertook this work principally with reſpect unto the glory of God, and out of love unto him. But with reſpect unto us,

us, his *only motive* unto it was his abundant overflowing love. And this is eſpecially remembered unto us in that inſtance wherein it carried him through the greateſt difficulties, namely, in his *death* and the oblation of himſelf on our behalf, Gal. ii. 20. Eph. v. 2. 25. 26. 1 John iii. 16. Rev. i. 5. 6. This alone inclined the Son of God to undertake the glorious work of our redemption, and carried him through the death and dread which he underwent in the accompliſhment of it.

Should I engage into the conſideration of this *love of Chriſt*, which was the great means of the conveying all the effects of divine wiſdom and grace unto the church; that glaſs which God choſe to repreſent himſelf and all his goodneſs in unto believers; that Spirit of life in the wheel of all the motions of the perſon of Chriſt in the redemption of the church unto the eternal glory of God, his own and that of his redeemed alſo; that mirror, wherein the holy angels and bleſſed ſaints ſhall for ever contemplate the divine excellencies in their ſuitable operations; I muſt now begin a *diſcourſe* much larger than that which I have paſſed through: but it is not ſuited unto my preſent deſign ſo to do. Nor conſidering the growing apprehenſions of many about the perſon of Chriſt, which are utterly deſtructive of the whole nature of that *love* which we aſcribe unto him, do I know how ſoon a more diſtinct explication and defence of it may be called for. And this cauſe will not be forſaken.

They know nothing of the life and power of the goſpel, nothing of the reality of the grace of God, nor do they believe aright one *article of the Chriſtian faith*, whoſe hearts are not ſenſible of the *love of Chriſt* herein. Nor is he ſenſible of the *love of Chriſt*, whoſe affections are not thereon drawn out unto him. I ſay, they make a *pageant* of religion, a fable for the theatre of the world, a buſineſs of fancy and opinion, whoſe hearts are not really affected with the love of Chriſt, in the ſuſception and diſcharge of the work of mediation, ſo as to have real and ſpiritually ſenſible affections for him. Men may *babble* things which they have learned by rote; they have no real *acquaintance* with Chriſtianity, who imagine that the placing of the moſt intenſe affections of our ſouls on the perſon of Chriſt,

the loving him with all our hearts becauſe of his love, our being overcome thereby, until we are *ſick of love*, the conſtant motions of our ſouls towards him with delight and adherence, are but *fancies and imaginations*. I *renounce that religion*, be it whoſe it will, that teacheth, inſinuateth, or giveth countenance unto ſuch abominations. That doctrine is as diſcrepant from the goſpel as the *Alcoran*, as contrary to the experience of believers, as what is acted in and by the *devils*, which inſtructs men unto a contempt of the moſt fervent love unto Chriſt, or caſts reflections upon it. I had rather chooſe my eternal lot and portion with the *meaneſt believer*, who being effectually ſenſible of the love of Chriſt, ſpends his days in mourning that he can *love him no more* than he finds himſelf, on his utmoſt endeavours for the diſcharge of his duty to do, than with the beſt of them, whoſe vain ſpeculations, and a falſe pretence of reaſon, puff them up unto a contempt of theſe things.

2. This love of Chriſt unto the church, is *ſingular* in all thoſe qualifications which render love obliging unto reciprocal affections. It is ſo in its *reality*. There can be no love amongſt men, but will derive ſomething from that diſorder which is in their affections, in their higheſt actings. But the love of Chriſt is *pure*, and abſolutely *free* from any allay. There cannot be the leaſt ſuſpicion of any thing of *ſelf* in it. And it is abſolutely *undeſerved*. Nothing can be found amongſt men, that can repreſent or exemplify its freedom from any deſert on our part. The moſt candid and ingenuous love amongſt us, is when we love another for his worth, excellency, and uſefulneſs, though we have no *ſingular benefit* of them ourſelves. But not the leaſt of any of theſe things were found in them on whom he ſet his *love*, until they were wrought in them, as effects of that love which he ſet upon them.

Men ſometimes may riſe up unto ſuch an high degree and inſtance in love, as that they will *even die for one another*; but then it muſt be on a ſuperlative eſteem which they have of their worth and merit. It may be, ſaith the apoſtle, treating of the love of Chriſt, and of God in him, *that for a good man even one would dare to die*, Rom. v. 7. It muſt be for a *good* man, one who is juſtly eſteemed

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commune bonum, a public good to mankind; one whose benignity is ready to exercise loving-kindness on all occasions, which is the estate of a good man; peradventure some would *even dare to die* for such a man. This is the height of what love among men can arise unto; and if it hath been instanced in any, it hath been accompanied with an open mixture of *vain glory*, and desire of renown. But the Lord Christ placed his love *on us*, that love from whence he died for us, when we *were sinners and ungodly*; that is, every thing which might render us unamiable and undeserving. Though we were as *deformed* as sin could render us, and more deeply *indebted* than the whole creation could pay or answer, yet did he fix his love upon us, to free us from that condition, and to render us meet for the most intimate society with himself. Never was there love which had such effects, which cost him so dear in whom it was, and proved so advantageous unto them on whom it was placed. In the pursuit of it, he underwent *every thing that is evil* in his own person, and we receive *every thing that is good* in the favour of God, and eternal blessedness.

On the account of these things, the apostle ascribeth a *constraining power* unto the love of Christ, 2 Cor. v. 14. And if it constraineth us unto any return unto him, it doth so unto that of love in the first place. For no suitable return can be made for love but love, at least not without it. As love cannot be purchased, for *if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned*, Cant. viii. 7.; so if a man would give all the world for a requital of love, without love, it would be despised. 'To fancy that all the love of Christ unto us, consists in the *precepts* and promises of the gospel, and all our love unto him, in the *observance of his commands*, without a real love in him unto our persons, like that of a *husband unto a wife*, Eph. v. 25. 26. or an holy affection in our hearts and minds unto his person, is to overthrow the whole power of religion, to despoil it of its life and soul, leaving nothing but the carcase of it.

This love unto Christ, and unto God in him, because of his love unto us, is the principal instance of *divine love*, the touchstone of its reality and sincerity. Whatever men

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may boaſt of their affectionate endearments unto the *divine goodneſs*, if it be not founded in a ſenſe of this love of Chriſt, and the love of God in him, they are but *empty notions* they flouriſh withal, and their deceived hearts feed upon aſhes. It is in Chriſt alone that God is declared to be *love*, without an apprehenſion whereof, none can *love him* as they ought. In him alone, that infinite goodneſs which is the peculiar object of divine love, is truly repreſented unto us, without any ſuch deceiving *phantaſms*, as the workings of fancy, or depravation of reaſon may impoſe upon us. And on him doth the ſaving communication of all the effects of it depend. And an infinite condeſcenſion is it in the holy God, ſo to expreſs his *glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, or to propoſe himſelf as the object of our love in and through him. For conſidering our weakneſs, as to an immediate comprehenſion of the infinite excellencies of the divine nature, or to bear the rays of his reſplendent glory, ſeeing none can ſee *his face and live*, it is the moſt adorable effect of divine wiſdom and grace, that we are admitted unto the contemplation of them, in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt.

There is yet farther evidence to be given unto this love unto the perſon of Chriſt, from all thoſe *bleſſed effects* of it which are declared in the ſcripture, and whereof believers have the experience in themſelves. But ſomething I have ſpoken concerning them formerly in my diſcourſe about *Communion with God*, and the nature of the preſent deſign will not admit of enlargement upon them.

CHAP. XV.

Conformity unto Chriſt, and following his example.

THE third thing propoſed to declare *the uſe of the perſon of Chriſt in religion*, is that *conformity* which is required of us unto him. This is the great deſign and projection of all believers. Every one of them hath the *idea* or *image* of Chriſt in his mind; in the eye of faith, as

as it is repreſented unto him in the glaſs of the goſpel. Κατοπτριζόμενοι την δόξαν κυρίυ, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *We behold his glory in a glaſs*, which implants the image of it on our minds. And hereby the mind is *transformed into the ſame image*, made like unto Chriſt ſo repreſented unto us, which is the conformity we ſpeak of. Hence every true believer hath his heart under the conduct of an *habitual inclination* and deſire to be like unto Chriſt. And it were eaſy to demonſtrate that where this is not, there is neither faith nor love. Faith will caſt the ſoul into the *form or frame of the thing believed*, Rom. vi. 17. And all ſincere love worketh an aſſimulation. Wherefore the beſt evidence of a real principle of the life of God in any ſoul, of the ſincerity of faith, love, and obedience, is an internal cordial endeavour, operative on all occaſions, after *conformity* unto Jeſus Chriſt.

There are two parts of the duty propoſed. The firſt reſpects the *internal grace and holineſs* of the human nature of Chriſt; the other his *example in duties of obedience*. And both of them, both *materially*, as to the things wherein they conſiſt, and *formally*, as they were his, or in him, belong unto the conſtitution of a true diſciple.

1. *Intérnal conformity unto his habitual grace and holineſs*, is the fundamental deſign of a Chriſtian life. That which is the beſt without it, is a pretended imitation of his example in outward duties of obedience. I call it *pretended*, becauſe, where the firſt deſign is wanting, it is no more but ſo; nor is it acceptable to Chriſt, nor approved by him. And therefore an attempt unto that end hath often iſſued in formality, hypocriſy, and ſuperſtition. I ſhall therefore lay down the grounds of this deſign, the nature of it, and the means of its purſuit.

God, in the *human nature* of Chriſt, did perfectly renew that bleſſed image of his on our nature, which we loſt in Adam, with an addition of many glorious endowments which Adam was not made partaker of. God did not renew it in his nature, as though that portion of it whereof he was partaker, had ever been deſtitute or deprived of it, as it is with the ſame nature in all other perſons. For he derived not his nature from Adam in the ſame way that we do; nor was he ever in Adam as the public repreſentative

tive of our nature, as we were. But our nature in him had the image of God implanted in it, which was loſt and ſeparated from the ſame nature, in all other inſtances of its ſubſiſtence. It pleaſed the Father that in him *all fulneſs ſhould dwell*, that he ſhould be *full of grace and truth*, and in all things have the pre-eminence. But of theſe gracious endowments of the human nature of Chriſt, I have diſcourſed elſewhere.

2. One end of God in *filling the human nature of Chriſt with all grace*, in implanting his glorious image upon it, was, that he might in him propoſe an *example* of what he would by the ſame *grace* renew us unto, and what we ought in a way of *duty* to labour after. The fulneſs of grace was neceſſary unto the human nature of Chriſt, from its *hypoſtatical union* with the Son of God. For whereas therein the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily*, it became τὸ ἅγιον, an *holy thing*, Luke i. 35. It was alſo neceſſary unto him, as unto his *own obedience* in the fleſh, wherein he fulfilled all righteouſneſs, did no ſin, *neither was guile found in his mouth*, 1 Pet. ii. 22. And it was ſo unto the diſcharge of the office he undertook: for *ſuch an High Prieſt became us, who was holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate from ſinners*, Heb. vii. 26. Howbeit, the infinite wiſdom of God had this farther deſign in it alſo, namely, that he might be the *pattern* and *example* of the renovation of the image of God in us, and of the glory that doth enſue thereon. He is in the eye of God as the *idea* of what he intends in us, in the communication of grace and glory; and he ought to be ſo in ours, as unto all that we aim at in a way of duty.

He hath *predeſtinated us to be conformed unto the image of his Son, that he might be the firſt-born among many brethren*, Rom. viii. 30. In the collation of all grace on Chriſt, God deſigned to make *him the firſt-born of many brethren*; that is, not only to give him the power and authority of the firſt-born, with the truſt of the whole inheritance to be communicated unto them, but alſo as the *example* of what he would bring them unto. *For both he that ſanctifieth, and they that are ſanctified, are all of one; for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them brethren*, Heb. ii. 11. It is Chriſt who ſanctifieth believers; yet

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is it from God, who firſt ſanctified him, that he and they might be *of one*, and ſo become *brethren*, as bearing the image of the ſame Father. God deſigned and gave unto Chriſt *grace and glory*; and he did it that he might be the *prototype* of what he deſigned unto us, and would beſtow upon us. Hence the apoſtle ſhews that the effect of this *predeſtination* to conformity unto the image of the Son, is the communication of all effectual ſaving grace, with the glory that enſues thereon, ver. 30. *Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called; and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.*

The great deſign of God in his grace is, that as we have borne the *image of the firſt Adam*, in the depravation of our natures, ſo we ſhould bear the *image of the ſecond* in their renovation. As we have borne *the image of the earthy*, ſo we ſhall bear *the image of the heavenly*, 1 Cor. xv. 49. And as he is the pattern of all our graces, ſo he is of *glory* alſo. All our glory will conſiſt in our being *made like unto him*, which what it is, doth not as yet *appear*, 1 John iii. 2. For *he ſhall change even our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body*, Phil. iii. 21. Wherefore the fulneſs of grace was beſtowed on the human nature of Chriſt, and the image of God glorioufly implanted thereon, that it might be the *prototype* and example of what the church was through him to be made partaker of. That which God intends for us, in the internal communication of his grace, and in the uſe of all the ordinances of the church, is, that we may come unto the *meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs which is in Chriſt*, Eph. iv. 13. There is a fulneſs of all grace in Chriſt. Hereunto are we to be brought according to the *meaſure* that is deſigned unto every one of us. *For unto every one of us is given grace according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt*, ver. 7. He hath in his ſovereign grace aſſigned different meaſures unto thoſe on whom he doth beſtow it. And therefore it is called *the ſtature*, becauſe as we grow *gradually* unto it, as men do unto their juſt ſtature; ſo there is a *variety* in what we attain unto, as there is in the ſtatures of men, who are yet all perfect in their proportion.

3. *This image of God in Chriſt* is repreſented unto us in the goſpel. Being loſt from our nature, it was utterly impoſſible we ſhould have any juſt comprehenſion of it. There could be no *ſteady notion of the image of God*, until it was renewed and exemplified in the human nature of Chriſt. And thereon, without the knowledge of him, the wiſeſt of men have taken thoſe things to render men moſt like unto God which were *adverſe* unto him. Such were the moſt of thoſe things which the Heathens adored as *heroic virtues*. But being perfectly exemplified in Chriſt, it is now plainly repreſented unto us in the goſpel. Therein *with open face we behold as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the ſame image*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. The *vail* being taken away from divine revelations by the doctrine of the goſpel, and from our hearts *by the Lord the Spirit*, we behold the image of God in Chriſt with open face, which is the principal means of our being transformed into it. The goſpel is the declaration of Chriſt unto us, and the glory of God in him, as unto many other ends, ſo in eſpecial, that we might in him *behold and contemplate that image of God* we are gradually to be renewed into. Hence we are ſo therein to *learn the truth as it is in Jeſus, as to be renewed in the ſpirit of our minds, and to put on that new man which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, Eph. iv. 20. 23. 24. that is, that is *renewed after the image of him who created him*, Col. iii. 10.

4. It is therefore evident, that the *life of God* in us conſiſts in *conformity unto Chriſt*; nor is the Holy Spirit as the principal and efficient cauſe of it given unto us for any other end, but to *unite us* unto him, and make *us like him*. Wherefore the original goſpel-duty which animates and rectifies all others, is a deſign for *conformity* unto Chriſt in all the gracious principles and qualifications of his holy ſoul, wherein the *image of God* in him doth conſiſt. As he is the *prototype* and exemplar in the eye of God for the communication of all grace unto us; ſo he ought to be the great *example* in the eye of our faith in all our obedience unto God, in our compliance with all that he requireth of us.

God himſelf or the *divine nature* in its holy perfections, is

is the *ultimate object and idea* of our transformation in the renewing of our minds. And therefore under the Old Teſtament before the incarnation of the Son, he propoſed his own holineſs immediately as the pattern of the church. *Be ye holy, for the Lord your God is holy*, Lev. xi. 44. chap. xix. 2. xx. 5. But the *law made nothing perfect*. For to complete this great injunction, there was yet wanting an *expreſs example* of the holineſs required, which is not given us but in him, who is the *firſt-born, the image of the inviſible God*.

There was a notion even among the *philoſophers*, that the principal endeavour of a wiſe man was *to be like unto God*. But in the improvement of it the beſt of them fell into fooliſh and proud imaginations. Howbeit the notion itſelf, was the principal beam of our *primogenial light*, the beſt relique of our natural perfections. And thoſe who are not ſome way under the power of a deſign to *be like unto God*, are every way like unto the devil. But thoſe perſons who had nothing but the abſolute eſſential properties of the divine nature to contemplate on in the light of reaſon, failed all of them both in the notion itſelf of conformity unto God, and eſpecially in the practical improvement of it. Whatever men may fancy to the contrary, it is the deſign of the apoſtle in ſundry places of his writings to prove that they did ſo, eſpecially Rom. i. 1 Cor. i. Wherefore it was an infinite condeſcenſion of divine wiſdom and grace glorioufly to implant that *image* of his, which we are to endeavour *conformity* unto, on the human nature of Chriſt, and then ſo fully to repreſent and propoſe it unto us in the revelation of the goſpel.

The *infinite perfections* of God conſidered *abſolutely* in themſelves, are accompanied with ſuch an incomprehenſible glory, as is hard to conceive how they are the object of our imitation. But the *repreſentation* that is made of them in Chriſt, as the image of the inviſible God, is ſo ſuited to the renewed faculties of our ſouls, ſo *congenial* unto the new creature, or the gracious principle of ſpiritual life in us, that the mind can dwell on the contemplation of them, and be thereby transformed into the ſame image.

Herein lies much of the life and power of *Chriſtian*

religion, as it reſides in the ſouls of men. This is the prevailing deſign of the minds of them that truly believe the goſpel; they would in all things be like unto Jeſus Chriſt. And I ſhall briefly ſhew, (1.) *What is* required hereunto: and, (2.) What is to be done in a way of *duty* for the attaining that end.

1. A *ſpiritual light* to diſcern the beauty, glory, and amiableneſs of grace in Chriſt, is required hereunto. We can have no real deſign of conformity unto him, unleſs we have their eyes, who *ſaw his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John i. 14. Nor is it enough that we ſeem to diſcern the glory of his perſon, unleſs we ſee a *beauty and excellency* in every grace that is in him. *Learn of me*, ſaith he, *for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Matth. xi. 29. If we are not able to diſcern an excellency in *meekneſs and lowlineſs of heart*, (as they are things generally deſpiſed), how ſhall we ſincerely endeavour after conformity unto Chriſt in them? The like may be ſaid of all other his gracious qualifications. His zeal, his patience, his ſelf-denial, his readineſs for the croſs, his love unto his enemies, his benignity to all mankind, his faith and fervency in prayer, his love to God, his compaſſion towards the ſouls of men, his unweariedneſs in doing good, his purity, his univerſal holineſs; unleſs we have a *ſpiritual light* to diſcern the glory and amiableneſs of them all as they were in him, we ſpeak in vain of any deſign for *conformity* unto him. And this we have not, unleſs God *ſhine into our hearts*, to give us the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. It is, I ſay, a fooliſh thing to talk of the *imitation of Chriſt*, whilſt really through the darkneſs of our minds we diſcern not that there is an excellency in the things wherein we ought to be like unto him.

2. *Love unto them ſo diſcovered in a beam of heavenly light*, is required unto the ſame end. No ſoul can have a deſign of *conformity* unto Chriſt, but his, who ſo likes and loves the graces that were in him, as to eſteem a participation of them in their power, to be the greateſt advantage, to be the moſt invaluable privilege that can in this world be attained. It is the *ſavour of his good ointments*

ments for which the virgins love him, cleave unto him, and endeavour to be like him. In that whereof we now diſcourſe, namely, of conformity unto him, he is the repreſentative of the image of God unto us. And if we do not love and prize above all things thoſe gracious qualifications and diſpoſitions of mind wherein it doth conſiſt, whatever we may pretend of the *imitation of Chriſt* in any outward acts or duties of obedience, we have no deſign of conformity unto him. He who ſees and admires the glory of Chriſt as filled with theſe graces, as he was *fairer than the children of men*, becauſe *grace was poured into his lips*, unto whom nothing is ſo deſireable, as to have the ſame mind, the ſame heart, the ſame ſpirit that was in Chriſt Jeſus, he is prepared to preſs after *conformity* unto him. And unto ſuch a ſoul the repreſentation of all theſe excellencies in the perſon of Chriſt, is the great incentive, motive and guide, in and unto all internal obedience unto God.

That wherein we are to labour for this conformity may be reduced unto two heads.

1. *An oppoſition unto all ſin*, in the root, principle, and moſt ſecret ſprings of it, or original cleavings unto our nature. *He did no ſin*, neither was there any guile found in his mouth. *He was holy*, *harmleſs*, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners. He was the Lamb of God *without ſpot or blemiſh*; like unto us, yet without ſin. Not the leaſt tincture of ſin did ever make an approach unto his holy nature. He was abſolutely free from every drop of that *fomes* which hath invaded us in our depraved condition. Wherefore to be *freed from all ſin*, is the firſt general part of an endeavour for conformity unto Chriſt. And although we cannot perfectly attain hereunto in this life, as we have *not already attained*, *nor are already perfect*, yet he who groaneth not in himſelf after it, who doth not loath every thing that is of the remainder of ſin in him, and himſelf for it, who doth not labour after its abſolute and univerſal extirpation, hath no ſincere deſign of *conformity* unto Chriſt, nor can ſo have. He who endeavours to be like him, muſt *purify himſelf*, *even as he is pure*. Thoughts of the purity of Chriſt, in his abſolute freedom from the leaſt tincture of ſin, will not ſuffer a

believer

believer to be negligent at any time, for the endeavouring the utter ruin of that which makes him unlike unto him. And it is a bleſſed advantage unto faith in the work of mortification of ſin, that we have ſuch a pattern continually before us.

2. The due *improvement of, and continual growth in every grace,* is the other general part of this duty. In the exerciſe of his own all-fulneſs of grace, both in moral duties of obedience, and the eſpecial duties of his office, did the glory of Chriſt on the earth conſiſt. Wherefore to abound in the exerciſe of every grace, to grow in the root, and thrive in the fruit of them, is to be conformed unto the image of the Son of God.

Secondly, The *following the example of Chriſt* in all duties towards God and men, in his whole converſation on the earth, is the ſecond part of the inſtance now given concerning the uſe of the perſon of Chriſt in religion. The field is large which here lies before us, and filled with numberleſs bleſſed inſtances: I cannot here enter into it; and the miſtakes that have been in a pretence unto it, requires that it ſhould be handled diſtinctly and at large by itſelf, which, if God will, may be done in due time. One or two general inſtances wherein he was moſt eminently *our example,* ſhall cloſe this diſcourſe.

1. *His meekneſs, lowlineſs of mind, condeſcenſion unto all ſorts of perſons;* his love and kindneſs unto mankind, his readineſs to do good unto all, with patience and forbearance, are continually ſet before us in his *example.* I place them all under one head, as proceeding all from the ſame ſpring of *divine goodneſs,* and having effects of the ſame nature. With reſpect unto them, it is required that *the ſame mind be in us that was in Chriſt Jeſus,* Phil. ii. 5. and that we *walk in love, as he alſo loved us,* Eph. v. 2.

In theſe things was he the great repreſentative of the divine goodneſs unto us. In the acting of theſe graces on all occaſions did he declare and manifeſt the nature of God from whom he came. And this was one end of his exhibition in the fleſh. Sin had filled the world with a *repreſentation of the devil* and his nature, in mutual hatred, ſtrife, variance, envy, wrath, pride, fierceneſs and rage againſt one another, all which are of the old murderer.

murderer. The inſtances of a cured, of a contrary frame were obſcure and weak in the beſt of the ſaints of old. But in our Lord Jeſus, the light of the glory of God herein firſt ſhone upon the world. In the exerciſe of theſe graces which he moſt abounded in, becauſe the ſins, weakneſſes, and infirmities of men gave continual occaſion thereunto, did he repreſent the *divine nature*, as love, as infinitely good, benign, merciful and patient, as delighting in the excrciſe of theſe its holy properties. In them was the Lord Chriſt our *example* in an eſpecial manner. And they do in vain pretend to be his diſciples, to be followers of him, who endeavour not to order the whole courſe of their lives in conformity unto him in theſe things.

One Chriſtian who is *meek*, *humble*, *kind*, *patient*, and *uſeful unto all*, that condeſcends to the ignorance, weakneſſes and infirmities of others, that paſſeth by provocations, injuries, contempt, with patience, and with ſilence, unleſs where the glory and truth of God call for a juſt vindication; that pitieth all ſorts of men in their failings and miſcarriages, who is free from jealouſies and evil ſurmiſes, that loveth what is *good in all men*, and *all men even wherein they are not good*, nor do good, doth more expreſs the virtues and excellencies of Chriſt, than thouſands can do with the moſt magnificent works of piety or charity where this frame is wanting in them. For men to pretend to follow the *example of Chriſt*, and in the mean time to be proud, wrathful, envious, bitterly zealous, calling for fire from heaven to deſtroy men, or fetching it themſelves from hell, is to cry *hail unto him*, and to crucify him afreſh unto their power.

2. *Self-denial, readineſs for the croſs*, with *patience in ſufferings*, are the ſecond ſort of things which he calls all his diſciples to follow his example in. It is the fundamental law of his goſpel, that if any one will be his diſciple, *he muſt deny himſelf, take up his croſs and follow him.* Theſe things in him, as they are all of them ſummarily repreſented, Phil. ii. 5.—8. by reaſon of the *glory of his perſon*, and the nature of his ſufferings, are quite of another *kind* than that we are called unto. But his *grace* in them all is our only pattern, in what is required of us.

Chriſt

Christ hath ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps: who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatened not, 1 Pet. ii. 21. 22. 23. Hence are we called to look unto *Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame.* For we are to *conſider him, who endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners in himſelf, that we faint not,* Heb. xii. 2. 3. Bleſſed be God for this example; for the glory of the condeſcenſion, patience, faith, and endurance of Jeſus Chriſt in the extremity of all ſorts of ſufferings. This hath been the pole-ſtar of the church in all its ſtorms; the guide, the comfort, ſupportment, and encouragement of all thoſe holy ſouls, who in their ſeveral generations, have in various degrees undergone *perſecution for righteouſneſs ſake*, and yet continueth ſo to be unto them who are in the ſame condition.

And I muſt ſay, as I have done on ſome other occaſions in the handling of this ſubject, that a diſcourſe on this one inſtance of the *uſe of Chriſt in religion*, from the conſideration of the perſon who ſuffered and ſet us this example, of the principle from whence, and the end for which he did it; of the variety of evils of all ſorts he had to conflict withal, of his invincible patience under them all, and immoveableneſs of love and compaſſion unto mankind, even his perſecutors, the dolorous afflictive circumſtances of his ſufferings from God and men, the bleſſed efficacious workings of his faith and truſt in God unto the uttermoſt, with the glorious iſſue of the whole, and the influence of all theſe conſiderations unto the conſolation and ſupportment of the church, would take up more room and time, than what is allotted unto the whole of that, whereof it is here the leaſt part. I ſhall leave the whole under the ſhade of that bleſſed promiſe, *If ſo be that we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo be glorified together; for I reckon that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii. 17. 18.

The laſt thing propoſed concerning the *perſon of Chriſt*, was the *uſe of it* unto believers, in the whole of their relation unto God and duty towards him. And the things belonging

belonging thereunto may be reduced unto theſe general heads.

1. Their *ſanctification*, which conſiſteth in theſe four things: (1.) The *mortification of ſin.* (2.) The *gradual renovation* of our natures. (3.) *Aſſiſtances* in actual obedience. (4.) The ſame in *temptations* and trials.

2. Their *juſtification*, with its concomitants and conſequents. As, (1.) *Adoption.* (2.) *Peace.* (3.) *Conſolation* and joy in life and death. (4.) *Spiritual gifts* unto the edification of themſelves and others. (5.) A *bleſſed reſurrection.* (6.) *Eternal glory.*

There are other things which alſo belong hereunto. As their guidance in the courſe of their converſation in this world; direction unto uſefulneſs in all ſtates and conditions; patient waiting for the accompliſhment of God's promiſes to the church; the communication of *federal bleſſings* unto their families; and the exerciſe of loving-kindneſs towards mankind in general; with ſundry other concernments of the life of faith of the like importance; but they may be all reduced unto the general heads propoſed.

What ſhould have been ſpoken with reference unto theſe things belongs unto theſe three heads.

1. A *declaration* that all theſe things are wrought in, and communicated unto believers according to their various natures by an *emanation of grace and power* from the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, as the head of the church, as he who is exalted and made a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and the forgiveneſs of ſins.

2. A declaration of the *way and manner* how believers do live upon Chriſt in the exerciſe of faith, whereby according to the promiſe and appointment of God, they derive from him the whole grace and mercy whereof in this world they are made partakers, and are eſtabliſhed in the expectation of what they ſhall receive hereafter by his power. And that two things do hence enſue. (1.) The neceſſity of *univerſal evangelical obedience*, ſeeing it is only in and by the duties of it, that faith is or can be kept in a due exerciſe unto the ends mentioned. (2.) That believers do hereby *increaſe continually with the increaſe*

of God, and grow up into him who is the Head, until they become the fulneſs of him who filleth all in all.

3. A conviction that a real intereſt in, and participation of theſe things, cannot be obtained any other way, but by the actual exerciſe of faith on the *perſon of Jeſus Chriſt*.

Theſe things were neceſſary to be handled at large with reference unto the end propoſed. But for ſundry reaſons the whole of this labour is here declined. For ſome of the particulars mentioned, I have already inſiſted on in other diſcourſes heretofore publiſhed, and that with reſpect unto the end here deſigned. And this argument cannot be handled as it doth deſerve unto full ſatisfaction, without an entire diſcourſe concerning the life of faith, which my preſent deſign will not admit of.

CHAP. XVI.

An humble inquiry into, and proſpect of the infinite wiſdom of God, in the conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt, and the way of ſalvation thereby.

FROM the conſideration of the things before inſiſted on, we may endeavour according unto our meaſure, to take a view of, and humbly adore the *infinite wiſdom of God* in the holy contrivance of this great *myſtery of godlineſs*, *God manifeſt in the fleſh*. As it is a ſpiritual *evangelical myſtery*, it is an effect of divine wiſdom, in the redemption and ſalvation of the church, unto the eternal glory of God. And as it is a *great myſtery*, ſo it is the myſtery of the *manifold wiſdom of God*, Eph. iii. 9. 10. that is, of infinite wiſdom working in great variety of actings and operations, ſuited unto, and expreſſive of its own infinite fulneſs; for herein were *all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge* laid up, and laid out, Col. ii. 3. An argument this is, in ſome parts whereof divers of the *ancient writers* of the church have laboured, ſome occaſionally, and ſome with expreſs deſign. I ſhall inſiſt only on thoſe things which ſcripture-light leads

leads us directly unto. The depths of *divine wiſdom* in this glorious work are hid from the eyes of all living. *God alone underſtandeth the way thereof; and he knoweth the place thereof;* as he ſpeaks, Job xxviii. 21. 23. Yet is it ſo glorious in its effects, that *deſtruction and death ſay, We have heard the fame of it with our ears*, ver. 22. The fame and report of this divine wiſdom reach even unto hell. Thoſe who eternally periſh ſhall hear a *fame* of this wiſdom in the glorious effects of it, towards the bleſſed ſouls above, though ſome of them would not believe it *here* in the *light of the goſpel*, and none of them can underſtand it *there*, in their everlaſting darkneſs. Hence the *report* which they have of this wiſdom, is an aggravation of their miſery.

Theſe *depths* we may admire and adore, but we cannot comprehend: *For who hath known the mind of the Lord herein, or with whom took he counſel?* Concerning the original cauſes of his counſels in this great myſtery, we can only ſay, *O the depths of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgements, and his ways paſt finding out!* This alone is left unto us in the way of duty, that in the effects of them, we ſhould contemplate on their excellency, ſo as to give glory to God, and live in an holy admiration of his *wiſdom* and grace. For to give glory unto him, and admire him is our preſent duty, until he *ſhall come eternally to be glorified in his ſaints, and admired in all them that believe*, 2 Theſſ. i. 10.

We can do no more but ſtand at the *ſhore of this ocean*, and adore its unſearchable depths. What is delivered from them by divine revelation, we may receive as pearls of price, to enrich and adorn our ſouls. *For ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God; but thoſe things which are revealed, unto us, that we may do the words of his law*, Deut. xxix. 29. We ſhall not therefore in our inquiry into this *great myſtery, intrude ourſelves into the things which we have not ſeen*, but only endeavour a right underſtanding of what is revealed concerning it. For the end of all divine revelations is our knowledge of the things revealed, with our obedience thereon; and unto this end, *things revealed do belong unto us.*

Some things in general are to be premiſed unto our preſent inquiry.

1. We can have no view or due proſpect of the *wiſdom* of God in any of his works, much leſs in this of *ſending his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*, or the conſtitution of his perſon, and the work of redemption to be accompliſhed thereby, unleſs we conſider alſo the intereſt of the other holy properties of the divine nature in them. Such are his *holineſs*, his *righteouſneſs*, his ſovereign *authority*, his *goodneſs*, *love* and *grace*.

There are three excellencies of the divine nature principally to be conſidered in all the external works of God.

(1.) His *goodneſs*, which is the communicative property thereof. This is the eternal fountain and ſpring of all divine communications. Whatever is *good* in and unto any creatures, is an emanation from divine goodneſs. *He is good, and he doth good.* That which acts originally in the divine nature, unto the communication of itſelf in any bleſſed or gracious effects unto the creatures, is *goodneſs*.

(2.) *Wiſdom*, which is the directive power or excellency of the divine nature. Hereby God guides, diſpoſeth, orders and directs all things unto his own glory, in and by their own immediate proper ends, Prov. xvi. 4. Rev. iv. 11.

(3.) *Power*, which is the effective excellency of the divine nature, effecting and accompliſhing what *wiſdom* doth deſign and order.

Whereas *wiſdom* therefore is that holy excellency or power of the divine Being, wherein God deſigns, and whereby he effects the glory of all the other properties of his nature, we cannot trace the paths of it in any work of God, unleſs we know the intereſt and concernment of thoſe *other properties* in that work. For that which *wiſdom* principally deſigns, is the glorification of them. And unto this end the *effective property* of the divine nature, which is *almighty power*, always accompanies or is ſubſervient unto the *directive* or infinite wiſdom, which is requiſite unto perfection in operation. What infinite *goodneſs* will communicate *ad extra*, what it will open the eternal fountain of the divine Being and all-ſufficiency to give

give forth; that infinite *wiſdom* deſigns, contrives, and directs to the glory of God; and what wiſdom ſo deſigns, infinite *power* effects. See Iſ. xl. 13. 14. 15. 17. 28.

2. We can have no apprehenſions of the intereſt of the *other properties* of the divine nature, in this great myſtery of godlineſs, whoſe glory was deſigned in infinite wiſdom, without the conſideration of that *ſtate and condition of our own*, wherein they are ſo concerned. That which was deſigned unto the eternal glory of God in this great work of the *incarnation of his Son*, was the redemption of mankind, or the recovery and ſalvation of the church. What hath been diſputed by ſome concerning it, without reſpect unto the ſin of man, and the ſalvation of the church, is *curioſity*, and indeed preſumptuous folly. The whole ſcripture conſtantly aſſigneth this ſole end of that effect of divine goodneſs and wiſdom, yea aſſerts it as the only foundation of the goſpel, John iii. 16. Wherefore unto a due contemplation of *divine wiſdom* in it, it is neceſſary we ſhould conſider what is the *nature of ſin*, eſpecially of that firſt ſin, wherein our original apoſtaſy from God did conſiſt; what was the condition of mankind thereon; what is the concernment of the holy God therein, on the account of the bleſſed properties of his nature; what way was ſuited unto our recovery, that God might be glorified in them all. Without a previous conſideration of theſe things, we can have no due conceptions of the *wiſdom* of God in this glorious work, which we inquire after. Wherefore I ſhall ſo far ſpeak of them, that if it be the will of God, the minds of thoſe who read and conſider them, may be opened and prepared to give admittance unto ſome rays of that *divine wiſdom* in this glorious work, the luſtre of whoſe full light we are not able in this world to behold.

When there was a viſible pledge of the preſence of God in the *buſh that burned* and was not conſumed, Moſes ſaid, he *would turn aſide to ſee that great ſight*, Exod. iii. 3. And this great repreſentation of the glory of God being made and propoſed unto us, it is certainly our duty to *divert from all other occaſions* unto the contemplation of it. But as Moſes was then commanded to *put off his ſhoes, the place whereon he ſtood being holy ground*, ſo it will be the

wisdom of him that writes, and of them that read, to divest themselves of all *carnal affections* and imaginations, that they may draw nigh unto this great object of faith, with due reverence and fear.

The first thing we are to consider in order unto the end proposed, is, the *nature of our sin and apostasy from God.* For from thence we must learn the concernment of the divine excellencies of God in this work. And there are three things that were eminent therein.

First, A *reflection* on the honour of the holiness and wisdom of God, in the *rejection of his image.* He had newly made man in his *own image.* And this work he so expresseth, as to intimate a peculiar effect of *divine wisdom* in it, whereby it was distinguished from all other external works of creation whatever, Gen. i. 26. 27. *And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* No where is there such an *emphasis* of expression concerning any work of God. And sundry things are represented as peculiar therein.

1. That the *word of consultation* and that of *execution* are distinct. In all other works of creation, the word of determination and execution was the same. When he created *light*, which seems to be the beauty and glory of the whole creation, he only said, *Let there be light, and there was light*, Gen. i. 3. So was it with all other things. But when he comes unto the creation of man, another *process* is proposed unto our faith. These several words are distinct, not in time, but in nature: *God said, Let us make man in our image and likeness*; and thereon it is added distinctly, as the execution of that antecedent counsel; *So God made man in his own image.* This puts a signal eminency on this work of God.

2. A distinct peculiar concernment of all the *persons of the Holy Trinity*, in their consultation and operation, is in like manner proposed unto us. *And God said, Let us make man.* The truth hereof I have sufficiently evinced elsewhere, and discovered the vanity of all other glosses and expositions. The properties of the divine nature, principally and originally considerable in all external operations, (as we have newly observed), are *goodness*, *wisdom*, and

power.

power. In this great work, divine *goodneſs* exerted itſelf eminently and effectually in the *perſon of the Father*; the eternal fountain and ſpring, as of the divine nature, ſo of all divine operations. *Divine wiſdom* acted itſelf peculiarly in the *perſon of the Son*, this being the principal notion thereof, the eternal wiſdom of the Father. Divine *power* wrought effectually in the *perſon of the Holy Spirit*; who is the immediate actor of all divine operations.

3. The propoſition of the effecting this work, being by way of *conſultation*, repreſents it a ſignal effect of infinite wiſdom. Theſe expreſſions are uſed to lead us unto the contemplation of that wiſdom.

Thus God made man in his *own image*, that is, in ſuch a *rectitude of nature*, as repreſented his righteouſneſs and holineſs, in ſuch a ſtate and condition as had a reflection on it of his *power* and *rule*. The former was the ſubſtance of it, the latter a neceſſary conſequent thereof. This repreſentation, I ſay, of God, in *power* and *rule*, was not that image of God wherein man was created, but a conſequent of it. So the words and their order declare. *Let us make man in our image, and after our likeneſs: and let them have dominion over the fiſh of the ſea*, &c. Becauſe he was made in the image of God, this *dominion and rule* were granted unto him. So fond is their imagination who would have the image of God to conſiſt ſolely in theſe things. Wherefore the loſs of the image of God, was not originally the loſs of power and dominion, or a right thereunto: but man was *deprived* of that right, on the *loſs of that image* which it was granted unto. Wherein it did conſiſt, ſee Eccl. vii. 29. Eph. iv. 24.

Three things God deſigned in this *communication of his image* unto our nature, which were his principal ends in the creation of all things here below. And therefore was divine wiſdom more eminently exerted therein, than in all the other works of this inferior creation.

1. The *firſt* was, that he might therein make a *repreſentation of his holineſs and righteouſneſs* among his creatures. This was not done in any other of them. Characters they had on them of his goodneſs, wiſdom, and power. In theſe things the *heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work.* His *eternal*

nal power and Godhead are manifeſt in the things that are made. But none of them, not the whole fabric of heaven and earth, with all their glorious ornaments and endowments, were either fit or able to receive any impreſſions of his *holineſs* and *righteouſneſs*, of any of the moral perfections, or univerſal rectitude of his nature. Yet in the demonſtration and repreſentation of theſe things doth the *glory of God* principally conſiſt. Without them he could not be known and glorified as God. Wherefore he would have an *image* and repreſentation of them in the creation here below. And this he will always have ſo long as he will be worſhipped by any of his creatures. And therefore when it was loſt in Adam, it was renewed in Chriſt; as hath been declared.

2. The *ſecond* was, that it might be a means of rendering actual glory unto him, from all other parts of the creation. Without this, which is as the animating life and form of the whole, the other creatures are but as a *dead thing*. They could not any way declare the glory of God, but paſſively and objectively. They were as an harmonious well-tuned inſtrument, which gives no ſound, unleſs there be a ſkilful hand to move and act it. What is light, if there be no eye to ſee it? or what is muſic, if there be no ear to hear it? How glorious and beautiful ſoever any of the works of creation appear to be, from impreſſions of divine *power*, *wiſdom*, and *goodneſs* on them, yet without this *image of God* in man, there was nothing here below to underſtand God in them, to glorify God by them. This alone is that, whereby in a way of admiration, obedience, and praiſe, we were enabled to render unto God all the glory which he deſigned from thoſe works of his power.

3. The *third* was, that it might be a means to bring man unto that *eternal enjoyment* of himſelf, which he was fitted for, and deſigned unto. For this was to be done in a way of obedience: *Do this and live*, was that rule of it which the nature of God and man, with their mutual relation unto one another, did require. But we were made *meet* for this obedience, and enabled unto it, only by virtue of this *image of God* implanted in our natures. It was morally

morally a power to live unto God in obedience, that we might come to the enjoyment of him in glory.

Evident it is, that theſe were the *principal ends of God* in the creation of all things. Wherefore this conſtitution of our nature, and the furniſhment of it with the *image of God*, was the moſt eminent effect of *infinite wiſdom* in all the outward works of the divine nature.

Secondly, In the entrance of ſin, and by *apoſtaſy from God*, man voluntarily rejected and defaced this *bleſſed repreſentation* of the righteouſneſs and holineſs of God, this great effect of his goodneſs and wiſdom, in its tendency unto his eternal glory, and our enjoyment of him. No *greater diſhonour* could be done unto him, no endeavour could have been more pernicious in caſting contempt on his counſel. For as his *holineſs* which was repreſented in that *image* was deſpoiled, ſo we did what lay in us to defeat the contrivance of his *wiſdom*. This will be evident by reflecting on the ends of it now mentioned. For,

1. Hereon there remained nothing in all the creation here below, whereby any *repreſentation* might be made of God's holineſs and righteouſneſs, or any of the *moral perfections* of his nature. How could it be done, this image being loſt out of the world? The brute inanimate part of the creation, however ſtupenduouſly *great* in its matter, and *glorious* in its outward form, was no way capable of it. The nature of man under the loſs of this image, fallen, depraved, polluted, and corrupted, gives rather a repreſentation and *image of Satan*, than of God. Hence inſtead of *goodneſs*, *love*, *righteouſneſs*, *holineſs*, *peace*, all virtues uſefully communicative and effective of the good of the whole race of mankind, which would have been effects of this image of God, and repreſentatives of his nature, the whole world from and by the nature of man, is filled with *envy*, *malice*, *revenge*, *cruelty*, *oppreſſion*, and all engines of promoting ſelf, whereunto man is wholly turned, as fallen off from God. He that would learn the divine nature, from the *repreſentation* that is made of it, in the preſent actings of the nature of man, will be gradually led unto the devil inſtead of God. Wherefore no greater indignity could be offered unto *divine wiſdom* and

holineſs, than there was in this *rejection of the image of God*, wherein we were created.

2. There was no way left whereby glory might redound unto God, from the remainder of the creation here below. For the *nature of man alone* was deſigned to be the way and means of it, by virtue of the *image of God* implanted on it. Wherefore man by ſin did not only draw off himſelf from that relation unto God wherein he was made, but drew off the whole creation here below with himſelf, into an uſeleſſneſs unto his glory. And upon the entrance of ſin, before the cure of our apoſtaſy was actually accompliſhed, the generality of mankind divided the creatures into two ſorts; thoſe above, or the heavenly bodies, and thoſe here below. Thoſe of the firſt ſort they *worſhipped* as their gods; and thoſe of the other ſort they *abuſed* unto their luſts. Wherefore God was every way diſhonoured in and by them all; nor was there any glory given him on their account. What ſome attempted to do of that nature, in a *wiſdom of their own*, ended in folly, and a renewed diſhonour of God, as the apoſtle declares, Rom. i. 18. 19. 21. 22.

3. Man hereby loſt all *power and ability* of attaining that end for which he was made, namely, the eternal enjoyment of God. Upon the matter, and as much as in us lay, the whole end of God in the creation of all things here below, was utterly defeated.

But that which was the malignity and poiſon of this ſin, was the contempt that was caſt on the *holineſs of God*, whoſe *repreſentation*, and all its *expreſs characters* were utterly deſpiſed and rejected therein. Herein then lay the concernment of the *holineſs* or righteouſneſs of God in this ſin of our nature, which we are inquiring after. Unleſs ſome *reparation* be made for the indignity caſt upon it in the rejection of the *image* and repreſentation of it, unleſs there be ſome way whereby it may be more eminently *exalted* in the nature of man, that it was debaſed and deſpiſed in the ſame nature; it was juſt, equal, righteous with God, that which becomes the rectitude and purity of his nature, that mankind ſhould *periſh eternally* in that condition whereinto it was caſt by ſin.

It was not therefore conſiſtent with the glory of God, that

that *mankind ſhould be reſtored*, that this nature of ours ſhould be brought unto the enjoyment of him, unleſs his holineſs be more exalted, be more conſpicuouſly repreſented in *the ſame nature*, than ever it was depreſſed or deſpiſed thereby. The demonſtration of its glory in any *other nature*, as in that of *angels*, would not ſerve unto this end, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

We muſt now a little return unto what we before laid down. *Wiſdom* being the directive power of all divine operations, and the end of all thoſe operations, being the glory of God himſelf, or the demonſtration of the excellencies of the holy properties of his nature, it was incumbent thereon to provide for the honour and glory of *divine holineſs*, in an exaltation anſwerable unto the attempt for its debaſement. Without the conſideration hereof, we can have no due proſpect of the actings of *infinite wiſdom* in this great work of our redemption and recovery by the incarnation of the Son of God,

Thirdly, Sin brought *diſorder and diſturbance* into the whole rule and government of God. It was neceſſary from the infinite wiſdom of God, that all things ſhould be made in *perfect order* and harmony, all in a direct ſubordination unto his glory. There could have been no *original defect* in the natural or moral order of things, but it muſt have proceeded from a *defect in wiſdom*. For the diſpoſal of all things unto their proper order, belonged unto the contrivance thereof. And the *harmony* of all things among themſelves, with all their mutual relations and aſpects, in a regular tendency unto their proper and utmoſt end, whereby though every individual ſubſiſtence or being hath a peculiar end of its own, yet all their actings, and all their ends tend directly unto one utmoſt common end of them all, is the principal effect of wiſdom. And thus was it at the beginning; when God himſelf beheld the univerſe, and *lo, it was exceeding good.*

All things being thus created and ſtated, it belonged unto the nature of God to be the *rector and diſpoſer of them all.*

It was not a mere free act of his will, whereby God choſe to rule and govern the creation, according unto the law of the nature of all things, and their relation un-

to him; but it was *neceſſary* from his divine being and excellencies, that ſo he ſhould do. Wherefore it concerned both the wiſdom and righteouſneſs of God, to take care that either all things ſhould be *preſerved* in the ſtate wherein they were created, and no diſorder be ſuffered to enter into the kingdom and rule of God, or that in a way ſuited unto them, his glory ſhould be *retrieved* and re-eſtabliſhed. For God *is not the God of confuſion*, neither the author nor approver of it, neither in his works, nor in his rule. But ſin actually brought *diſorder* into the kingdom and rule of God. And this it did not in any one particular inſtance, but that which was univerſal as unto all things here below. For the original *harmony* and order of all things conſiſted in their ſubordination unto the glory of God. But this they all loſt, as was before declared. Hence he who looked on them in their firſt conſtitution, and to manifeſt his complacency in them, affirmed them to be *exceeding good*, immediately on the entrance of ſin, *pronounced a curſe on the whole earth*, and all things contained therein.

To ſuffer this *diſorder* to continue unrectified, was not conſiſtent with the wiſdom and righteouſneſs of God. It would make the *kingdom of God*, to be like that of Satan, full of darkneſs and confuſion. Nothing is more neceſſary unto the good of the univerſe, and without which it were better it were annihilated, than the preſervation of the *honour of God in his government*. And this could no otherwiſe be done, but by the infliction of a puniſhment proportionable in juſtice unto the demerit of ſin. Some think this might be done by a free *diſmiſſion of ſin*, or a paſſing it over without any puniſhment at all. But what evidence ſhould we then have that *good and evil* were not alike, and almoſt equal unto God in his rule, that he doth not like ſin as well as uprightneſs? Nor would this ſuppoſition leave any grounds of exerciſing juſtice among men. For if God in his rule of all things *diſmiſſed* the greateſt ſin without any penalty inflicted, what reaſon have we to judge that evils among ourſelves ſhould at all be puniſhed? That therefore be far from God, that the righteous ſhould be as the wicked; ſhall not the Judge of all the world do right?

Wherefore the *order of God's rule being broken*, as it conſiſted

conſiſted in the regular obedience of the creature, and *diſorder* with confuſion being brought thereby into the *kingdom and government of God*; his righteouſneſs as it is the *rectoral virtue* and power of the divine nature, required that his glory ſhould be reſtored, by reducing the ſinning creature again into order by puniſhment. Juſtice therefore muſt be anſwered and complied withal herein, according unto its eternal and unanſwerable law, in a way ſuited unto the glory of God, or the ſinning creature muſt periſh eternally.

Herein the *righteouſneſs of God* as the rectoral virtue of the divine nature, was concerned in the ſin and apoſtaſy of men. The vindication and glory of it, to provide, that in nothing it were eclipſed or diminiſhed, was incumbent on infinite wiſdom according unto the rule before laid down. That muſt direct and diſpoſe of all things anew unto the glory of the righteouſneſs of God, or there is no recovery of mankind. And in our inquiry after the impreſſions of *divine wiſdom*, on the great and glorious means of our reſtoration under conſideration, this proviſion made thereby for the righteouſneſs of God in his rule and government of all, is greatly to be attended unto.

Fourthly, Man by ſin *put himſelf into the power of the devil*, God's greateſt adverſary. The devil had newly by rebellion and apoſtaſy from his firſt condition, caſt himſelf under the eternal diſpleaſure and wrath of God. God had righteouſly purpoſed in himſelf, *not to ſpare him*, nor contrive any way for his deliverance unto eternity. He on the other ſide was become obdurate in his malice and hatred of God, deſigning his diſhonour and the impeachment of his glory with the utmoſt of his remaining abilities. In this ſtate of things, man voluntarily *leaves the rule and conduct of God*, with all his dependence upon him, and puts himſelf into the *power of the devil*. For he believed Satan above God, that is, placed his faith and confidence in him, as unto the way of attaining bleſſedneſs and true happineſs. And in whom we place our *truſt and confidence*, them do we obey, whatever we profeſs. Herein did God's adverſary ſeem for a ſeaſon to triumph againſt him, as if he had defeated the great deſign of his goodneſs, wiſdom, and power. So he would have continued to do, if no way had been provided for his diſappointment.

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This therefore alſo belonged unto the *care of divine wiſdom*, namely, that the glory of God in none of the holy properties of his nature did ſuffer any diminution hereby.

All this, and inconceivably more than we are able to expreſs, being contained in the ſin of our apoſtaſy from God; it muſt needs follow, that the condition of all mankind became thereby *inexpreſſibly evil*. As we had done all the *moral evil* which our nature was capable to act, ſo it was meet we ſhould receive all the *pendal evil* which our nature was capable to undergo. And it all iſſued in *death* temporal and eternal inflicted from the wrath of God.

This is the firſt thing to be conſidered in our tracing the footſteps of *divine wiſdom* in our deliverance by the incarnation of the Son of God. Without due conceptions of the nature of this ſin and apoſtaſy, of the provocation given unto God thereby, of the injury attempted to be done unto the glory of all his properties, of his concernment in their reparation, with the unſpeakable miſery that mankind was fallen into, we cannot have the leaſt view of the glorious actings of *divine wiſdom* in our deliverance by Chriſt. And therefore the moſt of thoſe who are inſenſible of theſe things, do wholly reject the principal inſtances of *infinite wiſdom* in our redemption, as we ſhall yet ſee farther afterwards. And the great reaſon why the glory of God in Chriſt, doth ſo little *irradiate* the minds of many, that it is ſo much neglected and deſpiſed, is becauſe they are not acquainted nor affected with the nature of our firſt ſin and apoſtaſy, neither in itſelf, nor in its woful effects and conſequents.

But on the ſuppoſition of theſe things, a double inquiry ariſeth with reference unto the *wiſdom* of God, and the other holy properties of his nature immediately concerned in our ſin and apoſtaſy.

1. Whereas man by ſin had *defaced the image of God*, and loſt it, whereby there was no repreſentation of his holineſs and righteouſneſs left in the whole creation here below; no way of rendering any glory to him, in, for, or by any other of his works; no means to bring man unto the enjoyment of God for which he was made: and whereas he had brought *confuſion* and diſorder into the rule and kingdom of God, which according unto the law

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of creation and its ſanction, could not be rectified but by the eternal ruin of the ſinner; and had moreover *given up himſelf unto the rule and conduct of Satan*; whether, I ſay, hereon, it was meet with reſpect unto the holy properties of the divine nature, that all mankind ſhould be *left eternally* in this condition, without remedy or relief; or whether there were not a *condecency* and ſuitableneſs unto them, that at leaſt our nature in *ſome portion* of it ſhould be reſtored.

2. Upon a ſuppoſition that the granting of a *recovery* was ſuited unto the *holy perfections* of the divine nature, acting themſelves by *infinite wiſdom*, what rays of that *wiſdom* may we diſcern in the finding out and conſtitution of the way and means of that recovery.

The firſt of theſe I ſhall ſpeak but briefly unto in this place, becauſe I have treated more largely concerning it in another. For there are many things which argue a *condecency* unto the divine perfections herein; namely, that *mankind ſhould not be left utterly remedileſs* in that gulf of miſery whereinto it was plunged. I ſhall at preſent only inſiſt on one of them.

God had originally created *two ſorts* of intellectual creatures capable of the eternal enjoyment of himſelf; namely, *angels* and *men*: that he would ſo make either ſort or both, was a mere effect of his *ſovereign wiſdom* and pleaſure. But on a ſuppoſition that he would ſo make them, they muſt be made for his glory. Theſe two ſorts thus created, he placed in ſeveral habitations prepared for them, ſuitable unto their natures, and the preſent duties required of them; the *angels* in heaven above, and *men* on earth below. Sin firſt invaded the nature of *angels*, and caſt innumerable multitudes of them out of their primitive condition. Hereby they loſt their capacity of, and right unto that enjoyment of God, which their nature was prepared and made meet for. Neither *would God ever reſtore* them thereunto. And in the inſtance of dealing with them, when he *ſpared them not, but ſhut them up in chains of everlaſting darkneſs unto the judgement of the great day*, he manifeſted how righteous it was to leave ſinning apoſtate creatures in everlaſting miſery. If any thing of relief be provided for any of them, it is a mere effect of

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ſovereign grace and wiſdom, whereunto God was no way obliged. Howbeit the *whole angelical nature* that was created in a capacity for the eternal enjoyment of God, periſhed not. Nor doth it ſeem conſiſtent with the *wiſdom* and goodneſs of God, that the whole entire *ſpecies* or kind of creatures made capable of glory in the eternal enjoyment of him, ſhould at once immediately be excluded from it. That ſuch a thing ſhould fall out as it were *accidentally*, without divine *proviſion and diſpoſal*, would argue a defect in wiſdom, and a poſſibility of a ſurpriſal into the loſs of the whole glory he deſigned in the creation of all things. And to have it a mere effect of divine ordination and diſpoſal, is as little conſiſtent with his *goodneſs*. Wherefore the *ſame nature* which ſinned and periſhed in the *angels* that fell, abideth in the enjoyment of God, in thoſe myriads of bleſſed ſpirits, which *left not their firſt habitation*.

The *nature of man* was in like manner made capable of the eternal enjoyment of God. This was the end for which it was created, unto the glory of him by whom it was made. For it became the divine wiſdom and goodneſs, to give unto every thing an *operation and end* ſuited unto its capacity. And theſe in this race of *intellectual creatures*, were to live unto God, and to come unto the eternal enjoyment of him. This *operation* and *end* their nature being capable of, they being ſuited unto it, unto them it was deſigned. But ſin entered them alſo; we alſo *ſinned, and came ſhort of the glory of God.* The inquiry hereon is, whether it became the divine goodneſs and wiſdom, that this *whole nature* in all that were partakers of it, ſhould fail and come *ſhort of that end* for which alone it was made of God. For whereas the *angels* ſtood in their primitive condition every one in his own individual perſon, the ſin of *ſome* did not prejudiſe *others*, who did not ſin actually themſelves. But the *whole race of mankind* ſtood all in one common head and ſtate; from whom they were to be educed and derived by natural generation. The ſin and apoſtaſy of that *one perſon*, was the ſin and apoſtaſy of us all. *In him all ſinned and died.* Wherefore unleſs there be a *recovery* made of them, or of *ſome from among them*, that whole *ſpecies of intellectual nature*,

nature, the whole kind of it, in all its individuals, which was made capable of doing the will of God, ſo as to come unto the eternal fruition of him, muſt be eternally loſt and excluded from it. This, we may ſay, *became not the wiſdom and goodneſs* of God, no more than it would have done to have ſuffered the whole *angelical nature* in all its individuals to have periſhed for ever. No created underſtanding could have been able to diſcern the glory of God in ſuch a diſpenſation, whereby it would have had no glory. That the *whole nature* in all the *individuals* of it, which was framed by the power of God out of nothing, and made what it was for this very end, that it might glorify him, and come unto the enjoyment of him, ſhould *eternally periſh*, if any way of relief for any portion of it were *poſſible* unto infinite wiſdom, doth not give an amiable repreſentation of the divine excellencies unto us.

It was therefore left on the *proviſion of infinite wiſdom*, that this great effect of recovering a *portion* of fallen mankind out of this miſerable eſtate, wherein there was a ſuitableneſs, a condecency unto the divine excellencies, ſhould be produced. Only it was to be done on and by a free act of the will of God; for otherwiſe there was no obligation on him from any of his properties ſo to do.

But it may be yet ſaid on the other ſide, that the *nature of man* was ſo defiled, ſo depraved, ſo corrupted, ſo alienated and ſeparated from God, ſo obnoxious unto the curſe by its ſin and apoſtaſy, that it was not *reparable* to the glory of God; and therefore it would not argue any defect in *divine power*, nor any unſuitableneſs unto *divine wiſdom and goodneſs*, if it were not actually repaired and reſtored. I anſwer two things.

1. The horrible nature of the firſt ſin, and the hainouſneſs of our *apoſtaſy* from God therein, were ſuch and ſo great, as that God thereon might, righteouſly and ſuitably unto all the holy properties of his nature, leave *mankind* to periſh eternally in that condition whereinto they had caſt themſelves. And if he had utterly forſaken the whole race of mankind in that condition, and left them all as remedileſs as the fallen angels, there could have been no reflection on his goodneſs, and an evident ſuitableneſs unto his juſtice and holineſs. Wherefore where-ever there

is any mention in the ſcripture of the redemption or *reſtoration* of mankind, it is conſtantly propoſed as an effect of *mere ſovereign grace and mercy*. See Eph. i. 3.—11. And thoſe who pretend a great difficulty at preſent in the reconciliation of the eternal periſhing of the *greateſt part of mankind*, with thoſe notions we have of the *divine goodneſs*, ſeem not to have ſufficiently conſidered what was contained in our original apoſtaſy from God; nor the righteouſneſs of God in dealing with the *angels* that ſinned. For when man had voluntarily broken all the relation of love and moral good between God and him, had defaced his image, the only repreſentation of his holineſs and righteouſneſs in this lower world, and deprived him of all his glory from the works of his hands, and had put himſelf into the ſociety, and under the conduct of the devil; what *diſhonour* could it have been unto God, what diminution would there have been of his glory, if he had left him unto his own choice, to *eat for ever of the fruit of his own ways*, and to be filled with his own devices unto eternity? It is only *infinite wiſdom* that could find out a way for the ſalvation of any *one* of the whole race of mankind, ſo as that it might be reconciled unto the glory of his holineſs, righteouſneſs, and rule. Wherefore, as we ought always to admire *ſovereign grace* in the *few* that ſhall be ſaved; ſo we have no ground to reflect on divine goodneſs in the *multitudes* that periſh, eſpecially conſidering that they all voluntarily continue in their ſin and apoſtaſy.

2. I grant the *nature of man* was not *reparable* nor recoverable, by any ſuch actings of the properties of God as he had exerted in the creation and rule of all things. Were there not other properties of the divine nature than what were diſcovered and revealed in the *creation of all*; were not ſome of them ſo declared capable of an exerciſe in another way or in higher degrees than what had as yet been inſtanced in, it muſt be acknowledged that the *reparation* of mankind could not be conceived compliant with the divine excellencies, nor to be effected by them. I ſhall give one inſtance in each ſort, namely, firſt in *properties of another kind* than any which had been manifeſted in the works of creation, and then the actings of

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ſome of them ſo manifeſted, in *another way*, or farther degree than what they were before exerted in or by.

(1.) Of the firſt ſort, are *love*, *grace*, and *mercy*, which I refer unto one head, their nature being the ſame, as they have reſpect unto ſinners. For although theſe were none of them manifeſted in the works of creation, yet are they no leſs *eſſential* properties of the divine nature, than either *power*, *goodneſs*, or *wiſdom*. With theſe it was that the reparation of our nature was compliant, unto them it had a condecency, and the glory of them *infinite wiſdom* deſigned therein. That *wiſdom* on which it is incumbent to provide for the manifeſtation of all the other properties of God's nature, contrived this work unto the glory of his *love*, *mercy*, and *grace*, as in the goſpel it is every where declared.

(2.) Of the ſecond ſort is *divine goodneſs*. This, as the *communicative property* of the divine nature, had exerted itſelf in the creation of all things. Howbeit, it had not done ſo *perfectly*, it had not done ſo to the *uttermoſt*. But the nature of goodneſs being *communicative*, it belongs unto its perfection, to act itſelf unto the uttermoſt. This it had not yet done in the creation. Therein *God made man*, and acted his goodneſs in the communication of our being unto us, with all its endowments. But there yet remained another effect of it, which was, that *God ſhould be made man*, as the way unto and the means of our recovery.

Theſe things being premiſed, we proceed to inquire more particularly by what way and means the *recovery of mankind* might be wrought, ſo as that God might be glorified thereby.

If *fallen man* be reſtored and reinſtated in his primitive condition, or brought into a better, it muſt either be by himſelf, or by ſome other undertaking for him. For it muſt be done by ſome means or other. So great an *alteration* in the whole ſtate of things was made by the entrance of ſin, that it was not conſiſtent with the glory of any of the divine excellencies, that a *reſtoration* of all things ſhould be made by a *mere act of power*, without the uſe of any means for the removal of the *cauſe* of that alteration. That *man himſelf* could not be this means, that is,

that he could not *restore himself*, is openly evident. Two ways there were whereby he might attempt it, and neither jointly nor severally could he do any thing in them.

1. He might do it by *returning unto obedience unto God on his own accord.* He fell off from God on his own accord by disobedience through the suggestion of Satan. Wherefore a *voluntary return* unto his former obedience, would seem to reduce all things unto their first estate. But this way was both *impossible*, and, upon a supposition of it, would have been *insufficient* unto the end designed. For,

1. This *he could not do.* He had by his sin and fall lost that *power* whereby he was able to yield any acceptable obedience unto God. And a *return unto obedience* is an act of *greater power* than a persistency in the way and course of it, and more is required thereunto. But all man's *original power of obedience* consisted in the *image of God.* This he had defaced in himself, and deprived himself of. Having therefore lost *that power* which should have enabled him to live unto God in his primitive condition, he could not retain a *greater power* in the same kind to return thereunto. This indeed was that which Satan deceived and deluded him withal; namely, that by his *disobedience* he should acquire new light and power, which he had not yet received; he should be *like unto God.* But he was so far from any advantage by his apostasy, that one part of his misery consisted in the *loss of all power or ability to live to God.*

This is the folly of that Pelagian *heresy*, which is now a *third time* attempting to impose itself on the Christian world. It supposeth that men have a *power of their own* to *return* unto God, after they had lost the power they had of *abiding* with him. It is not indeed as yet pretended by many, that the *first sin* was a mere transient act, that *no way* vitiated our nature, or impaired the power, faculty, or principle of obedience in us. A *wound*, they say, a *disease*, a *weakness* it brought upon us, and rendred us *legally* obnoxious unto death temporal, which we were *naturally* liable unto before. Wherefore it is not said that *men can return unto that perfect obedience* which the law required; but that they can comply with, and perform

perform that which the goſpel requireth in the room thereof. For they ſeem to ſuppoſe, that the *goſpel* is not much more but an *accommodation of the rule of obedience* unto our preſent reaſon and abilities, with ſome motives unto it, and an example for it in the perſonal obedience and ſuffering of Chriſt. For whereas man forſook the law of obedience firſt preſcribed unto him, and fell into various incapacities of obſerving it, God did not, as they ſuppoſe, provide in and by the goſpel a righteouſneſs whereby the law might be fulfilled, and effectual grace to raiſe up the nature of man unto the performance of acceptable obedience; but only *brings down the law* and the rule of it into a compliance unto our weakened, diſeaſed, depraved nature; than which, if any thing can be ſpoken more *diſhonourably of the goſpel*, I know it not. However, this pretended power of returning unto *ſome kind of obedience*, but not that which was required of *us* in our primitive condition, is no way ſufficient unto our reſtoration, as is evident unto all.

2. As man *could not* effect his own recovery, ſo *he would not* attempt it. For he was fallen into that condition wherein, in the principles of all his moral operations, he was at *enmity againſt* God; and whatever did befall him, he would chuſe to continue in his ſtate of apoſtaſy. For he was wholly *alienated from the life of God*. He likes it not, as that which is incompliant with his diſpoſitions, inclinations, and deſires, as inconſiſtent with every thing wherein he placeth his intereſt. And hence, as he *cannot do* what he ſhould through *impotency*, he *will not do* even what he can through *obſtinacy*. It may be we know not diſtinctly what to aſcribe unto man's *impotency*, and what unto his *obſtinacy*. But between both, he neither *can* nor *will* return unto God. And his power unto good, though not *ſufficient* to bring him again unto God, yet is it not ſo *ſmall* but that he always chuſeth not to make uſe of it unto that end. In brief, there was left in man a *fear of divine power*, a fear of God becauſe of his *greatneſs*, which makes him do many things, which otherwiſe he would not do; but there is not left in him *any love unto divine goodneſs*, without which he cannot chuſe to return unto God.

3. But

3. But let us leave theſe things which men will diſpute about, though in expreſs contradiction unto the ſcripture, and the experience of them that are wrought upon to believe; and let us make an *impoſſible ſuppoſition*, that man *could* and *would* return unto his primitive obedience; yet no reparation of the glory of God, ſuffering in the loſs of the former ſtate of all things, would thereon enſue. What ſatisfaction would be hereby made for the *injury* offered unto the holineſs, righteouſneſs, and wiſdom of God, whoſe violation in their bleſſed effects was the principal evil of ſin? Notwithſtanding ſuch a ſuppoſition, all the diſorder that was brought into the rule and government of God by ſin, with the reflection of diſhonour upon him, in the rejection of his image, would ſtill continue. And ſuch a *reſtitution of things*, wherein no proviſion is made for the reparation of the glory of God, is not to be admitted. The notion of it may poſſibly pleaſe men in their apoſtate condition, wherein they are wholly turned off from God, and into ſelf; not caring what becomes of his glory, ſo it may go well with themſelves. But it is highly contradictory unto all equity, juſtice, and the whole reaſon of things, wherein the glory of God is the principle and centre of all.

Practically things are otherwiſe among many. The moſt profligate ſinners in the world, that have a *conviction* of an eternal condition, would be ſaved. Tell them it is inconſiſtent with the glory of the *holineſs*, *righteouſneſs*, and *truth* of God, to ſave unbelieving impenitent ſinners, they are not concerned in it. Let them be ſaved, that is, eternally delivered from the evil they fear, and let God look unto his own glory, they take no care about it. A ſoul that is ſpiritually ingenuous, *would not be ſaved* in any way but that whereby God may be glorified. Indeed to *be ſaved*, and *not unto the glory of God*, implies a contradiction. For our ſalvation is eternal bleſſedneſs, in a participation of the glory of God.

Secondly, It followeth therefore, that man muſt make *ſatisfaction* unto the juſtice of God, and thereby a reparation of his glory, that he may be ſaved. This added unto a *complete return unto obedience*, would effect a reſtitution of all things; it would do ſo as unto what was paſt, though it

it would make no new addition of glory unto God. But this became not the nature and efficacy of divine wiſdom. It became it not merely to *retrieve* what was paſt, without a new manifeſtation and exaltation of the divine excellencies; and therefore, in our *reſtitution by Chriſt*, there is ſuch a manifeſtation and exaltation of the divine properties, as incomparably exceeds whatever could have enſued on, or been effected by the law of creation, had man continued in his original obedience. But at preſent it is granted, that this *addition of ſatisfaction* unto a *return unto obedience*, would reſtore all things unto their firſt condition. But as that *return* was impoſſible unto man, ſo was this *ſatisfaction* for the injury done by ſin much more. For ſuppoſe a mere creature, ſuch as man is, ſuch as all men are, in what condition you pleaſe, and under all advantageous circumſtances; yet whatever he can do towards God, is *antecedently and abſolutely due from him* in that inſtant wherein he doth it, and that in the manner wherein it is done. They muſt all ſay, when they have done all *that they can do, We are unprofitable ſervants, we have done what was our duty*. Wherefore it is impoſſible, that by any thing a man can do *well*, he ſhould make ſatisfaction for any thing he hath done *ill*. For what he ſo doth, is due in and for itſelf. And to ſuppoſe that *ſatisfaction* will be made for a *former fault*, by that whoſe omiſſion would have been *another*, had the former never been committed, is madneſs. An old debt cannot be diſcharged with ready money for new commodities; nor can paſt injuries be compenſated by preſent duties, which we are anew obliged unto. Wherefore mankind being indiſpenſably and eternally obliged unto the preſent performance of all duties of obedience unto God, according to the utmoſt of their capacity and ability, ſo as that the non-performance of them in their ſeaſon, both as unto their *matter* and *manner*, would be their ſin; it is utterly impoſſible that by any thing, or all that they can do, they ſhould make the leaſt *ſatisfaction* unto God, for any thing they have done againſt him; much leſs for the horrible apoſtaſy whereof we treat. And to attempt the ſame end by any way which God hath not appointed, which he hath not

not made their duty, is a new provocation of the higheſt nature. See Micah vi. 6. 7. 8.

It is therefore evident on all theſe conſiderations, that *all mankind*, as unto any endeavours of their own, any thing that can be fancied as poſſible for them to deſign or do, muſt be left *irreparable* in a condition of eternal miſery. And unleſs we have a full conviction hereof, we can neither admire nor entertain the myſtery of the *wiſdom* of God in our reparation. And therefore it hath been the deſign of Satan in all ages, to contrive preſumptuous notions of *mens ſpiritual abilities*, to divert their minds from the contemplation of the glory of divine wiſdom and grace, as alone exalted in our recovery.

We are proceeding on this ſuppoſition, that there was a *condecency* unto the holy perfections of the divine nature, that mankind ſhould be reſtored, or ſome *portion* of it recovered unto the enjoyment of himſelf; ſo *angelical* nature was preſerved unto the ſame end in thoſe that did not ſin. And we have ſhewed the general grounds whereon it is impoſſible that fallen man ſhould reſtore or recover himſelf. Wherefore we muſt in the next place inquire, what is neceſſary unto ſuch a *reſtoration*, on the account of that concernment of the divine *excellencies*, in the ſin and apoſtaſy of man, which we have ſtated before. For hereby we may obtain light, and an inſight into the glory of that wiſdom whereby it was contrived and effected. And the things following, among others, may be obſerved unto that end.

1. It was required, that there ſhould be an *obedience* yielded unto God, bringing more glory unto him, than diſhonour did ariſe and accrue from the *diſobedience* of man. This was due unto the glory of divine holineſs in giving of the law. Until this was done, the excellency of the law as becoming the holineſs of God, and as an effect thereof, could not be made manifeſt. For if it were *never kept in any inſtance*, never fulfilled by any one perſon in the world, how ſhould the glory of it be declared? how ſhould the holineſs of God be repreſented by it? how ſhould it be evident that the tranſgreſſion of it was not rather from *ſome defect in the law* itſelf, than from any evil in them that ſhould have yielded obedience unto it?

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The obedience yielded by the *angels* that ſtood and ſinned not, made it manifeſt that the tranſgreſſion of it by them that fell and ſinned, was from their *own wills*, and not from any unſuitableneſs unto their nature and ſtate in the law itſelf. But if the law given unto man ſhould *never be complied withal in perfect obedience by any one whatever*, it might be thought that the law itſelf was unſuited unto our nature, and impoſſible to be complied withal. Nor did it become *infinite wiſdom* to give a law, whoſe equity, righteouſneſs, and holineſs ſhould never be exemplified in *obedience*; ſhould never be made to appear, but in the puniſhment inflicted on its tranſgreſſors. Wherefore the original law of perſonal righteouſneſs, was not given ſolely nor primarily, that men might *ſuffer juſtly* for its tranſgreſſion, but that *God might be glorified* in its accompliſhment. If this be not done, it is impoſſible that men ſhould be reſtored unto the glory of God. If the law be not fulfilled by *obedience*, man muſt ſuffer evermore for his diſobedience, or God muſt loſe the manifeſtation of his holineſs therein. Beſides, God had repreſented his holineſs in that *image* of it which was implanted in our nature, and which was the principle enabling us unto obedience. This alſo was rejected by ſin, and therein the holineſs of God deſpiſed. If this be not reſtored in our nature, and that with advantages above what it had in its firſt communication, we cannot be recovered unto the glory of God.

2. It was neceſſary, that the *diſorder brought into the rule and government of God by ſin and rebellion* ſhould be rectified. This could no otherwiſe be done but by the infliction of that puniſhment, which, in the unalterable rule and ſtandard of divine juſtice, was due thereunto. The *diſmiſſion of ſin* on any other terms, would leave the rule of God under unſpeakable diſhonour and confuſion. For where is the righteouſneſs of government, if the higheſt ſin and provocation that our nature was capable of, and which brought confuſion on the whole creation below, ſhould for ever go unpuniſhed? The firſt expreſs intimation that God gave of his righteouſneſs in the government of mankind, was, his threatening a *puniſhment* equal unto the demerit of diſobedience, if man ſhould fall into it. *In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt die.* If he revoke and diſ-

annul this ſentence, how ſhall the glory of his righteouſneſs in the rule of all be made known? But how this puniſhment ſhould be undergone, which conſiſted in *man's eternal ruin*, and yet man be *eternally ſaved*, was a work for divine wiſdom to contrive. This therefore was neceſſary unto the honour of God's righteouſneſs, as he is the ſupreme Governor and Judge of all the earth.

3. It was neceſſary that Satan ſhould be *juſtly* deſpoiled of his advantage and power over mankind unto the glory of God. For he was not to be left to triumph in his ſucceſs. And inaſmuch as man was on his part *rightfully* given up unto him, his deliverance was not to be wrought by an act of *abſolute dominion* and power, but in a way of juſtice and lawful judgement; which things ſhall be afterwards ſpoken unto.

Without theſe things the *recovery of mankind* into the favour and unto the enjoyment of God was utterly impoſſible, on the account of the concernment of the glory of his divine perfections in our ſin and apoſtaſy.

How all this might be effected; how the glory of the *holineſs* and *righteouſneſs* of God in his law and rule, and in the primitive conſtitution of our nature, might be repaired; how his *goodneſs*, *love*, *grace*, and *mercy* might be manifeſted and exalted in this work of the reparation of mankind, was left unto the care and contrivance of *infinite wiſdom*. From the eternal ſprings thereof, muſt this work ariſe, or ceaſe for ever.

To trace ſome of the footſteps of *divine wiſdom* herein, in and from the revelation of it by its effects, is that which lieth before us. And ſundry things appear to have been neceſſary hereunto. As,

1. That all the things required unto our *reſtoration*, the whole work wherein they conſiſt, muſt be *wrought in our own nature*, in the nature that had ſinned, and which was to be reſtored and brought unto glory. On ſuppoſition, I ſay, of the *ſalvation of our nature*, no ſatisfaction can be made unto the glory of God for the ſin of *that nature*, but in *the nature* itſelf that ſinned and is to be ſaved. For whereas God gave the law unto *man*, as an effect of his wiſdom and holineſs, which he tranſgreſſed in his diſobedience, wherein could the glory of them or either of

of them be exalted, if the ſame law were complied withal and fullfiled in and by a nature of another kind, ſuppoſe that of *angels?* For notwithſtanding any ſuch obedience, yet the law might be *unſuited unto the nature of man* whereunto it was originally preſcribed. Wherefore there would be a vail drawn over the glory of God, in *giving the law* unto man, if it were not fullfiled by obedience in the *ſame nature.* Nor can there be any ſuch relation between the obedience and ſufferings of *one nature*, in the ſtead and for the diſobedience of *another*, as that glory might enſue unto the wiſdom, holineſs, and juſtice of God, in the deliverance of that *other* nature thereon.

The ſcripture abounds in the declaration of the *neceſſity* hereof, with its *condecency* unto divine wiſdom. Speaking of the way of our relief and recovery; *verily*, ſaith the apoſtle, *he took not on him the nature of angels*, Heb. ii. 16. Had it been the recovery of *angels* which he deſigned, he would have taken their nature on him. But this would have been no relief at all unto us, no more than the aſſuming of our nature is of advantage unto the fallen angels; the obedience and ſufferings of Chriſt therein extended not at all unto them, nor was it juſt or equal that they ſhould be relieved thereby. What then was required unto our deliverance? Why, ſaith he, *Foraſmuch as the children were partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame*, ver 14. It was *human nature* (here expreſſed by *fleſh and blood*) that was to be delivered, and therefore it was human nature wherein this deliverance was to be wrought. This the ſame apoſtle diſputes at large, Rom. v. ver. 12.—19. The ſum is, that as *by one man's diſobedience many were made ſinners*, ſo by *the obedience of one* (of one man, Jeſus Chriſt, ver. 15.) *are many made righteous.* The ſame nature that ſinned muſt work out the reparation and recovery from ſin. So he affirms again, 1 Cor. xv. 21. *For ſince by man came death, by man came alſo the reſurrection from the dead.* No otherwiſe could our ruin be retrieved, nor our deliverance from ſin with all the conſequents of it be effected, which came by *man*, which were committed and deſerved in and by our nature, but by *man*, by one of the ſame nature with us. This therefore, in the firſt place, became

the *wiſdom of God*, that the work of deliverance ſhould be wrought in our own nature, in the nature that had ſinned.

2. That part of human nature, wherein or whereby this work was to be effected, as unto the eſſence or ſubſtance of it, was to be *derived from the common root* or ſtock of the ſame nature, in our firſt parents. It would not ſuffice hereunto, that God ſhould create a man out of the *duſt of the earth*, or out of nothing, of the ſame nature in general with ourſelves. For there would be no *cognation* or alliance between him and us, ſo as that we ſhould be any way concerned in what he did or ſuffered. For this alliance depends ſolely hereon, *that God hath of one blood made all nations of men*, Acts xvii. 26. Hence it is that the *genealogy* of Chriſt is given us in the goſpel, not only from Abraham, to declare the faithfulneſs of God in the promiſe that he ſhould be of his ſeed, but from Adam alſo, to manifeſt his relation unto the common ſtock of our nature, and unto all mankind therein.

The firſt diſcovery of the *wiſdom* of God herein, was in that primitive revelation, that the *deliverer* ſhould be of *the ſeed of the woman*, Gen. iii. 15. No other but he who was ſo, could *break the ſerpent's head* or *deſtroy the work of the devil*, ſo as that we might be delivered and reſtored. He was not only to be partaker of our nature, but he was ſo to be, by being *the ſeed of the woman*, Gal. iv. 4. He was not to be created out of nothing, nor to be made of the duſt of the earth, but *ſo made of a woman*, as that thereby he might receive our nature from the common root and ſpring of it. Thus he *who ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one*, Heb. ii. 11. ἐξ ἑνὸς, that is, φυράματος, of the *ſame maſs*, *of one nature and blood*; whence he is not aſhamed to call them brethren. This alſo was to be brought forth from the treaſures of infinite wiſdom.

Thirdly, This nature of ours, wherein the work of *our recovery* and ſalvation is to be wrought and performed, was not to be ſo derived from the *original ſtock* of our kind or race, as to bring along with it the ſame *taint of ſin*, and the ſame *liableneſs unto guilt* upon its own account, as accompany every *other individual perſon* in the world. For, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, ſuch an High Prieſt became

became us, (and as an High Prieſt was he to accompliſh this work), *as was holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners.* For if this nature in him were ſo *defiled* as it is in us; if it were under a deprivation of the image of God, as it is in our perſons before our renovation, it could do nothing that ſhould be acceptable unto him. And if it were *ſubject unto guilt* on its own account, it could make no ſatisfaction for the ſin of others. Here therefore again occurs *nodus vindice dignus*, a difficulty which nothing but *divine wiſdom* could expedite.

To take a little farther view hereof, we muſt conſider on what grounds theſe things (ſpiritual defilement and guilt) do adhere unto our nature as they are in all our *individual perſons*. And the firſt of theſe is, that our entire nature, as unto our participation of it, was in *Adam* as our head and repreſentative. Hence *his ſin* became *the ſin of us all*, is juſtly imputed unto us, and charged on us. *In him we all ſinned;* all did ſo, who were in him as their common repreſentative when he ſinned. Hereby we became the *natural children of wrath*, or liable unto the wrath of God for the common ſin of our nature, in the natural and legal head or ſpring of it. And the other is, that we derive our nature from Adam by the way *of natural generation*. By that means alone is the nature of our firſt parents, as *defiled*, communicated unto us. For by this means do we become to appertain unto the ſtock, as it was degenerate and corrupt. Wherefore that part of our nature wherein and whereby this great work was to be wrought, muſt, as unto its *eſſence and ſubſtance*, be derived from our firſt parents, yet ſo as never to have been in Adam as *a common repreſentative;* nor be derived from him by *natural generation*.

The bringing forth of our nature in ſuch an inſtance, wherein it ſhould relate no leſs really and truly unto the *firſt* Adam than we do ourſelves, whereby there is the ſtricteſt alliance of nature between *him* ſo partaker of it, and *us*, yet ſo, as not in the leaſt to participate of the *guilt of the firſt ſin*, nor of the *defilement of our nature* thereby, muſt be an effect of *infinite wiſdom*, beyond the conceptions of any created underſtanding. And this, as we know, was done in the perſon of Chriſt. For his hu-

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man nature was never in Adam as his repreſentative, nor was he compriſed in the covenant wherein he ſtood. For he derived it *legally* only from and after the *firſt promiſe*; when Adam ceaſed to be a common perſon. Nor did it proceed from him by *natural generation*, the only means of the derivation of its depravation and pollution. For it was an *holy thing*, created in the womb of the virgin by the power of the Moſt High. *O the depths of the wiſdom and knowledge of God!*

It was neceſſary therefore, on all theſe conſiderations, it was ſo unto the glory of the holy properties of the divine nature, and the reparation of the honour of his holineſs and righteouſneſs, that he by whom the work of our recovery was to be wrought, ſhould be a *man* partaker of the *nature that ſinned*, yet *free from all ſin*, and all the conſequents of it. And this did *divine wiſdom* contrive and accompliſh in the human nature of Jeſus Chriſt.

But yet, in the ſecond place, on all the conſiderations before mentioned, it is no leſs evident, that his work could not be wrought or effected by him who was *no more than a mere man*, who had no nature but ours, who was an *human perſon* and no more. There was no one act which he was to perform in order unto our deliverance, but did require a *divine power* to render it efficacious. But herein lies that great *myſtery of godlineſs*, whereunto a continual oppoſition hath been made by the *gates of hell*, as we manifeſted in the entrance of this diſcourſe. But whereas it belongs unto the foundation of our faith, we muſt inquire into it, and confirm the truth of it with ſuch *demonſtrations*, as divine revelation doth accommodate us withal. And three things are to be ſpoken unto.

Firſt, We are to give in *rational evidences*, that the recovery of mankind was not to be effected by any one who was a *mere man* and no more, though it were abſolutely neceſſary, that *a man* he ſhould be; he muſt be God alſo. *Secondly*, We muſt inquire into the *ſuitableneſs or condecency* unto divine wiſdom, in the redemption and ſalvation of the church by Jeſus Chriſt, who was *God and man* in one perſon; and thereon give a deſcription of *the perſon of Chriſt* and its conſtitution, which ſuiteth all the ends of *infinite wiſdom* in this glorious work.

work. The firſt of theſe falls under ſundry plain demonſtrations.

1. That *human nature* might be reſtored, or any portion of mankind be eternally ſaved unto the glory of God, it was neceſſary, as we proved before, that an *obedience ſhould be yielded unto God and his law*, which ſhould give and bring more glory and honour unto his holineſs, than there was diſhonour reflected on it by the *diſobedience* of us all. Thoſe who are otherwiſe minded, care not what becomes of the *glory of God*, ſo that wicked ſinful man may be ſaved one way or other. But theſe thoughts ſpring out of our *apoſtaſy*, and belong not unto that eſtate wherein we loved God above all, and preferred his glory above all, as it was with us at the firſt in the original conſtitution of our nature. But ſuch an *obedience* could never be yielded unto God by any mere creature whatever; not by any one who was only a man, however dignified and exalted in ſtate and condition above all others. For to ſuppoſe that God ſhould be pleaſed and glorified with the obedience of *any one man*, more than he was diſpleaſed and diſhonoured by the *diſobedience of Adam* and all his poſterity, is to fancy things that have no ground in reaſon or juſtice, or any way ſuitable unto divine wiſdom and holineſs. He who undertaketh this work, muſt have ſomewhat that is *divine* and *infinite* to put an infinite value on his obedience; that is, he muſt be God.

2. The *obedience* of ſuch an one, of a *mere man*, could have no influence at all on the recovery of mankind, nor the ſalvation of the church. For whatever it were, it would be all due from him *for himſelf*, and ſo could only profit or benefit himſelf. For what is due from any on his *own account*, cannot redound or be reckoned unto the advantage of another. But there is no *mere creature*, nor can there be any ſuch, but he is obliged for himſelf unto all the obedience unto God, that he is capable of the performance of in this world, as we have before declared. Yea, *univerſal obedience* in all poſſible inſtances is ſo abſolutely neceſſary unto him, as a creature made in dependence on God, and for the enjoyment of him, that the *voluntary* omiſſion of it in any one inſtance, would be a

criminal

criminal diſobedience, ruinous unto his own ſoul. Wherefore no ſuch *obedience* could be accepted as any kind of compenſation for the *diſobedience* of others, or in their ſtead. He then that performs this *obedience*, muſt be one who was not originally obliged thereunto on his own account or for himſelf. And this muſt be a *divine perſon*, and none other; for every mere creature is ſo obliged. And there is nothing more fundamental in goſpel-principles, than that the Lord Chriſt in his divine perſon was *above the law*, and for himſelf owed no obedience thereunto. But by his own condeſcenſion, as he was *made of a woman* for us, ſo he was *made under the law* for us. And therefore thoſe by whom the divine perſon of Chriſt is denied, do all of them contend, that he yielded *obedience unto God for himſelf*, and not for us. But herein they bid defiance unto the principal effect of *divine wiſdom*, wherein God will be eternally glorified.

3. The *people* to be freed, redeemed, and brought unto glory, were great and innumerable; *a great multitude which no man can number*, Rev. vii. 9. The *ſins* which they were to be delivered, ranſomed, and juſtified from, for which a propitiation was to be made, were next unto abſolutely infinite. They wholly ſurpaſs the comprehenſion of any created underſtanding, or the compaſs of imagination. And *in every one of them* there was ſomething *reductively infinite*, as committed againſt an infinite majeſty. The miſeries which hereon all theſe perſons were obnoxious unto, were *infinite*, becauſe *eternal*; or all that evil which our nature is capable to ſuffer, was by them all eternally to be undergone.

By all theſe *perſons*, in all theſe *ſins*, there was an inroad made on the rule and government of God, an affront given unto his juſtice in the violation of his law. Nor can any of them be delivered from the conſequents hereof in eternal miſery, without a *compenſation* and ſatisfaction made unto the juſtice of God. To aſſert the contrary, is to ſuppoſe, that, upon the matter, it is all one to him whether he be *obeyed or diſobeyed*, whether he be honoured or diſhonoured in and by his creatures. And this is all one as to deny his very being; ſeeing it oppoſeth the glory of his eſſential properties. Now, to ſuppoſe that a

mere

mere man, by his temporary ſuffering of external pains, ſhould make ſatisfaction unto the juſtice of God *for all the ſins of all theſe perſons*, ſo as it ſhould be right and juſt with him, not only to ſave and deliver them from all the evils they were liable unto, but alſo to bring them unto life and glory, is to conſtitute a *mediation* between God and man that ſhould conſiſt in appearance and oſtentation, and not be an effect of divine wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and holineſs, nor have its foundation in the nature and equity of things themſelves. For the things ſuppoſed will not be reduced unto any *rules of juſtice* or proportion, that one of them ſhould be conceived in any ſenſe to anſwer unto the other. That is, there is nothing which anſwers any rule, notions, or conceptions of juſtice; nothing that might be exemplary unto men in the puniſhment of crimes, that the ſins of an infinite number of men, deſerving every one of them eternal death, ſhould be expiated by the *temporary ſufferings* of one mere man, ſo as to demonſtrate the righteouſneſs of God in the puniſhment of ſin. But God doth not do theſe things for *ſhew or appearance*, but according unto the real exigence of the holy properties of his nature. And on that ſuppoſition, there muſt be a *proportion* between the things themſelves, namely, the ſufferings of *one*, and the deliverance of *all*.

Nor could the *faith* of man ever find a *ſtable foundation* to fix upon on the ſuppoſition before mentioned. No faith is able to conflict with this objection, that the *ſufferings of one mere man* ſhould be accepted with God as a juſt compenſation for the ſins of the whole church. Men, who, in things of this nature, ſatisfy themſelves with *notions* and fancies, may digeſt ſuch ſuppoſitions. But thoſe who make uſe of faith, for their own delivery from under a conviction of ſin, the nature and demerit of it, with a ſenſe of the wrath of God, and the curſe of the law againſt it, can find *no relief* in ſuch notions or apprehenſions. But it became the *wiſdom of God*, in the diſpenſation of himſelf herein unto the church, ſo to order things, as that *faith* might have an immoveable rock to build upon. This alone it hath in the *perſon of Chriſt*, God and man, his obedience and ſufferings. Wherefore thoſe by whom

the *divine nature* of the Lord Chriſt is denied, do all of them abſolutely deny alſo, that he made *any ſatisfaction* unto divine juſtice for ſin. They will rather ſwallow all the abſurdities which the *abſolute diſmiſſion of ſin* without ſatisfaction or puniſhment doth bring along with it, than grant, that a *mere man* could make any ſuch ſatisfaction by his temporary ſufferings for the ſins of the world. And on the other hand, whoever doth truly and ſincerely believe the *divine perſon* of Chriſt, namely, that he was God and man in one perſon, and, as ſuch a perſon, acted in the whole work of mediation, he cannot ſhut his eyes againſt the glorious light of this truth, that *what he did and ſuffered* in that work, muſt have an intrinſic worth and excellency in it, out-balancing all the evil in the ſins of mankind; that more honour and glory accrued unto the holineſs and law of God by his *obedience*, than diſhonour was caſt on them by the *diſobedience* of Adam and all his poſterity.

4. The way whereby the church was to be recovered and ſaved, was by ſuch works and actings, as one ſhould take on himſelf to perform in the way *of an office* committed unto him for that end. For whereas man could not recover, ranſom, nor ſave himſelf, as we have proved, the whole muſt be wrought for him by another. The undertaking hereof by another, muſt depend on the *infinite wiſdom*, counſel, and pleaſure of God, with the will and conſent of him who was to undertake it. So alſo did the conſtitution of the way and means in particular, whereby this deliverance was to be wrought. Hereon it became his *office* to do the things which were required unto that end. But we have before proved apart by itſelf, that *no office* unto this purpoſe could be diſcharged towards God, or the whole church, by any one who was a man only. I ſhall not therefore here farther inſiſt upon it, although there be good argument in it, unto our preſent purpoſe.

5. If man be recovered, he muſt be reſtored *into the ſame ſtate, condition, and dignity* wherein he was placed before the fall. To reſtore him with any *diminution of honour and bleſſedneſs*, was not ſuited unto divine wiſdom and *bounty*. Yea, ſeeing it was the infinite grace, goodneſs,

neſs, and mercy of God to *reſtore him*, it ſeems agreeable unto the glory of divine excellencies in their operations, that he ſhould be brought into a *better and more honourable condition* than that which he had loſt. But before the *fall*, man was not ſubject nor obedient *unto any but unto God alone*. *Somewhat leſs* he was in dignity than the *angels*, howbeit he owed them no obedience; they were his fellow-ſervants: and as for all other things here below, they were made *ſubject unto him, and put under his feet*, he himſelf being in ſubjection unto God alone. But if he were redeemed and reſtored by one who was a *mere creature*, he could not be reſtored unto this ſtate and dignity: for, on all grounds of right and equity, he muſt *owe all ſervice and obedience* unto him, by whom he was redeemed, reſtored, and recovered, as the author of the ſtate wherein he is. For when we are *bought with a price, we are not our own*, as the apoſtle affirms, 1 Cor. vi. 19. 20. We are *therefore his who hath bought us*, and him are we bound to ſerve in our ſouls and bodies, which are his. Accordingly, in the purchaſe of us, the Lord Chriſt became *our abſolute Lord*, unto whom we owe all religious ſubjection of ſoul and conſcience, Rom. xiv. 7. 8. 9. It would follow therefore, that if we were redeemed and recovered by the interpoſition of a *mere creature*, if ſuch an one were our redeemer, ſaviour, and deliverer, into the *ſervice of a mere creature*, that is, religious ſervice and obedience, we ſhould be recovered. And ſo they believe, who affirm the Lord Chriſt to be a man and no more. But, on this ſuppoſition, we are ſo far from an *advancement* in ſtate and dignity by our reſtoration, that we do not recover what we were firſt enſtated in. For it belonged thereunto, that we ſhould owe religious ſervice and obedience unto *him alone*, who was God by nature over all bleſſed for ever. And they bring all confuſion into Chriſtian religion, who make a *mere creature* the object of our faith, love, adoration, invocation, and all ſacred worſhip. But in our preſent *reſtoration* we are made ſubject anew, as unto religious ſervice, *only unto God alone*. Therefore the holy angels, the head of the creation, do openly diſclaim any ſuch ſervice and veneration from us, becauſe they are only the *fellow-ſervants*

of them that have the teſtimony of Jeſus, Rev. xix. 10. Nor hath God put the *world to come*, the goſpel-ſtate of the church, into ſubjection unto angels or any other creature, but only unto the Son, who is Lord over his own houſe, even he that made all things, who is God, Heb. iii. 4. 5. 6. Wherefore we are reſtored into our primitive condition, to be in ſpiritual ſubjection unto God alone. He therefore by whom we are reſtored, unto whom we owe all obedience and religious ſervice, is, and ought to be *God* alſo. And as they utterly overthrow the goſpel, who affirm, that all the obedience of it is due unto him *who is a man and no more*, as do all by whom the divine nature of Chriſt is denied; ſo they debaſe themſelves beneath the dignity of the ſtate of redemption, and caſt diſhonour on the mediation of Chriſt, who ſubject themſelves in any religious ſervice to *ſaints* or *angels*, or any other creatures whatever.

On theſe ſuppoſitions, which are full of light and evidence, *infinite wiſdom* did interpoſe itſelf, to glorify all the other concerned excellencies of the glory of God, in ſuch a way as might ſolve all difficulties, and ſatisfy all the ends of God's glory, in the recovery and redemption of mankind. The *caſe* before it was as followeth.

Man by ſin had caſt the moſt *inconceivable diſhonour* on the righteouſneſs, holineſs, goodneſs, and rule of God, and himſelf into the guilt of eternal ruin. In this ſtate it became the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, neither to ſuffer the *whole race of mankind* to come ſhort eternally of that enjoyment of himſelf for which it was created, nor yet to deliver *any one of them*, without a retrieval of the eternal honour of his righteouſneſs, holineſs, and rule from the diminution and waſte that was made of it by ſin. As this could no way be done, but by a *full ſatisfaction* unto juſtice and an obedience unto the law, bringing and yeilding more honour unto the holineſs and righteouſneſs of God, than they could any way loſe by the ſin and diſobedience of man; ſo this *ſatisfaction* muſt be made, and this *obedience* be yielded in and by the ſame nature that ſinned or diſobeyed, whereby alone the reſidue of mankind may be intereſted in the benefits and effects of that obedience and ſatisfaction. Yet was it neceſſary hereunto,

unto, that the *nature* wherein all this was to be performed, though derived from the ſame common ſtock with that whereof in all our perſons we are partakers, ſhould be abſolutely free from the *contagion and guilt*, which with it, and by it are communicated unto our *perſons*, from that common ſtock. Unleſs it were ſo, there could be no undertaking in it for *others*, it would not be able to anſwer for *itſelf*. But yet, on all theſe ſuppoſitions, no undertaking, no performance of duty in *human nature* could poſſibly yield that *obedience* unto God, or make that *ſatisfaction* for ſin, whereon the deliverance of *others* might enſue unto the glory of the holineſs, righteouſneſs, and rule of God.

In this ſtate of things, did *infinite wiſdom* interpoſe itſelf, in that glorious ineffable contrivance of the *perſon of Chriſt*, or of the divine nature in the eternal Son of God, and of ours in the ſame individual perſon. Otherwiſe this work could not be accompliſhed; at leaſt, all other ways are hidden from the eyes of all living, no created underſtanding being able to apprehend any other way, whereby it might ſo have been unto the eternal glory of God. This therefore is ſuch an effect of *divine wiſdom*, as will be the object of holy *adoration* and *admiration* unto eternity; as unto this life, *how little a portion* is it we know of its excellency?

CHAP. XVII.

Other evidences of divine wiſdom, in the contrivance of the work of redemption in and by the perſon of Chriſt, in effects evidencing a condecency thereunto.

THAT which remains of our preſent inquiry, is concerning thoſe evidences of *divine condecency* or ſuitableneſs unto *infinite wiſdom* and goodneſs, which we may gather from the nature of this work, and its effects, as expreſſed in *divine revelation*. Some few inſtances hereof I ſhall chuſe out from amongſt many that might be inſiſted on.

1. *Man*

1. *Man was made to ſerve God in all things.* In his perſon, in his ſoul and body, in all his faculties, powers and ſenſes, in all that was given unto him or intruſted with him, he was *not his own*, but every way a *ſervant*, in all that he was, in all that he had, in all that he did or was to do. This he was made for, this ſtate and condition was neceſſary unto him as a *creature*. It could be no otherwiſe with any that was ſo; it was ſo with the *angels*, who were greater in dignity and power than man. The very name of *creature* includes the condition of univerſal ſubjection and ſervice unto the Creator. This condition in and by his ſin, Adam deſigned to deſert, and to free himſelf from. He would exalt himſelf out of *the ſtate of ſervice and obedience*, abſolute and univerſal, into a condition of *ſelf-ſufficiency* of domination and rule. He would *be as God, like unto God*, that is, ſubject no more to him, be in no more dependence on him, but advance his own will above the will of God. And there is ſomewhat of this in every ſin; the ſinner would advance his own will in oppoſition unto, and above the will of God. But what was the event hereof? Man, by endeavouring to free himſelf from *abſolute ſubjection* and univerſal ſervice, to invade *abſolute dominion*, fell into *abſolute and eternal ruin*.

For our recovery out of this ſtate and condition, conſidering how we caſt ourſelves into it, the way inſiſted on was found out by *divine wiſdom*, namely, the incarnation of the Son of God. For he was *Lord of all*, had abſolute dominion over all, *owed no ſervice*, no obedience for himſelf, being in the form of God, and equal unto him. From this ſtate of abſolute *dominion*, he deſcended into a condition of abſolute ſervice. As Adam ſinned and fell, by leaving that ſtate of *abſolute ſervice* which was due unto him, proper unto his nature, inſeparable from it, to attempt a ſtate of *abſolute dominion*, which was not his own, not due unto him, not conſiſtent with his nature; ſo the Son of God being made the *ſecond Adam*, relieved us, by deſcending from a *ſtate of abſolute dominion*, which was his own, due unto his nature, to take on him a ſtate of *abſolute ſervice*, which was not his own, nor due unto him. And this being inconſiſtent with his own divine nature,

ture, he performed it, by taking *our nature on him*, making it his own. He *deſcended* as much *beneath himſelf*, in his *ſelf-humiliation*, as Adam deſigned to *aſcend above himſelf*, in his *pride* and ſelf-exaltation.

The conſideration of the divine grace and wiſdom herein, the apoſtle propoſeth unto us, Phil. ii. 6. 7. 8. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of man: and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* Adam being in the *form*, that is, the ſtate and condition of a ſervant, did, by *robbery*, attempt to take upon him the *form of God*, or to make himſelf equal unto him. The Lord Chriſt being in the *form of God*, that is, his *eſſential form* of the ſame nature with him, accounted it *no robbery* to be in the ſtate and condition of God, to be *equal to him*. But being made in *the faſhion of a man*, taking on him our nature, he alſo ſubmitted unto the *form*, or the *ſtate and condition* of a ſervant therein. He had dominion over all, owed ſervice and obedience unto none, being in the *form of God*, and equal unto him, the condition which Adam aſpired unto. But he condeſcended unto a ſtate of *abſolute ſubjection and ſervice* for our recovery. This did no more belong unto him on his own account, than it belonged unto Adam to be like unto God, or equal to him. Wherefore it is ſaid, that he *humbled himſelf* unto it, as Adam would have *exalted* himſelf unto a ſtate of dignity, which was not his due.

This ſubmiſſion of the Son of God unto an eſtate of *abſolute* and *univerſal ſervice*, is declared by the apoſtle, Heb. x. 5. For thoſe words of the pſalmiſt, *Mine ears haſt thou digged* or *bored*, Pſal. xl. 6. he renders, *A body haſt thou prepared me*. There is an alluſion in the words of the prophecy unto him under the law, who gave up himſelf in abſolute and perpetual ſervice; in ſign whereof, his *ears were bored with an awl*. So the body of Chriſt was prepared for him, that therein he might be in a ſtate of *abſolute ſervice* unto God. So he became to have *nothing of his own*, the original ſtate that Adam would have forſaken, no not his life, he was obedient unto the death.

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This way did divine wiſdom find out and contrive, whereby more glory did ariſe unto the holineſs and righteouſneſs of God, from his condeſcenſion unto univerſal ſervice and obedience, who was over all God bleſſed for ever; than diſhonour was caſt upon them by the ſelf-exaltation of him, who, being in all things a ſervant, deſigned to be like unto God.

2. Adam *was poor in himſelf*, as a creature muſt be. What *riches* he had in his hand or *power*, they were none of his own, they were only truſted with him for eſpecial ſervice. In this ſtate of *poverty*, he commits the *robbery* of attempting to be like unto God. Being *poor*, he would make himſelf *rich* by the *rapine* of an equality with God. This brought on him and us all, as it was meet it ſhould, the loſs of all that we were entruſted with. Hereby we loſt the image of God, loſt our right unto the creatures here below, loſt ourſelves and our ſouls. This was the iſſue of his attempt, to be *rich* when he was *poor*.

In this ſtate infinite wiſdom hath provided for our relief unto the glory of God. *For the Lord Jeſus Chriſt being rich in himſelf, for our ſakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich*, 2 Cor. viii. 9. He was rich in that riches which Adam deſigned by robbery. For he was in the *form of God*, and accounted it no robbery to be equal with God. But he made himſelf *poor* for our ſakes, with *poverty* which Adam would have relinquiſhed; yea, to that degree that he had *not where to lay his head*, he had nothing. Hereby he made a compenſation for what he *never made ſpoil of*, or paid what he never took. In this condeſcenſion of his, out of grace and love to mankind, was God more glorified, than he was diſhonoured in the ſinful exaltation of Adam, out of pride and ſelf-love.

3. The ſin of man conſiſted formally in *diſobedience*; and it was the *diſobedience* of him, who was every way and in all things obliged unto *obedience*. For man by all that he was, by all that he had received, by all that he expected or was farther capable of, by the conſtitution of his own nature, by the nature and authority of God with his relation thereunto, was *indiſpenſably obliged* unto univerſal obedience. His ſin therefore was the *diſobedience* of him who

who was abſolutely obliged unto *obedience*, by the very conſtitution of his being, and neceſſary relation unto God. This was that which rendered it ſo exceeding ſinful, and the conſequents of it eternally miſerable. And from this obligation, his ſin in any one inſtance was a total renunciation of all obedience unto God.

The recompenſe, with reſpect unto the glory of God, for *diſobedience* muſt be by *obedience*, as hath been before declared. And if there be not a full *obedience* yielded unto the law of God in that nature that ſinned, man cannot be ſaved without an eternal violation of the glory of God therein. But the *diſobedience* of him who was every way obliged unto *obedience*, could not be compenſated but by his *obedience*, who was no way obliged thereunto. And this could be only the obedience of him that is God, (for all creatures are obliged to obedience for themſelves), and it could be performed only by him who was man. Wherefore, for the accompliſhment of this obedience, he, who in his *own perſon*, as God, was *above the law*, was in his *human nature*, in his own perſon, as man, made under the law. Had he not been *made under the law*, what he did could not have been *obedience*; and had he not been in himſelf above the law, his *obedience* could not have been beneficial unto us. The ſin of Adam (and the ſame is in the nature of every ſin) conſiſted in this, that he who was naturally *every way under the law*, and ſubject unto it, would be *every way above the law*, and no way obliged by it. Wherefore it was taken away unto the glory of God, by his *obedience*, who being in himſelf *above the law*, no way ſubject unto it, yet ſubmitted, humbled himſelf, to be *made under the law*, to be every way obliged by it; ſee Gal. iii. 13. chap. iv. 4. This is the ſubject of the diſcourſe of the apoſtle, Rom. v. from ver. 12. to the end of the chapter.

Unto the glory of God in all theſe ends, the perſon of Chriſt, as an effect of *infinite wiſdom*, was meet and able to be a Mediator and undertaker between God and man. In the *union* of both our natures in the ſame perſon, he was ſo meet by his relation unto both; unto God by *filiation* or ſonſhip, unto us by *brotherhood* or nearneſs of kindred, Heb. ii. 14. And he was *able* from the dignity of

his perſon. For the *temporary ſufferings* of him who was eternal, was a full compenſation for the *eternal ſufferings* of them who were temporary.

4. *God made man the lord of all things here below.* He was as it were the *heir of God*, as unto the inheritance of this world in preſent, and as unto a bleſſed ſtate in eternal glory: but he loſt all right and title hereunto by ſin; he made *forfeiture* of the whole, by the law of the tenure whereby he held it, and God took the forfeiture. Wherefore he deſigns a *new heir* of all, and veſts the whole inheritance of heaven and earth in him, even in his Son. He *appointed him the Heir of all things*, Heb. i. 3. This tranſlation of God's inheritance the apoſtle declares, Heb. ii. 6. 7. 8. 9. For the words which he cites from Pſal. viii. 4. 5. 6. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him? For thou haſt made him a little lower than the angels, and haſt crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madeſt him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things under his feet;* do declare the original condition of mankind in general. But man *forfeited the dominion and inheritance* that he was intruſted withal; and God ſettleth it anew ſolely in the man Chriſt Jeſus. So the apoſtle adds, *We ſee not all things put under him, but we ſee it all* accompliſhed in Jeſus, ver. 9. But as all other inheritances do deſcend with theirs, ſo did this unto him with its *burden*. There was a great *debt* upon it, the debt of ſin. This he was to undergo, to make payment of, or ſatisfaction for, or he could not rightly enter upon the inheritance. This could no otherwiſe be done but by his ſuffering in our nature, as hath been declared. He who was the *Heir of all*, was in himſelf to purge our ſins. Herein did the infinite wiſdom of God manifeſt itſelf, in that he conveyed the inheritance of all things unto him, who was *meet and able* ſo to enter upon it, ſo to enjoy and poſſeſs it, as that no detriment or *damage* might ariſe unto the riches, the revenue, the glory of God, from the *waſte* made by the former poſſeſſor.

5. *Mankind was to be recovered unto faith and truſt in God, as alſo unto the love of him above all.* All theſe things had utterly forſaken our nature; and the *reduction* of them into

into it, is a work of the greateſt difficulty. We had ſo provoked God, he had given ſuch evidences of his wrath and diſpleaſure againſt us, and our minds thereon were ſo alienated from him, as we ſtood in need of the *ſtrongeſt motives*, and higheſt encouragements, once to attempt to return unto him, ſo as to place all our faith and truſt in him, and all our love upon him.

Sinners generally live in a neglect and contempt of God, in an enmity againſt him. But whenever they are convinced of a neceſſity to endeavour a return unto him, the firſt thing they have to conflict withal, is *fear*. Beginning to underſtand who and what he is, as alſo how things ſtand between him and them, they are *afraid* to have any thing to do with him, and judge it impoſſible that they ſhould find acceptance with him. This was the ſenſe that Adam himſelf had upon his ſin, when he was afraid and hid himſelf. And the ſenſe of other ſinners is frequently expreſſed unto the ſame purpoſe in the ſcripture. See Iſ. xxxiii. 14. Micah vi. 6. 7.

All theſe *diſcouragements* are abſolutely provided againſt, in that way of our recovery which *infinite wiſdom* hath found out. It were a thing *delightful* to dwell on the ſecurities given us therein, as unto our acceptance in all thoſe principles, acts, and duties, wherein the renovation of the image of God doth conſiſt. I muſt contract my meditations, and ſhall therefore inſtance in ſome few things only unto that purpoſe.

1. *Faith* is not capable of greater encouragement or confirmation than lieth in this one conſideration, that what we are to believe unto this end, is *delivered unto us by God himſelf in our nature*. What could confirm our faith and hope in God, what could encourage us to expect acceptance with God, like this ineffable teſtimony of his good will unto us? The nature of things is not capable of greater aſſurance, ſeeing the divine nature is capable of no greater condeſcenſion.

This the ſcripture propoſeth, as that which gives a juſt expectation, that againſt all *fears* and oppoſitions we ſhould cloſe with divine calls and invitations to return unto God. *Laſt of all, he ſent unto them his ſon, ſaying, They will reverence my ſon*, Matth. xxi. 37. they will believe the meſ-

ſage which I ſend by him. *He hath ſpoken unto us by his Son who is the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon,* Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. The conſideration hereof, is ſufficient to diſpel all that darkneſs and confuſion which *fear,* dread, and guilt do bring on the minds of men when they are invited to return unto God. That that God againſt whom we have ſinned, ſhould ſpeak unto us and treat with us in *our own nature,* about a return unto himſelf, is the utmoſt that divine excellencies could condeſcend unto. And as this was needful for us, (though proud men and ſenſeleſs of ſin underſtand it not), ſo if it be refuſed, it will be attended with the ſoreſt deſtruction, Heb. xii. 25.

2. This *treaty* principally conſiſts in a *divine declaration,* that all the cauſes of *fear and dread* upon the account of ſin, are removed and taken away. This is the ſubſtance of the goſpel, as it is declared by the apoſtle, 2 Cor. v. 18.—21. Wherefore if hereon we refuſe to return unto God, to make him the object of our faith, truſt, love, and delight, it is not by reaſon of any old or former ſin, not of that of our *original apoſtaſy* from God, nor of the effects of it againſt the law, by the means of a *new ſin,* outdoing them all in guilt and contempt of God. Such is *final unbelief* againſt the propoſal of the goſpel. It hath more *malignity* in it, than all other ſins whatever. But, by this way of our recovery, all cauſe of fear and dread is taken away, all pretences of a diſtruſt of the love and good will of God are defeated; ſo that if men will not hereon be recovered unto him, it is from their *hatred of him,* and enmity unto him, the fruits whereof they muſt feed on to eternity.

3. Whereas, if we will return unto God by *faith,* we are alſo to return unto him in *love,* what greater motive can there be unto it, than that *infinite love* of the Father and the Son unto us, which is glorioufly diſplayed in this way of our recovery? See 1 John iv. 9. 10. *Si amare pigebat, ſaltem redamare ne pigeat.*

4. The whole race of mankind falling into ſin againſt God, and apoſtaſy from him, there was no *example* left unto them to manifeſt how excellent, how glorious and comely a thing it is to live unto God, to believe and truſt

truſt in him, to cleave unto him unchangeably by *love*. For they were utter ſtrangers unto what is done by *angels* above, nor could be affected with their example. But without a *pattern* of theſe things, manifeſting their excellency and reward, they could not earneſtly endeavour to attain unto them. This is given us moſt conſpicuouſly in the *human nature of Chriſt*. See Heb. xii. 13. Hereby therefore every thing needful for our encouragement to return unto God, is in *infinite wiſdom* provided for, and propoſed unto us.

6. *Divine wiſdom* in the way of our recovery by Jeſus Chriſt; God manifeſt in the fleſh, deſigned *to glorify a ſtate of obedience unto God, and to caſt the reproach of the moſt inexpreſſible folly on the relinquiſhment of that ſtate by ſin.* For as God would recover and reſtore us, ſo he would do it in a *way of obedience* on our part, of that obedience which we had forſaken. The deſign of man, which was impoſed on him by the craft of Satan, was to *become wiſe like unto God*, knowing good and evil. The *folly* of this endeavour was quickly diſcovered in its effects. Senſe of nakedneſs, with ſhame, miſery, and death, immediately enſued thereon.

But *divine wiſdom* thought meet to aggravate the reproach of this *folly*. He would let us ſee wherein the *true knowledge of good and evil did conſiſt*, and how fooliſhly we had aſpired unto it by a relinquiſhment of that ſtate of *obedience* wherein we were created.

Job xxviii. from ver. 12. unto the end of the chapter, there is an inquiry after *wiſdom and the place of its habitation*. All creatures give an account, that it is not in them, that it is hid from them, only they have *heard the fame thereof*. All the context is to evince, that it is *eſſentially* and *originally* only in God himſelf. But if we cannot comprehend it in itſelf, yet may we not know what is *wiſdom unto us*, and what is required thereunto? yes, ſaith he; *For unto man he ſaid, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil, that is underſtanding*, verſ. 28. Man, on the other hand, by the ſuggeſtion of Satan *thought*, and now of himſelf continues to think otherwiſe, namely, that the *way to be wiſe* is to relinquiſh theſe things. The world will not be perſuaded

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that *the fear of the Lord is wisdom*, and to depart from evil is understanding. Yea, there is nothing that the most of men do more despise and scorn, than thoughts, that true wisdom doth consist in *faith*, *love*, *fear*, and *obedience unto God*; see Psal. xiv. 6. Whatever else may be pleaded to be in it, yet sure enough they are, and those who count it *wisdom*, are but fools.

To cast an everlasting reproach of *folly* on this contrivance of the devil and man, and uncontrollably to evince wherein alone *true wisdom* doth consist, God would *glorify a state of obedience*. He would render it incomparably more amiable, desirable, and excellent, than ever it could have appeared to have been, in the obedience of all the angels in heaven, and men on earth, had they continued therein. This he did in this way of our recovery; in that his own *eternal Son* entered into a *state of obedience*, and took upon him the *form* or condition of *a servant* unto God.

What more evident conviction could there be of the *folly* of mankind, in hearkening unto the suggestion of Satan, to seek after *wisdom* in another condition? How could that great maxim, which is laid down in opposition unto all vain thoughts of man, be more eminently exemplified; that the *fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding?* What greater evidence could be given, that the nature of man is not capable of a better condition than that of *service* and *universal obedience* unto God? How could any state be represented more amiable, desirable, and blessed? In the obedience of Christ, of the Son of God in our nature, *apostate sinners* are ubreaded with their *folly*, in relinquishing that state, which, by his susception of it, is rendered so glorious. What have we attained by leaving that condition, which the eternal Son of God delighted in? *I delight*, saith he, *to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is in the midst of my bowels*, Psal. xl. 8. It is the highest demonstration, that our nature is not capable of more order, more beauty, more glory, than consists in obedience unto God. And that state which we fell into upon our forsaking of it, we now know to be all *darkness*, *confusion*, and *misery*.

Wherefore seeing God in infinite grace and mercy would

would recover us unto himſelf; and in his righteouſneſs and holineſs would do this in a way of *obedience*, of that obedience which we had forſaken; it hath an eminent impreſſion of *divine wiſdom* upon it, that, in this myſtery of God manifeſt in the fleſh, the only means of our recovery, he would caſt the reproach of the moſt inexpreſſible *folly* on our apoſtaſy from a ſtate of it, and render it amiable and deſirable unto all who are to return unto him.

To bear the ſhame of this *folly*, to be deeply ſenſible of it; and to live in a conſtant proſpect and view of the glory of *obedience* in the perſon of Chriſt, with a ſedulous endeavour for *conformity* thereunto, is the higheſt attainment of our *wiſdom* in this world; and whoſoever is otherwiſe minded, is ſo at his own utmoſt peril.

7. God, in infinite wiſdom, hath by this means *ſecured the whole inheritance of this life, and that which is to come, from a ſecond forfeiture.* Whatever God will beſtow on the children of men, he grants it unto them in the way of an *inheritance.* So the land of Canaan, choſen out for a repreſentative of ſpiritual and eternal things, was granted unto Abraham and his ſeed for an inheritance. And his intereſt in the promiſe is expreſſed, by being *heir of the world.* All the things of this life that are really good and uſeful unto us, do belong unto this inheritance. So they did when it was veſted in Adam. All things of grace and glory do ſo alſo. And the whole of the privilege of believers is, that they are *heirs of ſalvation.* Hence *godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,* 1 Tim. iv. 8. And the promiſe is only of the *inheritance.* This inheritance, as was before intimated, was loſt in Adam, and forfeited into the hand of the great Lord, the great Poſſeſſor of heaven and earth. In his ſovereign grace and goodneſs, he was pleaſed again to *reſtore* it, as unto all the benefits of it, unto the former *tenants*, and that with an addition of grace, and a more exceeding weight of glory. But withal, infinite wiſdom provides, that a *ſecond forfeiture* ſhall not be made of it. Wherefore the grant of it is not made immediately unto any of thoſe, for whoſe uſe and benefit it is prepared and granted. They had been once tried, and failed in their *truſt*, unto their own eternal beggary and ruin, had not infinite

infinite grace interpoſed for their relief. And it did not become the *wiſdom* and glory of God to make a *ſecond grant* of it, which might be fruſtrate in like manner. Wherefore he would not commit it again unto any mere creature whatever; nor could it ſafely have been ſo done, with ſecurity unto his glory. For,

1. It was too *great a truſt*, even the whole inheritance of heaven and earth, all the riches of grace and glory, to be committed unto any one of them. God would not give this glory unto any one creature. If it be ſaid, it was firſt committed unto Adam, and therefore to have it again, is not an honour above the capacity of a creature; I ſay, that the nature of the *inheritance* is greatly changed. The whole of what was entruſted with Adam, comes exceedingly ſhort of what God hath now prepared as the inheritance of the church. There is grace in it, and glory added unto it, which Adam neither had, nor could have right unto. It is now of that nature, as could neither be entruſted with, nor communicated by any mere creature. Beſides, he that hath it, is the *object of the faith* and truſt of the church; nor can any be intereſted in any part of this *inheritance*, without the exerciſe of thoſe and all other graces on *him*, whoſe the inheritance is. And ſo to be the object of our faith, is the prerogative of the divine nature alone.

2. No *mere creature* could ſecure this inheritance that it ſhould be loſt no more; and yet, if it were ſo, it would be highly derogatory unto the glory of God. For two things were required hereunto. (1.) That he in whom this truſt is veſted, ſhould be in himſelf *incapable* of any ſuch failure, as through which, by the immutable eternal law of obedience unto God, a *forfeiture* of it ſhould be made. (2.) That he undertake for them all who ſhall be *heirs of ſalvation*, who ſhall enjoy this *inheritance*, that none of them ſhould loſe or forfeit their own perſonal intereſt in it, or the terms whereon it is conveyed and communicated unto them. But no mere creature was ſufficient unto theſe ends. For no one of them, in and by himſelf, in the conſtitution of his nature, is abſolutely free from *falling from God*, himſelf. They *may* receive, the angels in heaven, and the glorified ſaints *have* received

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ſuch a confirmation in and by grace, as that they ſhall never *actually* apoſtatize or fall from God. But this they have not from themſelves, nor the principles of their own nature, which is neceſſary unto him that ſhall receive this truſt. For ſo, when it was firſt veſted in Adam, he was left to preſerve it by the *innate concreated abilities* of his own nature. And as unto the latter, all the angels in heaven cannot undertake to ſecure the obedience of any one man, ſo as that the conveyance of the inheritance may be ſure unto him. Wherefore, with reſpect hereunto, thoſe angels themſelves, though the moſt holy and glorious of all the creatures of God, have no greater truſt or intereſt, than to *be miniſtering ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation*, Heb. i. 14. So unmeet are they to have the whole inheritance veſted in any of them.

But all this infinite wiſdom hath provided for in the great *myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh*. God herein makes his only Son the *Heir of all things*, and veſts the whole inheritance abſolutely in him. For the *promiſe*, which is the court-roll of heaven, the only external means and record of its conveyance, was originally made unto Chriſt only. God *ſaid not, And unto thy ſeeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy ſeed, which ſeed is Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 16. And we become again *heirs of God*, only as we are *joint heirs* with Chriſt, Rom. viii. 17. that is, by being taken into a participation of that inheritance which is veſted in him alone. For many may be partakers of the *benefit* of that, whoſe *right* and *title* is in one alone, when it is conveyed unto him for their uſe: and hereby the ends before mentioned are fully provided for. For,

1. He who is thus made the *Heir of all*, is meet to be entruſted with the glory of it. For where this grant is ſolemnly expreſſed, it is declared that he is the *brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 2. 3.; and that by him *the worlds were made*. He alone was meet to be this *Heir*, who is partaker of the divine nature, and by whom all things were created. For ſuch things belong unto it, as cannot appertain unto any other. The *reader* may conſult, if he pleaſe, our *expoſition* of that place of the apoſtle.

2. Any *failure in his own perſon* was abſolutely impoſ-

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ſible. The ſubſiſtence of the human nature in the perſon of the Son of God, rendered the leaſt ſin utterly impoſſible unto him. For all the moral operations of that nature are the acts of the perſon of the Son of God. And hereby not only is the *inheritance* ſecured, but alſo an aſſurance that it is ſo, is given unto all them that do believe. This is the life and ſoul of all goſpel-comforts, that the whole *inheritance* of grace and glory is veſted in Chriſt, where it can never ſuffer loſs or damage. When we are ſenſible of the *want of grace*, ſhould we go unto God, and ſay, *Father give us the portion of goods that falls unto us*, as the prodigal did, we ſhould quickly conſume it, and bring ourſelves unto the utmoſt miſery as he did alſo. But in Chriſt the whole *inheritance* is ſecured for evermore.

3. He is able to preſerve all thoſe who ſhall be *heirs of this inheritance*, that they forfeit not their own perſonal intereſt therein, according unto the terms of the covenant, whereby it is made over to them. He can, and will, by the power of his grace, preſerve them all unto the full enjoyment of the *purchaſed inheritance*. We hold our title by the *rod*, at the will of the Lord. And many failures we are liable unto, whereon we are *in miſericordia Domini*, and are ſubject unto amercements. But yet, the the whole inheritance being granted unto Chriſt, is eternally ſecured for us, and we are by his grace preſerved from ſuch offences againſt the *ſupreme Lord*, or committing any *ſuch waſtes*, as ſhould caſt us out of our poſſeſſion. See Pſal. lxxxix. 27.—32. Thus, in all things infinite wiſdom hath provided, that no *ſecond forfeiture* ſhould be made of the *inheritance* of grace and glory, which as it would have been eternally ruinous unto mankind, ſo it was inconſiſtent with the glory and honour of God.

8. The *wiſdom of God was glorioufly exalted in the righteous deſtruction of Satan and his intereſt*, by the incarnation and mediation of the Son of God. He had prevailed againſt the *firſt way* of the manifeſtation of divine glory; and therein both pleaſed and prided himſelf. Nothing could ever give ſuch ſatisfaction unto the malicious murderer, as the breach he had occaſioned between God and man, with his hopes and apprehenſions that it would

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be eternal. He had no other thoughts, but that the whole *race of mankind*, which God had deſigned unto the enjoyment of himſelf, ſhould be everlaſtingly ruined. So he had ſatisfied his envy againſt man in his eternal deſtruction with himſelf, and his malice againſt God in depriving him of his glory. Hereon, upon the diſtance that he had made between God and man, he interpoſed himſelf, and boaſted himſelf for a long ſeaſon, *as the god of this world*, who had all power over it, and in it. It belonged unto the honour of the *wiſdom* of God, that he ſhould be defeated in this triumph. Neither was it meet that this ſhould be done by a mere act of *ſovereign omnipotent power*. For he would yet glory in his *craft* and the ſucceſs of it, that there was no way to diſappoint him, but by cruſhing him with power, without reſpect unto *righteouſneſs*, or demonſtration of *wiſdom*. Wherefore it muſt be done in ſuch a way, as wherein he might ſee unto his eternal ſhame and confuſion, all his *arts* and *ſubtleties* defeated by infinite wiſdom, and his enterpriſe overthrown in a way of right and equity. The remark that the Holy Ghoſt puts on the *ſerpent*, which was his inſtrument in drawing man unto apoſtaſy from God, namely, that he was *ſubtle above all the beaſts of the field*, is only to intimate, wherein Satan deſigned his attempt, and from whence he hoped for his ſucceſs. It was not an *act of power* or rage, but of *craft*, *counſel*, ſubtlety, and deceit. Herein he gloried and prided himſelf; wherefore the way to diſappoint him with ſhame, muſt be a contrivance of infinite *wiſdom*, turning all his artifices into mere folly.

This work of God, with reſpect unto him, is expreſſed in the ſcripture two ways; *Firſt*, It is called the *ſpoiling of him*, as unto his power, and the prey that he had taken. The *ſtrong man armed* was to be bound, and his goods ſpoiled. The Lord Chriſt, by his death, *deſtroyed him that had the power of death*, that is, the devil. He *led captivity captive*, ſpoiling principalities and powers, triumphing over them in his croſs. So Abraham, when he ſmote the kings, not only delivered Lot, who was their captive, but alſo took *all their ſpoils*. Again, it is expreſſed by the *deſtruction of his works*. *For this cauſe was the Son of God manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the devil.*

devil. The *ſpoils* which he had in his own power were taken from him, and the *works* which he had erected in the minds of men were demoliſhed. The *web* which he had wove to clothe himſelf withal, as *the god of this world*, was unravelled to the laſt thread. And although all this ſeems to repreſent a work of power, yet was it indeed an effect of *wiſdom* and righteouſneſs principally.

For the power which Satan had over mankind was in itſelf *unjuſt*. For, (1.) He obtained it by *fraud* and *deceit*. *The ſerpent beguiled Eve.* (2.) He poſſeſſed it with *injuſtice*, with reſpect unto God, being an invader of his right and poſſeſſion. (3.) He uſed and exerciſed it with *malice*, tyranny, and rage; ſo as that it was every way *unjuſt* both in its foundation and execution. With reſpect hereunto he was *juſtly* deſtroyed by *omnipotent power*, which puts forth itſelf in his eternal puniſhment. But, on the other ſide, mankind did *ſuffer juſtly* under his power, being given up unto it in the righteous judgement of God. For one may *ſuffer* juſtly what another *doth* unjuſtly inflict. As when one cauſeleſsly ſtrikes an *innocent man*, if he ſtrikes him again, he who did the firſt injury *ſuffereth juſtly*, but the other doth *unjuſtly*, in revenging himſelf. Wherefore as man was given up unto him in a way of puniſhment, he was a *lawful captive*, and was not to be delivered but in a way of juſtice. And this was done in a way that Satan never thought of. For, by the obedience and ſufferings of the Son of God incarnate, there was full *ſatisfaction* made unto the juſtice of God for the ſins of man, a reparation of his glory, and an exaltation of the honour of his holineſs, with all the other properties of his nature, as alſo of his law, outbalancing all the *diminution* of it by the firſt apoſtaſy of mankind, as hath been declared. Immediately hereon, all the *charms* of Satan were diſſolved, all his *chains* looſed, his darkneſs that he had brought on the creation diſpelled, his whole plot and deſign defeated; whereon he ſaw himſelf, and was expoſed unto all the holy angels of heaven, in all the counſels, craft, and power he had boaſted of, to be nothing but a *congeries, a maſs of darkneſs, malice, folly, impotency, and rage.*

Hereon

Hereon did Satan make an *entrance* into one of the principal parts of his eternal torments, in that furious ſelf-maceration which he is given up unto, on the conſideration of his defeat and diſappointment. Abſolute *power* he always feared, and what it would produce; for he *believes that, and trembles*. But againſt any other way he thought he had ſecured himſelf. It lieth plain to every underſtanding, what ſhame, confuſion, and ſelf-revenge, the proud *apoſtate* was caſt into, upon this holy righteous diſappointment of his deſign; whereas he had always promiſed himſelf to carry his cauſe, or, at leaſt, to put God to act in the deſtruction of his dominion, by mere omnipotent power, without regard unto any other properties of his nature. To find that which he contrived for the deſtruction of the glory of God, the diſappointment of his ends in the creation of all things, and the eternal ruin of mankind, to iſſue in a more *glorious exaltation* of the holy properties of the divine nature, and an unſpeakable augmentation of bleſſedneſs unto mankind itſelf, is the higheſt aggravation of his eternal torments. This was a work every way becoming the infinite wiſdom of God.

9. Whereas there are *three diſtinct perſons* in the Holy Trinity, it became the wiſdom of God, that *the Son, the ſecond perſon*, ſhould undertake this work, and be incarnate. I ſhall but ſparingly touch on this *glorious myſtery*. For, as unto the reaſon of it, it is abſolutely reſolved into the *infinite wiſdom* and ſovereign counſel of the divine will. And all ſuch things are the objects of an holy admiration, not *curiouſly* to be inquired into. To intrude ourſelves into the things *which we have not ſeen*, that is, which are not revealed in thoſe concernments of them which are *not revealed*, is not unto the advantage of faith in our edification. But as unto what is declared of them, either immediately and directly, or by their *relation* unto other known truths, we may meditate on them unto the improvement of faith and love towards God. And ſome things are thus evident unto us in this myſtery.

1. We had by ſin loſt *the image of God*, and thereby all gracious acceptance with him, all intereſt in his love and favour. In our recovery, as we have declared, this *image* is again to be reſtored unto us, or we are to be renewed

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into the likeneſs of God. And there was a condecency unto *divine wiſdom*, that this work ſhould in a peculiar manner be effected by him, who is the *eſſential image* of God, that is, the Father. This, as we have formerly ſhewed, was the perſon of the Son; receiving his perſonal ſubſiſtence, and therewithal the divine nature, with all its eſſential properties from the Father, by eternal generation, he was thereon the *expreſs image of his perſon*, and the brightneſs of his glory. Whatever is in the perſon of the Father, is in the perſon of the Son; and being all received from the Father, he is his eſſential image. And one end of his incarnation was, that he might be the *repreſentative image* of God unto us. Whereas therefore, in the work of our recovery, the *image* of God ſhould be reſtored in us, there was a *condecency* that it ſhould be done by him, who was the eſſential image of God. For it conſiſts in the communication of the effects and likeneſs of the ſame image unto us, which was eſſentially in himſelf.

2. We were by nature the *ſons of God;* we ſtood in relation of ſons unto him by virtue of our creation, the communication of his image and likeneſs, with the preparation of an inheritance for us. On the ſame accounts, the *angels* are frequently called the *ſons of God.* This title, this relation unto God, we utterly loſt by ſin, becoming *aliens from him*, and enemies unto him. Without a recovery into this eſtate, we cannot be reſtored, nor brought unto the enjoyment of God; and this cannot be done but by *adoption.* Now, it ſeems convenient unto divine wiſdom, that he ſhould recover our *ſonſhip* by *adoption*, who was himſelf the *eſſential* and *eternal Son of God.*

3. The ſum of what we can comprehend in this great myſtery, ariſeth from the conſideration of the *order* of the holy perſons of the Bleſſed Trinity, in their operations. For their *order* herein doth follow that of their ſubſiſtence. Unto this great work there are peculiarly required, *authority*, *love*, and *power*, all directed by infinite *wiſdom.* Theſe originally reſide in the *perſon of the Father*, and the acting of them in this matter is conſtantly aſcribed unto him. He *ſent the Son*, as he *gives the Spirit*, by an act of ſovereign authority. And he ſent the Son from his eternal *love:* he loved the world, and ſent his Son to die.

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This is constantly assigned to be the effect of the love and grace of the *Father*; and he wrought in Christ, and he works in us, with respect unto the end of this mystery, with the *exceeding greatness of his power*, Eph. i. 18. The Son, who is the second person in the *order of subsistence*, in the order of operation puts the whole *authority*, *love*, and *power* of the Father in execution. This order of subsistence, and operation thereon, is expressly declared by the apostle, 1 Cor. viii. 6. *Unto us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.* The Father is the original fountain and spring, ἐξ ὧ, *from whom*, whose original authority, love, goodness, and power, *are all these things*. That expression of *from him*, peculiarly denotes the eternal original of all things. But how are this authority, goodness, love, and power in the Father, whence all these things spring and arise, made *effectual*; how are their effects wrought out and accomplished? *There is one Lord, even Jesus Christ*, a distinct person from the Father, δι ὧ, *by whom* are all things. He works in the order of his subsistence, to execute, work, and accomplish all that originally proceedeth from the Father. By the Holy Spirit, who is the third person in order of subsistence, there is made a *perfecting application* of the whole, unto all its proper ends.

Wherefore this work of our redemption and recovery, being the especial effect of the *authority*, *love*, and *power* of the Father, it was to be *executed* in and by the *person of the Son*, as the application of it unto us is made by the Holy Ghost. Hence it became not the *person of the Father* to *assume our nature*; it belonged not thereunto in the order of subsistence and operation in the blessed Trinity. The authority, love, and power, whence the whole work proceeded, were his in a peculiar manner. But the *execution* of what infinite wisdom designed in them and by them, belonged unto another. Nor did this belong unto the person of the Holy Spirit, who, in *order* of divine operation following that of his subsistence, was to perfect the whole work, in making *application* of it unto the church when it was wrought. Wherefore it was every way suit-

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ed unto divine wiſdom, unto the order of the holy perſons in their ſubſiſtence and operation, that this work ſhould be undertaken and accompliſhed in the *perſon of the Son.* What is farther, muſt be referred unto another world.

Theſe are ſome few of thoſe things wherein the *infinite wiſdom* of God, in this holy contrivance, giveth forth ſome rays of itſelf into enlightened minds, and truly-humbled ſouls. But *how little a portion of it is heard by us?* How weak, how low are our conceptions about it? We cannot herein find out the Almighty unto perfection. No ſmall part of the glory of heaven will conſiſt, in that comprehenſion which we ſhall have of the myſtery of the wiſdom, love, and grace of God herein.

Howbeit, we are with all *diligence* to inquire into it, whilſt we are here in the way. It is the very *centre* of all glorious *evangelical* truths; not one of them can be underſtood, believed, or improved as they ought, without a due comprehenſion of their relation hereunto, as we have ſhewed before.

This is that which the *prophets of old* inquired into and after with all diligence, even the myſtery of God manifeſt in the fleſh, with the glory that enſued thereon, 1 Pet. i. 11. Yet had they not that light to diſcern it by, which we have. The *leaſt in the kingdom of God,* as to the knowledge of this myſtery, may be above the greateſt of them. And ought we not to fear, leſt our ſloth under the beams of the ſun, ſhould be condemned by their diligence in the twilight?

This the *angels* bow down to look into, although their concerns therein were not equal to ours. But *angels* are angels, and *prophets* were prophets; we are a generation of *poor ſinful men,* who are little concerned in the glory of God or our own duty.

Is it not much to be lamented, that many Chriſtians content themſelves with a very *ſuperficiary* knowledge of theſe things? How are the ſtudies, the abilities, the time, and diligence of many excellent perſons engaged in, and laid out about the *works of nature,* and the effects of divine wiſdom and power in them, by whom any endeavour to inquire into this glorious myſtery is neglected, if not deſpiſed? Alas, the light of divine wiſdom in the greateſt

eſt works of nature, holds not the proportion of the *meaneſt ſtar* unto the ſun in its full ſtrength, unto that glory of it which ſhines in this myſtery of God manifeſt in the fleſh, and the work accompliſhed thereby. A little time ſhall put an end unto the whole ſubject of their inquiries, with all the concernment of God and man in them for evermore. This alone is that which *fills up eternity*, and which, although it be now with ſome as nothing, yet will ſhortly be *all*.

Is it not much more to be lamented, that many who are called Chriſtians do even *deſpiſe theſe myſteries?* Some oppoſe them directly, with *pernicious hereſies* about the perſon of Chriſt, denying his divine nature, or the perſonal union of his two natures, whereby the whole myſtery of *infinite wiſdom* is evacuated and rejected. And ſome there are, who, though they do not deny the *truth* of this myſtery, yet they both *deſpiſe* and *reproach* ſuch as with any diligence endeavour to inquire into it. I ſhall add the words uſed on alike occaſion, unto them who ſincerely believe the myſteries of the goſpel: *But ye beloved, building up yourſelves in your moſt holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keep yourſelves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, unto eternal life.* And the due contemplation of this myſtery will certainly be attended with many ſpiritual advantages.

1. It will bring in *ſtedfaſtneſs in believing*, as unto the eſpecial concerns of our own ſouls; ſo as to give unto God the glory that is his due thereon. This is the work, theſe are the ends of *faith*, Rom. v. 1.—5. We ſee how many Chriſtians who are *ſincere believers*, yet fluctuate in their minds with great uncertainties as unto their own ſtate and condition. The principal reaſon of it is, becauſe they are *unſkilful in the word of righteouſneſs*, and ſo are babes in a weak condition, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Heb. v. 13. This is the way of ſpiritual peace. When the ſoul of a believer is able to take a view of the glory of *the wiſdom of God*, exalting all the other holy properties of his nature in this great myſtery unto our ſalvation, it will obviate all fears, remove all objections, and be a means of bringing in *aſſured peace* into the mind; which,

without a due comprehenſion of it, will never be attained.

2. The acting of faith hereon, is that which is accompanied with its great power to *change and transform the ſoul* into the image and likeneſs of Chriſt. So is it expreſſed by the apoſtle, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *We all with open face beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* We all *beholding*; κατοπτριζόμενοι, not taking a tranſient glance of theſe things, but diligently inſpecting them, as thoſe do who *through a glaſs* deſign a ſteady view of things at a diſtance. That which we are thus to behold by the continued actings of faith in holy contemplation, is the *glory of the Lord in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, as it is expreſſed, chap. iv. ver. 6. which is nothing but that *myſtery of godlineſs*, in whoſe explanation we have been engaged. And what is the effect of the *ſteady contemplation* of this myſtery by faith? μεταμορφούμεθα, we are *changed*, made quite other creatures than we were, caſt into the *form*, *figure*, and image of Jeſus Chriſt, the great deſign of all believers in this world. Would we then be like unto Chriſt? would we bear the image of the *heavenly*, as we have borne the image of the *earthy*? is nothing ſo *deteſtable* unto us as the deformed image of the old man, in all the luſts of the mind and of the fleſh? is nothing ſo *amiable* and deſirable as the image of Chriſt, and the repreſentation of God in him? this is the way, this is the means of attaining the end which we aim at.

3. Abounding in this duty, is the moſt effectual means of freeing us, in particular, from the *ſhame and bane of profeſſion* in *earthly-mindedneſs*. There is nothing ſo unbecoming a Chriſtian, as to have his mind always exerciſed about, always filled with thoughts of *earthly things*. And according as mens *thoughts* are exerciſed about them, their *affections* are increaſed and inflamed towards them. Theſe things mutually promote one another, and there is a kind of *circulation* in them. Multiplied *thoughts* inflame *affections*, and inflamed affections increaſe the number of *thoughts* concerning them. Nothing is more repugnant unto the whole life of faith, nothing more obſtructive unto the exerciſe of all grace, than a prevalency

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of this frame of mind. And at this ſeaſon, in an eſpecial manner, it is viſibly *preying* on the vitals of religion. To abound in the contemplation of this myſtery, and in the exerciſe of faith about it, as it is *diametrically* oppoſed unto this frame, ſo it will gradually caſt it out of the ſoul. And without this we ſhall labour in the fire for deliverance from this pernicious evil.

4. And hereby are we prepared for the *enjoyment of glory above.* No ſmall part of that glory conſiſts in the eternal contemplation and adoration of the wiſdom, goodneſs, love, and power of God in this myſtery and the effects of it, as ſhall afterwards be declared.

And how can we better or otherwiſe be prepared for it, but by the implanting a ſenſe of it on our minds, by ſedulous contemplation whilſt we are in this world. God will not take us into heaven, into the *viſion and poſſeſſion of heavenly glory,* with our heads and hearts reaking with the thoughts and affections of earthly things. He hath appointed means to make us *meet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light,* before he will bring us unto the enjoyment of it. And this is the principal way whereby he doth it. For hereby it is, that we are *changed into the image of Chriſt from glory to glory,* and make the neareſt approaches unto the eternal fulneſs of it.

CHAP. XVIII.

The nature of the perſon of Chriſt, and hypoſtatical union of his natures declared.

THE nature or *conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt* hath been commonly ſpoken unto, and treated of in the writings both of the ancient and modern *divines.* It is not my purpoſe, in this diſcourſe, to handle any thing that hath been ſo fully already declared by others. Howbeit, to ſpeak *ſomething* of it in this place, is neceſſary unto the preſent work; and I ſhall do it, in anſwer unto a double end or deſign.

1. To help thoſe that believe, in the *regulation of their*

thoughts, about this divine perſon, ſo far as the ſcripture goeth before us. It is of great importance unto our ſouls, that we have *right conceptions* concerning him; not only in general, and in oppoſition unto the *pernicious hereſies* of them, by whom his divine perſon, or either of his natures, are denied; but alſo in thoſe eſpecial inſtances, wherein it is the moſt ineffable effect of divine wiſdom and grace. For although the knowledge of him mentioned in the goſpel, be not confined merely unto his *perſon*, in the conſtitution thereof, but extends itſelf unto the *whole work of his mediation*, with the deſign of God's love and grace therein, and our own duty thereon; yet is this knowledge of his *perſon* the foundation of all the reſt, wherein if we miſtake or fail, our whole building in the other parts of the knowledge of him will fall unto the ground. And, although the ſaving knowledge of him is not to be obtained without eſpecial divine revelation, Matth. xvi. 17. or ſaving illumination, 1 John v. 20. nor can we know him perfectly, until we come where he is, to behold his glory, 1 John xvii. 24. yet are inſtructions from the ſcripture of uſe, to lead us into thoſe farther degrees of the knowledge of him, which are attainable in this life.

2. To manifeſt in particular, how *ineffably diſtinct the relation between the Son of God and the man Chriſt Jeſus* is, from all that relation and union which may be between God and believers, or between God and any other creature. The want of a true underſtanding hereof, is the *fundamental error* of many in our days. We ſhall manifeſt thereupon, how *it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell*; ſo, that in all things, *he might have the preeminence*, Col. i. 18. 19. And I ſhall herein wholly avoid the curious inquiries, bold conjectures, and unwarrantable determinations of the *ſchoolmen* and ſome others. For many of them deſigning to *explicate* this myſtery, by exceeding the bounds of ſcripture-light and ſacred ſobriety, have *obſcured* it. Endeavouring to render all things plain unto *reaſon*, they have expreſſed many things *unſound as unto faith*, and fallen into manifold contradictions among themſelves. Hence *Aquinas* affirms, that three of the ways of declaring the *hypoſtatical union*, which are propoſed by the *maſter of the ſentences*, are ſo far from *probable*

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opinions, that they *are down right hereſies*. I ſhall therefore confine myſelf, in the explication of this myſtery, unto the propoſitions of divine revelation, with the juſt and neceſſary expoſitions of them.

What the ſcripture repreſents of the *wiſdom of God* in this great work, may be reduced unto theſe four heads.

(1.) The *aſſumption* of our nature into perſonal ſubſiſtence with the Son of God.

(2.) The *union* of the two natures in that ſingle perſon, which is conſequential thereon.

(3.) The *mutual communication* of thoſe diſtinct natures, the divine and human, by virtue of that union.

(4.) The *enunciations* or predications concerning the perſon of Chriſt, which follow on that *union* and *communcation*.

The firſt thing in the divine conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt, as God and man, is *aſſumption*. That ineffable divine act I intend, whereby the perſon of the Son of God *aſſumed* our nature, or took it into a perſonal ſubſiſtence with himſelf. This the ſcripture expreſſeth ſometimes *actively*, with reſpect unto the divine nature, acting in the perſon of the Son, the nature aſſuming; ſometimes *paſſively*, with reſpect unto the human nature, the nature *aſſumed*. The firſt it doth, Heb. ii. 14. 16. *Foraſmuch as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame: for verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* Phil. ii. 6. 7. *Being in the form of God, he took on him the form of a ſervant*; and in ſundry other places. The *aſſumption*, the taking of our human nature to be his own, by an ineffable act of his power and grace, is here clearly expreſſed. And to take it to be his *own*, his *own nature*, can be no otherwiſe, but by giving it a *ſubſiſtence in his own perſon*; otherwiſe his own nature it is not, nor can be. Hence God is ſaid to *purchaſe his church with his own blood*, Acts xx. 28. That relation and denomination of *his own*, is from the ſingle perſon of him whoſe it is. The latter is declared, John i. 14. *The word was made fleſh*. Rom. viii. 3. *God ſent his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*. Gal. iv. 4. *Made of a woman, made under the law*. Rom. i. 3. *Made of the ſeed of David according to the fleſh*. The eternal Word, the

Son

Son of God, was not *made fleſh*, not made of a woman, nor of the ſeed of David, by the *converſion of his ſubſtance* or nature into fleſh; which implies a contradiction, and beſides is abſolutely deſtructive of the divine nature. He could no otherwiſe therefore be *made fleſh*, or *made of a woman*, but in that our nature was *made his*, by his aſſuming of it to be his own. The *ſame perſon* who before was not fleſh, was not man, was made fleſh as man, in that he took our human nature to be his own.

This *ineffable act* is the foundation of the divine relation between the Son of God, and the man Chriſt Jeſus. We can only adore the myſterious nature of it; *great is this myſtery of godlineſs*. Yet may we obſerve ſundry things to direct us in that duty.

(1.) As unto *original efficiency*, it was the act of the divine nature, and ſo conſequently of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*. For ſo are all outward acts of God, the *divine nature* being the immediate principle of all ſuch operations. The wiſdom, power, grace, and goodneſs exerted therein, are *eſſential properties* of the divine nature. Wherefore the acting of them originally belongs *equally* unto each perſon *equally* participant of that nature.

(2.) As unto *authoritative* deſignation, it was the act of the Father. Hence is he ſaid to *ſend his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*, Rom. viii. 3. Gal. iv. 4.

(3.) As unto the *formation of the human nature*, it was the peculiar *act of the Spirit*, Luke i. 35.

(4.) As unto the *term of the aſſumption*, or the taking of our nature unto himſelf, it was the *peculiar act of the perſon of the Son*. Herein, as Damaſcen obſerves, the other perſons had no concurrence, but only καθ' βούλησιν καὶ εὐδοκίαν, by *counſel and approbation*.

2. This *aſſumption* was the only *immediate act* of the divine nature on the human in the perſon of the Son. All thoſe that follow in *ſubſiſtence*, *ſuſtentation*, with all others that are communicative, do enſue thereon.

3. This *aſſumption* and the *hypoſtatical union*, are diſtinct and different in the formal reaſon of them. (1.) *Aſſumption* is the *immediate act* of the divine nature in the perſon of the Son on the human; *union* is *mediate*, by virtue of that aſſumption. (2.) *Aſſumption* is unto perſonality; it is that act

act whereby the Son of God and our nature became one perſon. *Union* is an act or relation of the natures ſubſiſting in that one perſon. (3.) *Aſſumption* reſpects the *acting* of the divine, and the *paſſion* of the human nature; the one *aſſumeth*, the other is *aſſumed*. Union reſpects the *mutual relation* of the natures unto each other. Hence the divine nature may be ſaid to be *united* unto the human, as well as the human unto the divine; but the divine nature cannot be ſaid to be *aſſumed*, as the human is. Wherefore *aſſumption* denotes the *acting* of the one nature, and the *paſſion* of the other; *union*, the *mutual relation* that is between them both.

Theſe things may be ſafely affirmed, and ought to be firmly believed, as the ſenſe of the Holy Ghoſt in thoſe expreſſions; *He took on him the ſeed of Abraham: He took on him the form of a ſervant;* and the like. And who can conceive the condeſcenſion of divine goodneſs, or the actings of divine wiſdom and power therein!

2. That which followeth hereon is the *union* of the two natures in the ſame perſon, or the *hypoſtatical union*. This is included and aſſerted in a multitude of divine teſtimonies, Iſ. vii. 14. *Behold, a virgin ſhall conceive and bear a ſon, and ſhall call his name Immanuel*, as Matth. i. 23. He who was conceived and born of the virgin was Immanuel, or God with us; that is, God manifeſt in the fleſh, by the union of his natures in the ſame perſon; Iſ. ix. 6. *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and his name ſhall be called, Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of peace.* That the ſame perſon ſhould be the *mighty God*, and a *Child born*, is neither conceiveable, nor poſſible, nor can be true, but by the *union* of the divine and human natures in the ſame perſon. So he ſaid of himſelf, *Before Abraham was, I am*, John viii. 58. That he, the ſame perſon who then ſpake unto the Jews, and as a man *was* little more than *thirty years of age*, ſhould alſo be *before* Abraham, undeniably confirms the union of another nature in the ſame perſon, with that wherein he ſpake thoſe words, and without which they could not be true. He had not only another nature, which did exiſt before Abraham, but the ſame individual perſon, who then ſpake

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in the human nature, did then exiſt. See to the ſame purpoſe, John i. 14. Acts xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. Col. ii. 9. 1 John iii. 16.

This *union* the ancient church affirmed to be made ἀτρεπτῶς, *without any change* in the perſon of the Son of God, which the divine nature is not ſubject unto; ἀδιαιρέτως, with a *diſtinction* of natures, but without any *diviſion* of them by ſeparate ſubſiſtences; ἀσυγχύτως, *without mixture* or confuſion; ἀχρίσως, without *ſeparation* or diſtance. And ὁμοουσίως, *ſubſtantially*, becauſe it was of two ſubſtances or eſſences in the ſame perſon, in oppoſition unto all *accidental* union, as the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily*.

Theſe expreſſions were found out and uſed by the *ancient church*, to prevent the fraud of thoſe who corrupted the doctrine of the perſon of Chriſt, and (as all of that ſort ever did, and yet continue ſo to do) obſcured their pernicious ſentiments under ambiguous expreſſions. And they alſo made uſe of ſundry terms, which they judged ſignificant of this great *myſtery*, or the incarnation of the Son of God. Such are ἐνσάρκωσις, *incarnation*, ἐνσωμάτωσις, *embodying*, ἐνανθρώπησις, *inhumanation*, ἡ δεσποτικὴ ἐπιδημία, ἢ παρουσία, ἡ οἰκονομία, to the ſame purpoſe, ἡ διὰ σαρκὸς ὁμιλία, *his converſation* in or by the fleſh, ἡ διὰ ἀνθρωπότητος φανέρωσις, his *manifeſtation by humanity*, ἡ ἔλευσις, the *advent*, ἡ κένωσις the *exinanition*, or humiliation, ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπιφάνεια, the *appearance* or manifeſtation of Chriſt. ἡ συνκατάβασις, the *condeſcenſion*. Moſt of theſe expreſſions are taken from the ſcripture, and are uſed therein with reſpect unto this myſtery, or ſome concernments of it. Wherefore, as our faith is not confined unto any one of theſe words or terms, ſo as that we ſhould be obliged to believe not only the *things intended*, but alſo the *manner of its expreſſion* in them: ſo, ſo far as they explain the thing intended, according unto the mind of the Holy Ghoſt in the ſcripture, and obviate the ſenſes of men of corrupt minds, they are to be embraced and defended, as uſeful helps in teaching the truth.

That whereby it is moſt uſually declared in the witings of

of the ancients, is, χάρις ἑνώσεως, *gratia unionis*, the *grace of union*; which form of words, ſome manifeſting themſelves ſtrangers unto, do declare, how little converſant they are in their writings. Now, it is not any *habitual* inherent grace, reſiding *ſubjectively* in the perſon or human nature of Chiſt that is intended; but things of another nature.

1. The *cauſe of this union* is expreſſed in it. This is the free grace and favour of God towards the man Chriſt Jeſus, predeſtinating, deſigning, and taking him into *actual union* with the perſon of the Son, without reſpect unto, or foreſight of any precedent dignity, or merit in him, 1 Pet. i. 20.

Hence is that of Auſtin, *Ea gratia fit ab initio fidei ſuæ homo quicunque Chriſtianus, qua gratia homo ille ab initio factus eſt Chriſtus. De predeſt. ſanct. cap.* 15. For whereas all the inherent grace of the human nature of Chriſt, and all the holy obedience which proceeded from it, was conſequent in order of nature unto this union, and an effect of it, they could, in no ſenſe, be the *meritorious* or procuring cauſes of it; it was of grace.

2. It is uſed alſo by many, and deſigned to expreſs the peculiar dignity of the human nature of Chriſt. This is that wherein no creature is participant, nor ever ſhall be unto eternity. This is the fundamental privilege of the *human nature of Chriſt*, which all others, even unto his eternal glory, proceed from, and are reſolved into.

3. The *glorious meetneſs* and ability of the perſon of Chriſt, for and unto all the acts and duties of his mediatory office. For they are all reſolved into the *union of his natures* in the ſame perſon, without which not one of them could be performed unto the benefit of the church. And this is that *grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which renders him ſo glorious and amiable unto believers. *Unto them that believe he is precious.*

The common prevalent expreſſion of it at preſent in the church, is the *hypoſtatical union*; that is, the union of the divine and human nature, in the perſon of the Son of God, the human nature having no perſonality nor ſubſiſtence of its own.

With reſpect unto this *union*, the name of Chriſt is

called *Wonderful*, as that which hath the pre-eminence in all the effects of divine wiſdom. And it is a ſingular effect thereof. There is no other union in things divine or human, in things ſpiritual or natural, whether ſubſtantial or accidental, that is of the ſame kind with it; it differs *ſpecifically* from them all.

The moſt glorious *union* is that of the *divine perſons* in the ſame being or nature; the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, the Holy Spirit in them both, and both in him. But this is an *union* of diſtinct perſons in the *unity* of the ſame ſingle nature. And this, I confeſs, is *more glorious* than that whereof we treat. For it is in God abſolutely, it is eternal, of his nature and being. But this *union* we ſpeak of, is not God; it is a creature, an effect of divine wiſdom and power. And it is different from it herein; inaſmuch as that is of *many diſtinct perſons* in the ſame nature, this is of *diſtinct natures* in the ſame perſon. That union is *natural*, ſubſtantial, eſſential, in the ſame nature; this, as it is not accidental, as we ſhall ſhew, ſo it is not properly *ſubſtantial*; becauſe it is not of the ſame nature, but of divers in the ſame perſon, remaining diſtinct in their eſſence and ſubſtance, and is therefore peculiarly hypoſtatical or perſonal. Hence Auſtin feared not to ſay, that *homo potius eſt in Filio Dei, quam Filius in Patre, De Trin. lib.* i. *cap.* 10. But that is true only in this one reſpect, that the Son is not ſo in the Father, as to become *one perſon* with him. In all other reſpects, it muſt be granted, that the *inbeing* of the Son in the Father, the *union* between them, which is *natural*, *eſſential*, and eternal, doth exceed this in glory, which was a temporary external act of divine wiſdom and grace.

2. The moſt eminent *ſubſtantial* union in things natural, is that of the *ſoul and body* conſtituting an individual perſon. There is, I confeſs, ſome kind of *ſimilitude* between this union, and that of the different natures in the perſon of Chriſt, but it is not of the ſame kind or nature; and the *diſſimilitudes* that are between them, are more and of greater importance, than thoſe things are wherein there ſeems to be an agreement between them. For, (1.) The *ſoul and body* are ſo united, as to conſtitute one *entire nature.*

ture. The ſoul is not human nature, nor is the body, but it is the conſequent of their union. Soul and body are *eſſential parts* of human nature, but *complete* human nature they are not, but by virtue of their union. But the union of the natures in the perſon of Chriſt, doth not conſtitute a *new nature* that either was not, or was not complete before. Each nature remains the ſame perfect complete nature after this union. (2.) The union of the ſoul and body doth conſtitute that nature, which is made eſſentially complete thereby, a *new individual perſon*, with a ſubſiſtence of its own, which neither of them was, nor had before that union. But although the *perſon of Chriſt*, as God and man, be conſtituted by this union, yet his perſon abſolutely, and his *individual ſubſiſtence* was perfect, abſolutely antecedent unto that union. He did not become a *new perſon*, another perſon than he was before, by virtue of that union; only *that perſon* aſſumed human nature to itſelf to be its own, into perſonal ſubſiſtence. (3.) *Soul and body* are united by an *external efficient cauſe*, or the power of God; and not by the act of one of them upon another. But this union is effected by that act of the divine nature towards the human, which we have before deſcribed. (4.) *Neither ſoul nor body* have any perſonal ſubſiſtence before their union: but the ſole foundation of this union was in this, that the *Son of God* was a ſelf-ſubſiſting perſon from eternity.

3. There are *other unions* in things *natural*, which are by mixture or compoſition. Hereon ſomething is produced, compoſed of various parts, which is not what any of them are. And there is a *converſion* of things, when one thing is ſubſtantially changed into another, as the *water*, in the miracle that Chriſt wrought, was *turned into wine*. But this union hath no reſemblance unto any of them. There is not a κρᾶσις, a *mixture*, a contemporation of the divine and human natures into *one third nature*, or the *converſion* of one into another. Such notions of theſe things ſome fancied of old. Eutyches ſuppoſed ſuch a compoſition and mixture of the two natures in the perſon of Chriſt, as that the human nature at leaſt ſhould loſe all its eſſential properties, and have neither underſtanding nor will of its own. And ſome of the Arians fancied a ſub-

ſtantial change of that created divine nature which they acknowledged, into the human. But theſe imaginations, inſtead of profeſſing Chriſt to be God and man, would leave him indeed neither God nor man; and have been ſufficiently confuted. Wherefore the *union* we treat of, hath no ſimilitude unto any ſuch *natural union*, as is the effect of compoſition or mutation.

4. There is an *artificial union* wherewith ſome have illuſtrated this myſtery; as that of *fire and iron in the ſame ſword*. The ſword is one; the nature of fire and that of iron different; and the acts of them diſtinct; the iron cuts, the fire burns; and the effects diſtinct; cutting and burning; yet is the agent or inſtrument but *one ſword*. Something of this nature may be allowed to be ſpoken in way of alluſion; but it is a weak and imperfect repreſentation of this myſtery on many accounts: for the *heat in iron* is rather an accident than a ſubſtance, is ſeparable from it; and in ſundry other things diverts the mind from due apprehenſions of this myſtery.

5. There is a *ſpiritual union*, namely, of Chriſt and believers; or of God in Chriſt and believers; which is excellent and myſterious, ſuch as all other *unions* in nature are made uſe of in the ſcripture to illuſtrate and repreſent. This ſome among us do judge to be of the *ſame kind* with that of the Son of God and the man Chriſt Jeſus; only they ſay they differ in degrees. The *eternal Word* was ſo united unto the man Chriſt Jeſus, as that thereby he was exalted inconceivably above all other men, though never ſo holy; and had greater communications from God than any of them. Wherefore he was on many accounts *the Son of God* in a peculiar manner, and by a communication of names is called God alſo. This being the opinion of Neſtorius, revived again in the days wherein we live, I ſhall declare wherein he placed the *conjunction or union of the two natures of Chriſt*, whereby he conſtituted two diſtinct perſons of the Son of God, and the Son of man, as theſe now do, and briefly detect the vanity of it. For the whole of it conſiſted in the conceſſion of ſundry things that were true in particular, making uſe of the pretence of them, unto the *denial* of that wherein alone the true union of the perſon of Chriſt did conſiſt.

Neſtorius

Neſtorius allowed the preſence of the Son of God, with the man Chriſt Jeſus, to conſiſt in *five things*.

1. He ſaid he was ſo preſent with him, κατὰ παράσασιν, or by *inhabitation*, as a man dwells in an houſe or a ſhip to rule it. He dwelt in him as *his temple*: ſo he dwells in all that believe, but in him in a more eſpecial manner. And this is true with reſpect unto that *fulneſs of the Spirit*, whereby God was with him and in him, as he is with and in all believers, according unto the *meaſures* wherein they are made partakers of him. But this anſwers not that divine teſtimony; *that in him dwelt all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. *The fulneſs of the Godhead* is the entire divine nature. This nature is conſidered in the perſon of the Son, or eternal Word; for it was the Word that was made fleſh: and this could no otherwiſe dwell in him bodily, really, *ſubſtantially*, but in the aſſumption of that nature to be his own: and no ſenſe can be given unto this aſſertion to preſerve it from *blaſphemy*; that the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelleth in any of the ſaints bodily*.

2. He allowed an eſpecial preſence, κατὰ χέσιν, as ſome call it, that is, by ſuch an *union of affections* as is between intimate friends. The ſoul of God reſted always in that man; in him was he well pleaſed, and he was wholly given up in his *affections* unto God. This alſo is true; but there is that which is no leſs true, that renders it uſeleſs unto the pretenſions of Neſtorius. For he allowed the divine perſon of the Son of God. But whatever is ſpoken of this nature concerning the love of God unto the man Chriſt Jeſus, and of his love to God, it is the *perſon of the Father* that is intended therein; nor can any one inſtance be given, where it is capable of another interpretation: for it is ſtill ſpoken of, with reference unto the work that he was ſent of the Father to accompliſh, and his own delight therein.

3. He allowed it to be κατ' ἀξίαν, *by way of dignity and honour*. For this conjunction is ſuch, as that whatever honour is given unto the Son of God, is alſo to be given unto the Son of man. But herein, to recompenſe his *ſacrilege* in taking away the *hypoſtatical union* from the church, he would introduce *idolatry* into it. For the honour that

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is due unto the Son of God, is divine, religious, or the owning of all eſſential divine properties in him, with a due ſubjection of ſoul unto him thereon. But to give *this honour* unto the man Chriſt Jeſus, without a ſuppoſition of the ſubſiſtence of his human nature in the perſon of the Son of God, and ſolely on that account, is highly idolatrous.

4. He aſſerted it to be κατὰ ταυτοβυλίαν, or on the *account of the conſent and agreement* that was between the will of God, and the will of the man Chriſt Jeſus. But no other union will thence enſue, but what is between God and the angels in heaven; in whom there is a perfect compliance with the will of God in all things. Wherefore, if this be the foundation of this union, he might be ſaid to take on him the *nature of angels*, as well as the *ſeed of Abraham*, which is expreſsly denied by the apoſtle, Heb. ii. 16. 17.

5. Καθ' ὁμωνυμίαν, by an *equivocal denomination*, the name of the one perſon, namely, of the Son of God, being accommodated unto the other, namely, the Son of man. So they were called gods, unto whom the word of God came. But this no way anſwers any one divine teſtimony, wherein the name of God is aſſigned unto the Lord Chriſt, as thoſe wherein God is ſaid *to lay down his life for us*, and to *purchaſe his church with his own blood*, to come and be *manifeſt in the fleſh*, wherein no *homonymy* or equivocation can take place. By all theſe ways he conſtituted a ſeparable accidental union, wherein nothing in *kind*, but in *degree* only, was peculiar unto the man Chriſt Jeſus.

But all theſe things, ſo far as they are *true*, belong unto the third thing to be conſidered in his perſon, namely, the *communion*, or mutual communication of the diſtinct natures therein. But his *perſonal union* conſiſts not in any of them, nor in all of them together. Nor do they anſwer any of the multiplied teſtimonies given by the Holy Ghoſt unto this *glorious myſtery*. Some few of them may be mentioned.

The Word was made fleſh, John i. 14. There can be but two ſenſes of theſe words.

(1.) That the Word ceaſed to be what it was, and was ſubſtantially *turned into fleſh*.

(2.) That

(2.) That continuing to be what it was, it was made to be alſo what before it was not. The firſt ſenſe is deſtructive of the divine Being, and all its eſſential properties. The other can be verified only herein, that the *Word took that fleſh*, that is, our human nature to be his *own*, his own nature wherein he was made fleſh, which is that we plead for. For this aſſertion that the perſon of the Son *took our nature to be his own*, is the ſame with that of the aſſumption of the human nature into perſonal ſubſiſtence with himſelf. And the ways of the preſence of the Son of God with the man Chriſt Jeſus before mentioned, do expreſs nothing in anſwer unto this divine teſtimony, that *the Word was made fleſh*.

Being in the form of God, he took on him the form of a ſervant, and became obedient, Phil. ii. 7. 8. That by his being *in the form of God*, his participation in and of the ſame divine nature with the Father is intended, theſe men grant. And that herein he was a *perſon* diſtinct from him, Neſtorius of old acknowledged, though it be by ours denied. But they can fancy no diſtinction, that ſhall bear the denomination and *relation of Father* and Son, but all is inevitably included in it, which we plead for under that name. This perſon *took on him the form of a ſervant*; that is, the nature of man in the condition of a ſervant. For it is the ſame with his being made of a woman, made under the law; or taking on him the ſeed of Abraham. And this perſon became obedient. It was in the human nature in the form of a ſervant wherein he was obedient. Wherefore that human nature was the nature of that *perſon*, a nature which he took on him and made his own, wherein he would be obedient. And that the human nature is the nature of the perſon of him who was in the form of God, is that *hypoſtatical union*, which we believe and plead for.

To us a Son is given, to us a Child is born, and he ſhall be called the mighty God, Iſ. ix. 6. The Child and the mighty God are the ſame perſon, or he that is *born a child* cannot be rightly called *the mighty God*. And the truth of many other expreſſions in the Scripture hath its ſole foundation in this *hypoſtatical union*. So the Son of God took on him the ſeed of Abraham, was *made of a woman*, did

did *partake of flesh and blood*, was *manifest in the flesh*, that he who was born of the blessed virgin, was *before Abraham*, that he was made of the *seed of David* according to the flesh, whereby God purchased the *church with his own blood*, are all spoken of one and the same person, and are not *true*, but on the account of the union of the two natures therein. And all those who plead for the accidental *metaphorical* union, consisting in the instances before mentioned, do know well enough, that the true Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ is opposed by them.

3. Concurrent with, and in part consequent unto this *union*, is the *communion of the distinct natures of Christ hypostatically* united. And herein we may consider, (1.) What is peculiar unto the divine nature. (2.) What is common unto both.

1. There is a threefold *communication* of the divine nature unto the human in this *hypostatical union*.

(1.) Immediate in the person of the Son. This is *subsistence*. In itself it is ἀνυπόστατος, that which hath not a *subsistence* of its own, which should give it *individuation* and distinction from the same nature in any other person. But it hath its *subsistence* in the person of the Son, which thereby is its *own*. The divine nature, as in that person, is its *suppositum*.

(2.) By the Holy Spirit he filled that nature with an *all-fulness* of habitual grace, which I have at large explained elsewhere.

(3.) In all the acts of his office, by the divine nature he communicated *worth and dignity* unto what was acted in and by the human nature.

For that which some have for a long season troubled the church withal, about such a *real communication of the properties of the divine nature unto the human*, which *should* neither be a *transfusion* of them into it, so as to render it the subject of them; nor yet consist in a *reciprocal denomination* from their mutual inbeing in the same subject, it is that which neither themselves do, nor can any other well understand.

(2.) Wherefore concerning the *communion* of the natures in this personal union, three things are to be observed, which

which the ſcripture, reaſon, and the ancient church do all occur in.

(1.) *Each nature* doth preſerve its own natural, eſſential properties entirely unto, and in itſelf; without *mixture*, without compoſition or confuſion, without ſuch a *real communication* of the one unto the other, ſo as that the one ſhould become the ſubject of the properties of the other. The *deity* in the abſtract is not made the *humanity*, nor on the contrary. The *divine nature* is not made *temporary*, finite, limited, ſubject to paſſion or alteration by this union; nor is the human nature rendered *immenſe*, *infinite*, omnipotent. Unleſs this be granted, there will not be two natures in Chriſt, a divine and an human; nor indeed either of them, but ſomewhat elſe, compoſed of both.

(2.) *Each nature operates in him according unto its eſſential properties.* The divine nature knows all things, upholds all things, rules all things, acts by its preſence every where; the human nature was *born*, yielded obedience, died and roſe again. But it is the ſame perſon, the ſame Chriſt that acts all theſe things, the one nature being his, no leſs than the other. Wherefore,

(3.) *The perfect complete work of Chriſt in every act of his mediatory office, in all that he did as the King, Prieſt, and Prophet of the church, in all that he did or ſuffered, in all that he continueth to do for us*, in or by virtue of whether nature ſoever it be done or wrought, is not to be conſidered as the act of this or that nature in him alone, but it is the act and work of the whole perſon, of him that is both God and man in one perſon. And this gives occaſion,

4. Unto that *variety of enunciations* which is uſed in the ſcripture concerning him, which I ſhall name only, and conclude.

(1.) Some things are ſpoken of the perſon of Chriſt, wherein the *enunciation* is verified with reſpect unto *one nature* only. As, the *Word was with God, and the Word was God*, John i. 1. *Before Abraham was, I am*, John viii. 58. *Upholding all things by the word of his power*, Heb. i. 3. Theſe things are all ſpoken of the perſon of Chriſt; but belong unto it on account of his divine nature. So is it ſaid of him, *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is*

given, Iſa. ix. 6. *A man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief*, Iſa. liii. 3. They are ſpoken of the *perſon of Chriſt*, but are verified in *human nature* only, and the perſon on the account thereof.

(2.) Sometimes that is ſpoken of the *perſon* which belongs not diſtinctly and originally unto either nature, but doth belong unto him on the account of their *union* in him, which are the moſt direct *enunciations* concerning the perſon of Chriſt. So is he ſaid to be *the Head, the King, Prieſt, and Prophet of the church*; all which offices he bears and performs the acts of them, not on the ſingular account of this or that nature, but of the *hypoſtatical union* of them both.

(3.) Sometimes his perſon being denominated from *one nature*, the properties and acts of the other are aſſigned unto it. So they *crucified the Lord of glory*. He is the Lord of glory, on the account of his divine nature only; thence is his perſon denominated, when he is ſaid to be crucified, which was in the human nature only. So *God purchaſed his church with his own blood*, Acts xx. 28.; the denomination of the perſon is from the divine nature only; he is *God*; but the act aſcribed unto it, or what he did by his own blood, was of the human nature only. But the purchaſe that was made thereby, was the work of the perſon, as both God and man. So on the other ſide; *The Son of man who is in heaven*, John iii. 13.; the denomination of the perſon is from the human nature only; *the Son of man*. That aſcribed unto it was with reſpect untó the divine nature only; *who is in heaven*.

(4.) Sometimes the perſon being denominated from *one nature*, that is aſcribed unto it which is common unto both; or elſe being denominated from both, that which is proper unto one only is aſcribed unto him. See Rom. ix. 4. Matth. xxii. 42.

Theſe kinds of enunciations the ancients expreſſed by ἐναλλαγὴ, *alteration*, ἀλλαίωσις, *permutation*, κοινότης, *communion*, τροπος ἀντιδόσεως, *the manner of mutual poſition*, κοινωνία ἰδιωμάτων, *the communication of properties*, and other the like expreſſions.

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Theſe things I have only mentioned, becauſe they are commonly handled by others in their *didactical* and *polemical* diſcourſes concerning the perſon of Chriſt; and could not well be here utterly omitted.

CHAP. XIX.

The exaltation of Chriſt; with his preſent ſtate and condition in glory, during the continuance of his mediatory office.

THE apoſtle deſcribing the great myſtery of godlineſs, *God manifeſt in the fleſh*; by ſeveral degrees of *aſcent*, he carrieth it within the vail, and leaves it there in glory, ἀνελήφθη ἐν δόξῃ, 1 Tim. iii. 16. God was manifeſt in the fleſh, and *received up into glory*. This *aſſumption* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt into glory, or his glorious reception in heaven, with his ſtate and condition therein, is a principal article of the faith of the church, the great foundation of its hope and conſolation in this world. This alſo we muſt therefore conſider in our meditations on the perſon of Chriſt, and the uſe of it in our religion.

That which I eſpecially intend herein, is his *preſent ſtate in heaven in the diſcharge of his mediatory office* before the conſummation of all things. Hereon doth the glory of God, and the eſpecial concernment of the church at preſent depend. For at the end of this diſpenſation he ſhall give up the kingdom unto God, even the Father, or ceaſe from the adminiſtration of his mediatory office and power, as the apoſtle declares, 1 Cor. xv. 24.—27. *Then cometh the end, when he ſhall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he ſhall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he muſt reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The laſt enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed, is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he ſaith all things are put under him, it is manifeſt that he is excepted who did put all things under him. And when all things ſhall be ſubdued*

dued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

All things fell by ſin into an *enmity* unto the glory of God, and the ſalvation of the church. The removal of this *enmity*, and the deſtruction of all *enemies*, is the work that God committed unto his Son, in his incarnation and mediation, Eph. i. 10. This he was variouſly to accompliſh in the adminiſtration of all his offices. The *enmity* between God and us immediately, he removed by the *blood of his croſs*, whereby he made *peace*, Eph. ii. 14. 15. 16. Which peace he continues and preſerves by his *interceſſion*, Heb. vii. 26. 1 John ii. 2. The *enemies* themſelves of the church's eternal welfare, namely, *ſin*, *death*, the *world*, *Satan*, and *hell*, he ſubdues by his power. In the *gradual accompliſhment of this work*; according as the church of the elect is brought forth in ſucceſſive generations, (in every one whereof the ſame work is to be performed), he is to continue unto the *end* and conſummation of all things. Until then, the whole church will not be ſaved, and therefore his work not be finiſhed. He will not ceaſe his work whilſt there is one of his elect to be ſaved, or one *enemy* to be ſubdued. He ſhall not faint nor give over until he hath ſent forth judgement unto victory.

For the diſcharge of this work, he hath a *ſovereign power* over all things in heaven and earth committed unto him. Herein he doth and muſt reign. And ſo abſolutely is it veſted in him, that upon the ceaſing of the exerciſe of it, *he himſelf* is ſaid to be made *ſubject unto* God. It is true, that the Lord Chriſt in his human nature is always *leſs* than, or *inferior* unto God, even the Father. In that ſenſe he is in *ſubjection* unto him now in heaven. But yet he hath an *actual exerciſe* of divine power, wherein he is abſolute and ſupreme. When this *ceaſeth*, he ſhall be *ſubject unto the Father* in that nature, and *only* ſo. Wherefore when this work is perfectly fulfilled and ended, then ſhall all the *mediatory actings* of Chriſt ceaſe for evermore. For God will then have completely finiſhed the whole deſign of his wiſdom and grace, in the conſtitution of his perſon and offices, and have

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raiſed up and finiſhed the whole fabric of eternal glory. Then will God *be all in all.* In his own immenſe nature and bleſſedneſs he ſhall not only be *all eſſentially* and *cauſally*, but *in all* alſo; he ſhall *immediately be all*, in and unto us.

This ſtate of things, when God ſhall *immediately be all in all*, we can have no juſt comprehenſion of in this life. Some refreſhing notions of it may be framed in our minds, from thoſe apprehenſions of the *divine perfections* which reaſon can attain unto; and their ſuitableneſs to yield eternal reſt, ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs in that enjoyment of them, whereof our nature is capable. Howbeit, of theſe things in particular, the *ſcripture* is ſilent; however it teſtifies our eternal reward and bleſſedneſs to conſiſt alone in the enjoyment of God.

But there is *ſomewhat elſe* propoſed, as the immediate object of the faith of the ſaints at preſent, as unto what they ſhall enjoy upon their departure out of this world. And ſcripture-revelations extend unto the ſtate of things unto the end of the world, and no longer.

Wherefore, heaven is now principally repreſented unto us, as the place of the reſidence and *glory of Jeſus Chriſt in the adminiſtration of his office;* and our bleſſedneſs to conſiſt in a participation thereof, and communion with him therein. So he prays for all them who are given him of his Father, *that they may be where he is, to behold his glory*, John xvii. 24. It is not the *eſſential glory* of his divine perſon that he intends, which is abſolutely the ſame with that of the Father; but it is a *glory* that is *peculiarly his own;* a glory which the Father hath *given him*, becauſe he loved him. *My glory which thou gaveſt me, for thou lovedſt me.* Nor is it merely the glorified ſtate of his human nature that he intendeth; as was before declared in the conſideration of the fifth verſe of this chapter, where he prayeth for this glory. However this is not excluded. For unto all thoſe that love him, it will be no ſmall portion of their bleſſed refreſhment, to behold that *individual nature* wherein he ſuffered for them, undergoing all ſorts of reproaches, contempts, and miſeries, now unchangeably ſtated in incomprehenſible glory. But the

glory

glory which God gives unto Chriſt, in the phraſe of the ſcripture, principally is the glory of *his exaltation in his mediatory office*. It is the *all power* that is given him in heaven and earth; the *name that he hath above every name*, as he ſits on the right hand of the Majeſty on high. In the beholding and contemplation hereof, with holy joy and delight, conſiſts no ſmall part of that bleſſedneſs and glory which the ſaints above at preſent enjoy, and which all others of them ſhall ſo do, who depart this life before the conſummation of all things. And in the due conſideration hereof conſiſts a great part of the exerciſe of that *faith*, which is the evidence of things not ſeen, and which by making them *preſent* unto us, ſupplies the room of *ſight*. This is the ground whereon our *hope doth anchor*; namely, the things *within the vail*, Heb. vi. 19. which directs us unto the *temple adminiſtration* of the mediatory office of Chriſt. And it is for the ſtrengthening of our faith and hope in God through him, that we do, and that we ought to inquire into theſe things.

The conſideration of the *preſent ſtate of Chriſt in heaven*, may be reduced unto three heads.

1. The *glorification of his human nature*; what it hath in common with, and wherein it differs in kind from the glory of all ſaints whatever.

2. His *mediatory exaltation*; or the eſpecial glory of his perſon as Mediator.

3. The *exerciſe and diſcharge of his office* in this ſtate of things; which is what at preſent I ſhall principally inquire into. I ſhall not ſpeak at all of the nature of *glorified bodies*, nor of any thing that is common unto the *human nature* of Chriſt, and the ſame nature in glorified ſaints; but only what is *peculiar* unto himſelf. And hereunto I ſhall premiſe one general obſervation.

Obſ. All perfections whereof *human nature* is capable, abiding what it was in both the eſſential parts of it, ſoul and body, do belong unto the Lord Chriſt in his glorified ſtate. To aſcribe unto it what is inconſiſtent with its *eſſence*, is not an *aſſignation* of *glory* unto its ſtate and condition, but a *deſtruction* of its *being*. To affix unto the *human nature divine* properties, as *ubiquity* or *immenſity*, is to deprive it of its own. The eſſence of his body is no more changed,

changed, than that of his ſoul. It is a fundamental article of faith, that he is in the *ſame body in heaven*, wherein he converſed here on earth; as well as the *faculties of his rational ſoul* are continued the ſame in him. This is that *holy thing* which was framed immediately by the Holy Ghoſt in the *womb of the virgin*. This is that holy *One*, which when it was in the grave ſaw no corruption. This is that *body* which was offered for us, wherein he bare our ſins on the tree. To fancy any ſuch *change* in or of this body by its glorification, as that it ſhould not continue *eſſentially* and *ſubſtantially* the ſame that it was, is to overthrow the faith of the church, in a principal article of it. We believe that the very *ſame body* wherein he ſuffered for us, without any alteration as unto its *ſubſtance*, *eſſence*, or *integral parts*, and not another body of an *ethereal*, *heavenly ſtructure*, wherein is nothing of fleſh, blood, or bones, by which he ſo frequently teſtified the faithfulneſs of God in his incarnation, is ſtill that *temple* wherein God dwells, and wherein he adminiſters in the holy place not made with hands. The *body which was pierced*, is that which *all eyes* ſhall ſee, and no other.

On this foundation, I willingly allow all *perfections* in the glorified human nature of Chriſt, which are conſiſtent with its real form and eſſence; I ſhall therefore only in ſome inſtances inquire into the preſent glory of the human nature of Chriſt, wherein it *differs either in kind or degree* from the glory of all other ſaints whatever. For even among them, I freely allow different degrees in glory, which the eternal order of things, that is, the will of God in the diſpoſal of all things unto his own glory, doth require.

Firſt, There is that wherein the preſent glory of the human nature of Chriſt, differeth in *kind and nature*, from that which any other of the ſaints are partakers of, or ſhall be ſo after the reſurrection. And this is,

1. The *eternal ſubſiſtence* of that nature of his, in the perſon of the Son of God. As this belongs unto its dignity and honour, ſo it doth alſo unto its *inherent glory*. This is and ſhall be eternally peculiar unto him, in diſtinction from, and exaltation above the whole creation of God, angels and men. Thoſe by whom this is denied,

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inſtead of the glorious name whereby God doth call him, *Wonderful, Counſellor, the Mighty God,* &c. do call him *Ichabod,* where is the glory, or there is none that is peculiar unto him. But the myſtery hereof, according unto our meaſure, and in anſwer unto our deſign, we have already declared. And this glory he had indeed in this world, from the firſt inſtant of his incarnation or conception in the womb. But as unto the *demonſtration* of it, *he emptied himſelf,* and made himſelf of no reputation under the form of a ſervant. But now the glory of it is illuſtriouſly diſplayed in the ſight of all his holy ones. Some inquire, whether the ſaints in heaven do perfectly comprehend the *myſtery of the incarnation* of the Son of God. I do not well underſtand what is meant by *perfectly comprehend.* But this is certain, that what we have now by *faith,* we ſhall have there by *ſight.* For as we *live* now by faith, ſo ſhall we there by ſight. No finite creature can have an abſolute comprehenſion of that which is infinite. We ſhall never ſearch out the Almighty to perfection in any of his works of infinite wiſdom. Wherefore, this only I ſhall ſay; there is ſuch a ſatisfactory evidence in heaven, not only of the *truth,* but alſo of the *nature of this myſtery,* as that the glory of Chriſt therein is manifeſt as an eternal object of divine adoration and honour. The enjoyment of heaven is uſually called the *beatifical viſion.* That is, ſuch an intellectual preſent view, apprehenſion, and ſight of God and his glory, eſpecially as manifeſted in Chriſt, as will make us *bleſſed* unto eternity. Wherefore in the contemplation of this myſtery doth a great part of our bleſſedneſs conſiſt. And farther our thoughts cannot attain. This is that wherein the *glory of the human nature of Chriſt* doth eſſentially excel and differ from that of any other bleſſed creature whatever. And hereon other things do depend. For,

2. Hence *the union of the human nature of Chriſt unto God,* and the communications of God unto it, are of another kind, than thoſe of the bleſſed ſaints. In theſe things, namely, our *union* with God, and his *communications* unto us, doth our bleſſedneſs and glory conſiſt.

In this world believers are united unto God by *faith.* It is by faith that they cleave unto him with purpoſe of heart.

heart. In heaven it ſhall be by *love*. Ardent love, with delight, complacency, and joy, from a clear apprehenſion of God's infinite goodneſs and beauty now made preſent unto us, now enjoyed by us, ſhall be the principle of our eternal *adherence* unto him, and union with him. His communications unto us here, are by an *external efficiency of power*. He communicates of himſelf unto us in the effects of his goodneſs, grace, and mercy, by the operations of his Spirit in us. Of the ſame kind will all the communications of the divine nature be unto us unto all eternity. It will be by what he *worketh in us* by his Spirit and power. There is no other way of the emanation of virtue from God, unto any creature: but theſe things in Chriſt are of another nature. This union of his human nature unto God, is *immediate* in the perſon of the Son; ours is *mediate* by the Son as clothed with our nature. The way of communications of the divine nature unto the human in his perſon, is what we cannot comprehend; we have no notion of it, nothing whereby it may be illuſtrated. There is nothing equal to it, nothing like it in all the works of God. As it is a creature, it muſt ſubſiſt in eternal dependence on God; neither hath it any thing but what it receives from him. For this belongs eſſentially unto the divine nature, to be the only independent eternal ſpring and fountain of all being and goodneſs. Nor can *omnipotency* itſelf exalt a creature into any ſuch condition, as that it ſhould not always and in all things depend abſolutely on the divine Being. But as unto the *way of the communications* between the divine and human nature, in the perſonal union, we know it not. But whether they be of life, power, light, or glory, they are of another kind, than that whereby we do or ſhall receive all things. For all things are given unto us, are wrought in us, as was ſaid, by an *external efficiency of power*. The glorious immediate emanations of virtue, from the divine unto the human nature of Chriſt, we underſtand not. Indeed the actings of natures of different kinds, where both are *finite* in the ſame perſon one towards the other, is of a difficult apprehenſion. Who knows how directive power and efficacy proceeds from the ſoul, and is communicated unto the body, unto every the leaſt minute action, in every

member of it; ſo as that there is no diſtance between the direction and the action, or the accompliſhment of it; or how on the other hand, the ſoul is affected with ſorrow or trouble in the moment wherein the body feeleth pain, ſo as that no diſtinction can be made between the body's ſufferings, and the ſoul's ſorrow? How much more is this mutual communication in the *ſame perſon of divers natures* above our comprehenſion, where one of them is abſolutely *infinite?* Somewhat will be ſpoken to it afterwards. And herein doth this eternal glory differ from that of all other glorified creatures whatever. And,

3. Hence the *human nature of Chriſt*, in his divine perſon, and together with it, is the object of all *divine adoration* and worſhip, Rev. v. 13. All creatures whatever do for ever aſcribe *bleſſing*, *honour*, *glory*, *and power unto the Lamb*, in the ſame manner as unto him who ſits on the throne. This we have declared before. But no other creature either is, or ever can be exalted into ſuch a condition of glory, às to be the object of any divine worſhip, from the meaneſt creature which is capable of the performance of it. Thoſe who aſcribe divine or religious honour unto the ſaints or angels, as is done in the *church of Rome*, do both rob Chriſt of the principal flower of his imperial crown, and ſacrilegiouſly attempt to adorn others with it, which they abhor.

4. The *glory that God deſigned to accompliſh in and by him*, is now made evident unto all the holy ones that are about the throne. The great deſign of the wiſdom and grace of God from eternity, was to declare and manifeſt all the holy glorious properties of his nature, in and by Jeſus Chriſt. And this is that wherein he will acquieſce, with which he is well pleaſed. When this is fully accompliſhed, he will uſe no other way or means for the manifeſtation of his glory. Herein is the end and bleſſedneſs of all.

Wherefore the principal work of faith whilſt we are in this world, is to behold this *glory of God*, as ſo repreſented unto us in Chriſt. In the exerciſe of faith herein, is our conformity unto him carried on unto perfection, 2 Cor. iii. 18. And unto this end, or that we may do ſo, he powerfully communicates unto our minds, a *ſaving internal*

ternal light, without which we can neither behold his glory, nor give glory unto him. *He who commanded light to shine out of darkness, shines into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. The end, I say, why God communicates a spiritual supernatural light unto the minds of believers, is that they may be able to discern the manifestation and revelation of his glory in Christ, which is hid from the world, Eph. i. 17. 18. 19. Col. ii. 2. Howbeit, whilst we are here, we see it but *darkly as in a glass*; it is not evident unto us in its own lustre and beauty. Yea, the remainder of our darkness herein, is the cause of all our weakness, fears, and disconsolations. Want of a steady view of this glory of God, is that which exposeth us unto impressions from all our temptations. And the light of our minds therein, is that whereby we are changed and transformed into the likeness of Christ.

But in *heaven* this is conspicuously and gloriously manifest unto all the blessed ones that are before the throne of God. They do not behold it by *faith* in various degrees of *light*, as we do here below. They have not apprehensions of some impressions of divine glory on the person of Christ, and the human nature therein, with the work which he did perform, which is the utmost of our attainment. But they behold *openly* and *plainly* the whole glory of God, all the characters of it, illustriously manifesting themselves in him, in what he is, in what he hath done, in what he doth. Divine wisdom, grace, goodness, love, power, do all *shine forth* in him, unto the contemplation of all his saints in whom he is *admired*. And in the *vision* hereof consists no small part of our eternal blessedness. For what can be more satisfactory, more full of glory unto the souls of believers, than clearly to comprehend the mystery of the wisdom, grace, and love of God in Christ? This is that which the *prophets* at a great distance inquired diligently into; that which the *angels* bow down to look towards; that whose declaration is the life and glory of the gospel. To behold in one view the reality, the substance of all that was *typified* and represented by the beautiful fabric of the *tabernacle* and *temple* which succeeded in the room thereof; of all the utensils of them, and services

performed in them; all that the promiſes of the Old Teſtament did contain, or the declarations of the New; as it is the moſt ſatisfactory, bleſſed, and glorious ſtate, that by the preſent light of faith we can deſire or long for, ſo it evidenceth a glory in Chriſt of another *kind and nature*, than what any creature can be participant in. I ſhall therefore ſtate it unto our conſideration, with ſome few obſervations concerning it.

1. *Every believer ſeeth here in this life, an excellency, a glory in the myſtery of God in Chriſt.* They do ſo in various degrees, unleſs it be in times of temptation, when any of them walk in darkneſs, and have no light. The view and proſpect hereinto is far more clear, and accompanied with more evidence in ſome than in others, according unto the various degrees of their faith and light. The *ſpiritual ſight* of ſome is very weak, and their views of the glory of God in Chriſt are much obſcured with inevidence, darkneſs, and inſtability. This in many is occaſioned by the weakneſs of their natural ability, in more by ſpiritual ſloth and negligence, in that they have not *habitually exerciſed their ſenſes to diſcern good and evil*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Heb. v. 14. Some want inſtruction, and ſome have their minds corrupted by falſe opinions. Howbeit, all true believers have the *eyes of their underſtanding opened*, to diſcern in ſome meaſure the glory of God as repreſented to them in the goſpel. Unto others it is fooliſhneſs; or they think there is that darkneſs in it whereunto they cannot approach. But all the darkneſs is in themſelves. This is the diſtinguiſhing property and character of ſaving faith; it beholds the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt; it makes us to diſcern the manifeſtation of the glory of God in Chriſt, as declared in the goſpel.

2. Our apprehenſion of this glory is *the ſpring of all our obedience*, conſolation and hope in this world. Faith diſcovering this manifeſtation of the glory of God in Chriſt, engageth the ſoul unto univerſal obedience, as finding therein abundant reaſon for it, and encouragement unto it. Then is obedience truly *evangelical*, when it ariſeth from this acting of faith, and is thereon accompanied with liberty and gratitude. And herein is laid all the foundation

foundation of our consolations for the present, and hope for the future. For the whole security of our present and future condition depends on the actings of God towards us, according as he hath manifested himself in Christ.

3. From the exercise of faith herein, doth *divine love*, love unto God proceed; therein alone is it enlivened and enflamed. On these apprehensions doth a believing soul cry out, *How great is his goodness? how great is his beauty?* God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, is the only object of divine love. Under that representation of him alone, can the soul cleave unto him with ardent love, constant delight, and intense affections. All other notions of love unto God in sinners, as we are all, are empty fancies. Wherefore,

4. All believers are, or should be conversant in their minds about these things, with longings, expectations and desires after nearer *approaches* unto them, and enjoyments of them. And if we are not so, we are *earthly*, carnal and unspiritual. Yea, the want of this frame, the neglect of this duty, is the sole cause why many professors are so *carnal* in their minds, and so worldly in their conversations. But this is the state of them who live in the due exercise of faith. This they pant and breathe after; namely, that they may be delivered from all darkness, unstable thoughts, and imperfect apprehensions of the glory of God in Christ. After these things do those who have received the *first-fruits of the Spirit*, groan within themselves. This glory they would *behold with open face*, not as at present in a *glass*, but in its own beauty. What do we want? what would we be at? what do our souls desire? is it not that we might have a more full, clear, stable comprehension of the wisdom, love, grace, goodness, holiness, righteousness and power of God, as declared and exalted in Christ unto our redemption and eternal salvation? To see the glory of God in Christ, to understand his love unto him, and valuation of him, to comprehend his nearness unto God, all evidenced in his *mediation*, is that which he hath promised unto us, and which we are pressing after. See John xvii. 23. 24.

5. Heaven will satisfy all those desires and expectations. To have them fully satisfied, is heaven and eternal blessedness,

edneſs. This fills the ſouls of them who are already departed in the faith, with *admiration*, *joy*, and *praiſes*. See Rev. v. 9. 10. 11. Herein is the *glory of Chriſt* abſolutely of another kind and nature, than that of any other creature whatever. And from hence it is, that our glory ſhall principally conſiſt in *beholding his glory*, becauſe the whole glory of God is manifeſted in him.

And by the way, we may ſee hence the *vanity*, as well as the *idolatry* of them who would repreſent Chriſt in glory, as the object of our adoration, in *pictures* and *images*. They faſhion *wood* or *ſtone* into the likeneſs of a man. They adorn it with colours and flouriſhes of art, to ſet it forth unto the ſenſes and fancies of *ſuperſtitious* perſons, as having a reſemblance of glory. And when they have done, they *laviſh gold out of the bag*, as the prophet ſpeaks, in various ſorts of ſuppoſed ornaments; ſuch as are ſo only to the vaineſt ſort of mankind; and ſo propoſe it as an *image* or reſemblance of Chriſt in glory. But what is there in it that hath the leaſt reſpect thereunto, the leaſt likeneſs of it? nay, is it not the moſt effectual means that can be deviſed, to divert the minds of men from *true and real* apprehenſions of it? doth it teach any thing of the *ſubſiſtence of the human nature of Chriſt in the perſon of the Son of God?* nay, doth it not obliterate all thoughts of it? What is repreſented thereby of the *union of it unto God*, and the immediate communications of God unto it? doth it declare *the manifeſtation of all the glorious properties of the divine nature in him?* One thing indeed they aſcribe unto it that is proper unto Chriſt, namely, that it is to be *adored and worſhipped*, whereby they add *idolatry* unto their folly. Perſons who know not what it is to live *by faith*, whoſe minds are never raiſed by ſpiritual heavenly contemplations, who have no deſign in religion but to gratify their *inward* ſuperſtition, by their *outward* ſenſes, may be pleaſed for a time, and ruined for ever by theſe deluſions. Thoſe who have real faith in Chriſt, and love unto him, have a more glorious object for their exerciſe.

And we may hereby examine both our own *notions of the ſtate of glory*, and our preparations for it, and whether we are in any meaſure *made meet for the inheritance of the ſaints*

saints of light. More grounds of this trial will be afterwards suggested, these laid down may not be passed by. Various are the thoughts of men about the future state, the things *which are not seen*, which are eternal. Some rise no higher, but unto hopes of *escaping hell*, or everlasting miseries when they die. Yet the Heathen had their *Elisian fields*, and Mahomet his sensual paradise. Others have appprehensions of I know not what *glistering glory* that will please and satisfy them they know not how, when they can be here no longer. But this state is quite of another nature, and the blessedness of it is spiritual and intellectual. Take an instance in one of the things before laid down. The *glory of heaven* consists in the full manifestation of divine wisdom, goodness, grace, holiness of all the properties of the nature of God in Christ. In the clear perception and constant contemplation hereof, consists no small part of eternal blessedness. What then are our present thoughts of these things? What *joy*, what *satisfaction* have we in the sight of them, which we have by faith through divine revelation? What is our desire to come unto the perfect comprehension of them? How do we like this heaven? What do we find in ourselves that will be eternally satisfied hereby? According as our desires are after them, such and no other are our desires of the *true heaven*, of the residence of blessedness and glory. Neither will God bring us unto heaven whether we will or no. If through the ignorance and darkness of our minds, if through the earthliness and sensuality of our affections, if through a fulness of the world, and the occasions of it, if by the love of life, and our present enjoyments, we are strangers unto these things, we are not conversant about them, we long not after them; we are not in the way towards their enjoyment. The present *satisfaction* we receive in them by faith, is the best evidence we have of an indefeasible interest in them. How foolish is it to lose the *first-fruits* of these things in our own souls, those entrances into blessedness, which the contemplation of them through faith would open unto us, and hazard our everlasting enjoyment of them, by an eager pursuit of an interest in perishing things here below? This, this is that which ruins the

souls

ſouls of moſt, and keeps the faith of many at ſo low an ebb, that it is hard to diſcover any genuine working of it.

Secondly, The *glory of the human nature* of Chriſt differs from that of the ſaints after the *reſurrection*, in things which concern the *degrees* of it. For,

1. The glory of his body is the example and pattern of what they ſhall be conformed unto, Phil. iii. 21. *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf.* Our bodies were made *vile* by the entrance of ſin. Thence they became brothers to the worms, and ſiſters unto corruption. To death and the grave, with rottenneſs and corruption therein, they are deſigned. At the *reſurrection* they ſhall be new-framed, faſhioned and moulded. Not only all the detriment and diſadvantage they received by the entrance of ſin ſhall be removed, but many additions of glorious qualifications which they had not in their primitive natural conſtitution ſhall be added unto them. And this ſhall be done by the *almighty power of Chriſt*; that working or exerciſe of it, whereby he is able to ſubdue all things unto himſelf. But of this ſtate whereinto we ſhall be changed by the power of Chriſt, his *own body* is the pattern and example. A ſimilitude of it is all that we ſhall attain unto. And that which is the *idea* and exemplar in any ſtate, is the rule and ſtandard unto all others. Such is the glory of Chriſt; ours conſiſts in *conformity* thereunto; which gives him the pre-eminence.

2. As the ſtate of his body is more glorious than ours ſhall be, ſo will that of his ſoul in itſelf be made *appear* to be more excellent than what we are capable of. For that fulneſs of the Spirit without meaſure, and of all grace which his nature was capacitated for, by virtue of the *hypoſtatical* union, doth now ſhine forth in all excellency and glory. The grace that was in Chriſt in this world, is the ſame with that which is in him now in heaven. The nature of it was not changed, when he ceaſed to be *viator*, but is only brought into a more glorious exerciſe now he is *comprehenſor*. And all his graces are now made manifeſt, the vail being taken from them, and light

communicated

communicated to discern them. As in this world, he had unto the most neither form nor comelineſs for which he ſhould be deſired, partly from the vail which was caſt on his *inward beauty*, from his *outward condition*, but principally from the darkneſs which was on their minds, whereby they were diſenabled to diſcern the glory of ſpiritual things; notwithſtanding which, ſome then in the light of faith *ſaw his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*: ſo now the *vail* is removed, and the *darkneſs* wholly taken away from the minds of the ſaints; he is in the glory of his graces altogether lovely and deſirable. And although the *grace* which is in believers, be of the ſame nature with that which is in Chriſt Jeſus, and ſhall be changed into *glory*, after the likeneſs of his, yet is it, and always ſhall be incomprehenſibly ſhort of what dwells in him. And herein alſo doth his glory gradually excel that of all other creatures whatever.

But we muſt here *draw a vail* over what yet remains. For it doth not *yet appear* what we ourſelves ſhall be. Much leſs is it evident what are, and what will be the glories of the Head above all the members; even then when we ſhall *be made like unto him*. But it muſt be remembered, that whereas at the entrance of this diſcourſe, we ſo propoſed the conſideration of the preſent ſtate of the Lord Chriſt in heaven, as that which ſhould have an *end at the conſummation of all things*: what hath been ſpoken concerning the glory of his human nature in itſelf, is not of that kind, but what abideth unto eternity. All the things mentioned abide in him and unto him for evermore.

The ſecond thing to be conſidered in the preſent ſtate and condition of Chriſt, is his *mediatory exaltation*. And two things with reſpect thereunto may be inquired into. (1.) *The way of his entrance into that ſtate above.* (2.) *The ſtate itſelf, with the glory of it.*

Firſt, The *way of his entrance* into the exerciſe of his mediatory office in heaven, is expreſſed, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *He was received into glory*, or rather glorioufly. And he *entered into glory*, Luke xxiv. 26. This aſſumption and entrance into glory was upon his aſcenſion deſcribed, Acts

i. 9. 11. he was *taken* up into heaven, ἀνελήφθη ἐν δόξῃ, by an act of divine power; and he *went* into heaven, εἰσῆλθεν εἰς δόξαν, in his own choice and will, as that which he was exalted unto. And this aſcenſion of Chriſt in his *human nature* into heaven, is a fundamental article of the faith of the church.

And it falls under a double conſideration.

(1.) As it was *triumphant*, as he was a *King*.

(2.) As it was *gracious*, as he was a *Prieſt*. His aſcenſion as unto change of place, from earth to heaven, and as unto the outward manner of it, was one and the ſame, and at once accompliſhed. But as unto the end of it, which is the exerciſe of all his offices, it had *various reſpects*, various prefigurations, and is diſtinctly propoſed unto us, with reference unto them.

1*ſt*, In his aſcenſion as it was *triumphant*, three things may be conſidered.

(1.) The *manner of it*, with its repreſentation of old.

(2.) The *place* whereinto he aſcended.

(3.) The *end* of it, or what was the work which he had to do thereon.

1. As unto the manner of it, it was *openly triumphant* and glorious. So is it deſcribed, Eph. iv. 8. He *aſcended up on high; he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* And reſpect is had unto the prefiguration of it, at the giving of the law, Pſal. lxviii. 17. 18. where the glory of it is more fully expreſſed. *The chariots of God are twenty thouſand, even thouſands of angels: the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou haſt aſcended on high, thou haſt led captivity captive,* &c. The moſt glorious appearance of God upon the earth under the Old Teſtament, was that on mount Sinai, in the giving of the law. And as his preſence was there attended with all his *glorious angels*; ſo when upon the finiſhing of that work he returned or aſcended into heaven, it was in the way of a *triumph* with all that *royal attendance*. And this prefigured the aſcent of Chriſt into heaven upon his *fulfilling of the law*, all that was required in it, or ſignified by it. He aſcended triumphantly after he had *given* the law, as a figure of his triumphant aſcent after he had *fulfilled* it. Having then *ſpoiled principalities and powers*, he

he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them, Col. ii. 15. So he led captivity captive; or all the adverse powers of the salvation of the church in triumph at his chariot-wheels. I deny not, but that his leading *captivity captive,* principally respects his spiritual conquest over Satan, and the destruction of his power. Yet, whereas he is also said to *spoil principalities and powers, making a shew of them openly,* and triumphing over them, I no way doubt, but Satan the head of the apostasy, and the chief princes of darkness were led *openly* in sight of all the holy angels, as conquered captives. The *seed of the woman* having now broken the *head of the serpent.* This is that which is so emphatically expressed, Psal. xlvii. throughout. The ground and cause of all the *triumphant rejoicing* of the church therein declared, is, that God was *gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet,* ver. 5. which is nothing but the glorious ascent of Christ into heaven, said to be accompanied with shouts, and the sound of a trumpet, the expressions of triumphant rejoicing, because of the *glorious acclamations* that were made thereon by all the attendants of the throne of God.

2. The *place* whither he thus ascended, is *on high. He ascended up on high,* Eph. iv 8.; that is *heaven.* He went into *heaven,* Acts i. 11.; and the *heavens must receive him,* ver. 3. 21.: not these aspectable heavens which we behold; for in his ascension *he passed through them,* Heb. iv. 14. and is made *higher than they,* chap. vii. 27.; but into the place of the residence of God in glory and majesty, Heb. i. 3. chap. viii. 1. chap. xii. 2. There on *the throne of God,* Rev. iii. 21. *on the right hand of the Majesty on high,* he sits down in the full possession and exercise of all power and authority. This is the palace of this King of saints and nations. There is his royal eternal throne, Heb. i. 8. And *many crowns* are on his head, Rev. xix. 12. or all dignity and honour. And he who in a pretended imitation of him wears a *triple crown,* hath upon his own head thereby, *the name of blasphemy,* Rev. xiii. 1. There are before him his *sceptre* of righteousness, *his rod of iron,* all the *regalia* of his glorious kingdom. For by these *emblems* of power doth the scripture represent unto us his sovereign divine authority in

the execution of his kingly office. Thus he aſcended triumphantly, having conquered his enemies; thus he reigneth glorioufly over all.

3. The *end* for which he thus triumphantly aſcended into heaven, is twofold. (1.) The *overturning and deſtruction* of all his enemies in all their remaining powers. He rules them *with a rod of iron*, and in his due time will daſh them in pieces as a potter's veſſel, Pſal. ii. 9. For he muſt *reign until all his enemies are made his foot-ſtool*, 1 Cor. xv. 25. 26. Pſal. cx. 1. Although at preſent for the moſt part they deſpiſe his authority, yet they are all abſolutely in his power, and ſhall fall under his eternal diſpleaſure. (2.) The *preſervation*, continuation and rule of his church, both as unto the *internal* ſtate of the ſouls of them that believe, and the *external* order of the church in its worſhip and obedience, and its preſervation under and from all oppoſitions and perſecutions in this world. There is in each of theſe ſuch a continual exerciſe of divine wiſdom, power, and care, the effects of them are ſo great and marvellous, and the fruits of them ſo abundant unto the glory of God, that the world *would not contain the books* that might be written of them; but to handle them diſtinctly is not our preſent deſign.

2*dly*, His *aſcenſion* may be conſidered as *gracious*; as the aſcent of an *high prieſt*. And herein the things before mentioned are of a diſtinct conſideration.

1. As to the *manner* of it, and the deſign of it, he gives an account of them himſelf, John xx. 17. His deſign herein was not the taking on him the exerciſe of his power, kingdom, and glorious rule; but the *acting with God* on the behalf of his diſciples. *I go*, ſaith he, *to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and to your God*; not his God and Father with reſpect unto eternal generation, but as he was their God and Father alſo. And he was ſo, as he was their God and Father in the ſame *covenant* with himſelf; wherein he was to procure of God all good things for them. Through the blood of this *everlaſting covenant*, namely, his own blood, whereby this covenant was eſtabliſhed, and all the good things of it ſecured unto the church, he was *brought again from the dead*, that he might live ever to communicate them unto

the church, Heb. xiii. 20. 21. With this deſign in his aſcenſion, and the effects of it, did he often comfort and refreſh the hearts of his diſciples, when they were ready to faint on the apprehenſions of his leaving of them here below, John xiv. 1. 2. chap. xvi. 5. 6. 7. And this was typified by the *aſcent of the high prieſt* unto the temple of old. The temple was ſituated on an hill, high and ſteep, ſo as that there was no approach unto it but by *ſtairs*. Hence in their wars it was looked on as a moſt impregnable fortreſs. And the ſolemn aſcent of the *high prieſt* into it on the day of expiation, had a reſemblance of this aſcent of Chriſt into heaven. For after he had offered the ſacrifice in the outward court, and made atonement for ſin, he entered into the moſt holy place, *a type of heaven* itſelf, as the apoſtle declares, Heb. ix. 24. of heaven, as it was the place whereinto our High Prieſt was to enter. And it was a *joyful aſcent*, though not *triumphant*. All the pſalms from the 120th, to the 134th inclufively, whoſe titles are שירים המעלות, *ſongs of degrees*, or rather aſcents or riſings, being generally ſongs of praiſe and exhortations to have reſpect unto the ſanctuary, were ſung to God at the reſting places of that aſcent. Eſpecially was this repreſented on the day of *jubilee*. The proclamation of the *jubilee* was on the ſame day that the high prieſt entered into the holy place; and at the ſame time, namely, on the *tenth day of the ſeventh month*, Lev. xvi. 29. chap. xxv. 9. Then did the trumpet ſound throughout the land, the whole church; and *liberty* was proclaimed unto all ſervants, captives, and ſuch as had ſold their poſſeſſions, that they might return unto them again. This being a *great type* of the ſpiritual deliverance of the church, the noiſe of the trumpet was called the *joyful ſound*, Pſal. lxxxix. 15. *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound, they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.* Thoſe who are made partakers of ſpiritual deliverance, ſhall walk before God in a ſenſe of his love and grace. This is the aſcent of our High Prieſt into his ſanctuary, when he *proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy*

for

for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs, that they might be called trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified, Iſ. lxi. 2. 3. For in this aſcenſion of Chriſt, proclamation was made in the goſpel, of mercy, pardon, peace, joy, and everlaſting refreſhments, unto all that were diſtreſſed by ſin, with a communication of righteouſneſs unto them, to the eternal glory of God. Such was the *entrance of our High Prieſt* into heaven, with acclamations of joy and praiſe unto God.

2. The place whereinto he thus entered was the *ſanctuary above*, the *tabernacle not made with hands*, Heb. viii. 2. It was into heaven itſelf, not abſolutely, but as it is the *temple of God*, as the throne of grace and mercy-ſeat are in it, which muſt further be ſpoken unto immediately.

3. The *end* why the Lord Chriſt thus aſcended, and thus entered into the holy place, was to *appear in the preſence of God for us*, and to make *interceſſion* for all that come unto God by him, Heb. vii. 26, 27. chap. ix. 24, 25.

He aſcended triumphantly into heaven, as Solomon aſcended into his glorious throne of judgement deſcribed, 1 Kings x. 18, 19, 20. As David was the type of his conqueſt over all the enemies of his church, ſo was Solomon of his glorious reign. The types were multiplied becauſe of their imperfection. Then came unto him the queen of Sheba, the type of the Gentile converts and the church. When נדיבי עמים, the *voluntaries of the people* (thoſe made willing in the day of his power, Pſal. cx. 3.) *gathered themſelves to the people of the God of Abraham*, and were taken in his covenant, Pſal. xlvii. 9. But he aſcended graciouſly, as the *high prieſt* went into the holy place. Not to rule all things glorioufly with mighty power, not to uſe his *ſword and his ſceptre*, but to *appear as an High Prieſt*, in a *garment down to the foot, and a golden girdle about his paps*, Rev. i. 13.; as in a tabernacle or temple before a throne of grace. His ſitting down at the right hand of the Majeſty on high, adds to the glory of his prieſtly office, but belongs not

unto

unto the execution of it. So it was propheſied of him, that *he ſhould be a Prieſt on his throne*, Zech. vi. 13.

It may be added hereunto, that when he thus *left this world* and aſcended into glory, the great promiſe he made unto his diſciples, as they were to be *preachers* of the goſpel, and in them unto all that ſhould ſucceed them in that *office*, was, that he would *ſend the Holy Spirit unto them*, to teach and guide them, to lead them into all truth, to declare unto them the myſteries of the will, grace and love of God, for the uſe of the whole church. This he promiſed to do, and did in the diſcharge of his *prophetical* office. And although his giving *gifts unto men* was an act of his kingly power, yet it was for the end of his *prophetical* office.

From what hath been ſpoken, it is evident that the Lord Chriſt *aſcended into heaven*, or was received up into glory, with this deſign, namely, to exerciſe his office of *mediation* in the behalf of the church until the end ſhould be. As this was his grace, that when he was *rich*, for our ſakes he became *poor*; ſo when he was made *rich* again for his own ſake, he lays forth all the riches of his glory and power on our behalf.

Secondly, The *glory* of the ſtate and condition whereinto Chriſt thus entered, is the next thing to be conſidered. For he is *ſet down* at the right hand of the Majeſty on high. And as his *aſcenſion*, with the ends of it, were twofold, or of a double conſideration, ſo was his glory that enſued thereon. For his preſent mediatory ſtate conſiſts either in the glory of his *power* and *authority*; or in the glory of his *love and grace*; his glory as a *King*, or his glory as a *Prieſt*. For the firſt of theſe, or his *royal glory*, in ſovereign power and authority over the whole creation of God, all in heaven and earth, perſons and things, angels and men, good and bad, alive and dead, all things ſpiritual and eternal, grace, gifts, and glory, his *right and power*, or ability to diſpoſe of all things according unto his will and pleaſure, I have ſo fully and diſtinctly declared it, in my Expoſition on Heb. i. 3. as that I ſhall not here again inſiſt upon it. His preſent glory in the way of *love and grace*; his glory as a *Prieſt*, will be manifeſted in what doth enſue.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

The exercise of the mediatory office of Christ in heaven.

THE third and last thing which we proposed unto consideration, in our inquiry into the present state and condition of the person of Christ in heaven, is the *exercise and discharge of his mediatory office* in behalf of the church; especially as he continueth to be a *minister of the sanctuary*, and of the true tabernacle which God hath fixed, and not man.

All Christians acknowledge, that his *present state* is a state of the highest glory, of exaltation above the whole creation of God, above every name that is or can be named; and hereon they esteem their own honour and safety to depend. Neither do they doubt of his *power*, but take it for granted that he can do whatever he pleaseth, which is the ground of their placing all their confidence in him. But we must shew moreover, that his present state is a *state of office-power*, work, and duty. He leads not in heaven a life of *mere glory*, majesty, and blessedness, but a *life of office*, love, and care also. He lives as the *Mediator* of the church, as the king, priest, and prophet thereof. Hereon do our present safety, and our future eternal salvation depend. Without the continual actings of the *office-power* and care of Christ, the church could not be preserved one moment. And the darkness of our faith herein, is the cause of all our discomfolations, and most of our weaknesses in obedience. Most men have only general and confused notions and apprehensions of the present state of Christ with respect unto the church. And by some, all considerations of this nature are despised and derided. But *revealed things belong unto us*; especially such as are of so great importance unto the glory of God, and the saving of our own souls; such as this is concerning the present state of the person of Christ in heaven, with respect unto his office, power, and care.

Thus he is at once represented in all his offices, Rev. v. 6. *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the*

the four living creatures, ſtood a Lamb as it had been ſlain, having ſeven horns, and ſeven eyes, which are the ſeven Spirits of God ſent forth into all the earth. The whole repreſentation of the glory of God, with all his holy attendants, is here called his *throne*, whence Chriſt is ſaid to be in the *midſt* of it. And this he is in his *kingly glory*; with reſpect alſo whereunto, he is ſaid to have *ſeven horns*, or perfect power for the accompliſhment of his will. And with reſpect unto his *ſacerdotal office*, he is repreſented as a *Lamb that had been ſlain*: it being the virtue of his oblation, that is continually effectual for the ſalvation of the church: for as the *Lamb of God*, in the offering of himſelf, he takes away the ſins of the world. And as a *Prophet* he is ſaid to have *ſeven eyes*, which are the *ſeven Spirits of God*; or a perfect fulneſs of all ſpiritual light and wiſdom in himſelf, with a power for the communication of gifts and grace for the illumination of the church.

The nature of theſe *offices* of Chriſt, what belongs unto them and their diſcharge, as was before intimated, I have declared elſewhere. I do now no farther conſider them but as they relate unto the *preſent ſtate* and condition of the perſon of Chriſt in heaven. And becauſe it would be too long a work to treat of them all diſtinctly, I ſhall confine myſelf unto the conſideration of his *prieſtly office*, with what depends thereon. And with reſpect thereunto the things enſuing may be obſerved.

Firſt, The Lord Chriſt entered into heaven, the place of the reſidence of the glory of God, *as into a temple, a tabernacle, a place of ſacred worſhip.* He did ſo as the High Prieſt of the church, Heb. vi 9. 24. *He 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.* He is entered into heaven, as it was figured by the tabernacle of old, which was the place of all *ſacred* and ſolemn worſhip. And therefore is he ſaid to enter into it *through the vail*, Heb. vi. 19. 20. chap. x. 19. 20. which was the way of entrance into the moſt holy place, both in the tabernacle and temple. Heaven is not only a *palace*, a throne, as it is God's throne, Matth. v. 3. 4. but it is a *temple* wherein God dwells, not only in majeſty and power, but in grace and mercy. It

is the seat of ordinances and solemn worship. So is it represented, Rev. vii. 15. 17. It is said of the whole number of the saints above, that have passed through the tribulations of this world; that they are *before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. And the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water.* See also chap. viii. 1. 2. 3. 4. The worship of the church below may also be herein comprized; but it is by virtue of communion with that above. This is that *heaven* which the souls of believers do long for an entrance into. Other apprehensions of it are but uncertain speculations.

Secondly, In this *temple*, this *sanctuary*, the Lord Christ continueth gloriously to *minister before the throne of grace*, in the discharge of his office. See Heb. iv. 14. 15. 16. chap. ix. 24. As the high priest went into the holy place to minister for the church unto God, before the *ark* and *mercy-seat*, which were types of the throne of grace; so doth our High Priest act for us in the real presence of God. He did not enter into the holy place, only to reside there in a way of glory, but to do *temple-work*, and to give unto God all that glory, honour, and worship, which he will receive from the church. And we may consider both, (1.) *What* this work is. And, (2.) *How* it is performed.

1. In general, herein Christ exerteth and exerciseth all his *love*, *compassion*, *pity*, and *care* towards the church and every member of it. This are we frequently called unto the consideration of, as the foundation of all our consolation, as the fountain of all our obedience. See Heb. ii. 17. 18. chap. iv. 15. 16. chap. v. 2. Thoughts hereof are the relief of believers in all their distresses and temptations; and the effects of it are all their *supplies of grace*, enabling them to persevere in their obedience. He doth appear for them as the great representative of the church, to transact all their affairs with God. And that for three ends.

(1.) To make *effectual the atonement that he hath made for sin*. By the continual representation of it, and of himself as a *Lamb that had been slain*, he procures the application of the virtues and benefits of it, in reconciliation and peace

peace with God, unto their ſouls and conſciences. Hence are all believers ſprinkled and waſhed with his blood, in all generations; in the application of the virtues of it unto them, as ſhed for them.

(2.) To undertake their *protection*, and to plead their cauſe againſt all the accuſations of Satan. He yet accuſeth and chargeth them before God. But Chriſt is their *advocate* at the throne of grace, effectually fruſtrating all his attempts, Rev. xii. 10. Zech. iii. 2.

(3.) To *intercede* for them, as unto the communication of all grace and glory, all ſupplies of the Spirit, the accompliſhment of all the promiſes of the covenant towards them, 1 John ii. 1. 2. This is the work of Chriſt in *heaven*. In theſe things as the *High Prieſt* of the church, doth he continue to adminiſter his mediatory office on their behalf. And herein is he attended with the ſongs and joyful acclamations of all the holy ones that are in the preſence of God, giving glory to God by him.

2. As unto the *manner* of this glorious adminiſtration, ſundry things are to be conſidered.

1*ſt*, That this tranſaction of things in heaven, being in the *temple of God*, and before the throne of grace, is a ſolemn *inſtituted worſhip* at preſent, which ſhall ceaſe at the end of the world. *Religious* worſhip it is; or that wherein and whereby all the ſaints above do give glory to God. And it is *inſtituted* worſhip, not that which is merely natural, in that it is God's eſpecial appointment in and by Chriſt the Mediator. It is a *church-ſtate* which is conſtituted hereby, wherein theſe glorious ordinances are celebrated; and ſuch a ſtate as ſhall not be eternal, but hath its time allotted unto it. And believers at preſent have by faith an admiſſion into communion with this church above, in all its divine worſhip. For *we are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling, which ſpeaketh better things than that of Abel*, Heb. xii. 22. 23. 24. A *church-ſtate* doth the apoſtle moſt expreſs-

ly represent unto us. It is *Sion*, *Jerusalem*, the great assembly; the names of the church-state under the Old Testament. And it is a state *above*, the *heavenly Jerusalem*, where are all the holy angels, and the spirits of just men *made perfect*, in themselves, though not in their state as to the restitution of their bodies at the resurrection. And an *holy worship* is there in this great assembly. For not only is *Jesus* in it as the Mediator of the covenant; but there is the *blood of sprinkling* also, in the effectual application of it unto the church. Hereinto have we an entrance. In this holy assembly and worship, have we communion by faith whilst we are here below, Heb. x. 19.—22. O that my soul might abide and abound in this exercise of faith, that I might yet enjoy a clearer prospect of this glory, and inspection into the beauty and order of this blessed assembly! How inconceivable is the representation that God here makes of the glory of his wisdom, love, grace, goodness, and mercy in Christ? How excellent is the manifestation of the glory and honour of Christ, in his person and offices, the glory given him by the Father? How little a portion do we know, or can have experience in, of the refreshing, satiating communications of divine love and goodness unto all the members of this assembly; or of that unchangeable delight in beholding the glory of Christ, and of God in him; of that ardency of affections wherewith they cleave unto him, and continual exultation of spirit, whereby they triumph in the praises of God, that are in all the members of it? To enter into this assembly by faith, to join with it in the assignation of praises unto *him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb for evermore*, to labour after a frame of heart in holy affections, and spiritual delight, in some correspondency with that which is in the saints above, is the duty, and ought to be the design of the church of believers here below. So much as we are furthered and assisted herein by our present ordinances, so much benefit and advantage have we by them, and no more. A constant view of this glory, will cast contempt on all the desirable things of this world, and deliver our minds from any dreadful apprehensions of what is most terrible therein.

2*dly*, This

2dly, This heavenly worſhip in the ſanctuary above, adminiſtered by the High Prieſt over the houſe of God, is *conſpicuouſly glorious*. The glory of God is the great end of it, as ſhall be immediately declared; that is, the manifeſtation of it. The manifeſtation of the glory of God conſiſts *really* in the effects of his infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, grace, and power; *declaratively*, in the expreſs acknowledgement of it with praiſe. Herein therefore doth the ſolemn worſhip of God in the ſanctuary above conſiſt; ſetting aſide only the *immediate actings* of Chriſt in his *interceſſion*. It is a glorious expreſs acknowledgement of the wiſdom, love, goodneſs, grace, and power of God, in the redemption, ſanctification, and ſalvation of the church by Jeſus Chriſt, with a continual aſcription of all divine honour unto him in the way of praiſe. For the *manner* of its performance, our preſent light into it, is but dark and obſcure. Some things have an evidence in them. As,

(1.) That there is nothing *carnal* in it, or ſuch things as are ſuited unto the fancies and imaginations of men. In the thoughts of heaven, moſt perſons are apt to frame *images* in their minds of ſuch carnal things as they ſuppoſe they could be delighted withal. But they are far remote from the worſhip of this holy aſſembly. The worſhip of the *goſpel* which is ſpiritually glorious, makes a nearer approach unto it, than that of the *temple* which was outwardly and carnally ſo.

(2.) It is not merely *mental*; or tranſacted only in the ſilent thoughts of each individual perſon. For as we have ſhewed, it is the worſhip of a church-aſſembly, wherein they have all communion and join in the performance of it. We know not well the way and manner of communication between *angels* and the *ſpirits of juſt men* made perfect. It is expreſſed in the ſcripture by *voices*, *poſtures*, and *geſtures*; which although they are not of the ſame nature as abſolutely ours are, yet are they really ſignificant of the things they would expreſs, and a means of mutual communication. Yea, I know not how far God may give them the uſe of *voice* and *words*, whereby to expreſs his praiſe, as *Moſes talked with Chriſt*, at his *transfiguration*, Matth. xvii. 3. But the manner of it is ſuch, as whereby

by the whole assembly above do jointly set forth and celebrate the praises of God. And the glory hereof consists in three things.

1. The *blessed and beautiful order* of all things in that sanctuary. Job describes the grave beneath to be a *place without any order, and where the light is as darkness*, chap. x. 22. All above is order and light; every person and thing in its proper place and exercise.

(1.) Heaven itself is a *temple*, a *sanctuary*, made so by the especial presence of God, and the ministration of Christ in the tabernacle of his human nature.

(2.) God is on the *throne of grace*; gloriously exalted on the account of his grace, and for the dispensation of it. To the saints above he is on the throne of grace, in that they are in the full enjoyment of the effects of his grace, and do give glory unto him on the account thereof. He is so also with respect unto the church here below, in the continual communications of grace and mercy through Christ.

(3.) The Lord Christ in his human nature is *before the throne*, acting his mediatory office and power in behalf of the church.

(4.) All the holy angels in the various orders and degrees of their *ministration*, are about the throne continually. So,

(5.) Are the *spirits of just men* made perfect, in the various measures of light and glory. And these things were obscurely represented in the order of the church at its first erection in the wilderness; for the ordinances of God among them were patterns or figures of *heavenly things*, Heb. ix. 23. (1.) In the midst was the *tabernacle* or sanctuary, which represented the sanctuary or temple above. (2.) In the most holy place, were the *ark and mercy-seat*, representatives of the throne of grace. (3.) The *ministry of the high priest*, a type of the ministry of Christ. (4.) The *Levites* who attended on the priest, did represent the ministry of angels, attending on Christ in the discharge of his office. And, (5.) Round about them were the *tribes* in their order.

2. In the *full clear apprehensions* which all the blessed ones have of the glory of God in Christ, of the work and effects

effects of his wiſdom and grace towards mankind. Theſe are the foundation of all divine worſhip. And becauſe our conceptions and apprehenſions about them are dark, low, obſcure, and inevident, our *worſhip* is weak and imperfect alſo. But all is open unto the ſaints above. We are in the duſt, the blood, the noiſe of the battle; they are victorioufly at peace, and have a perfect view of what they have paſſed through, and what they have attained unto. They are come to the *ſprings of life and light*, and are filled with admiration of the grace of God in themſelves and one another. What they ſee in God, and in Jeſus Chriſt, what they have experience of in themſelves, what they know and learn from others, are all of them inconceiveable and inexpreſſible. It is well for us, if we have ſo much experience of theſe things, as to ſee a real glory in the fulneſs and perfection of them. The apprehenſions by *ſight* without mixture of unſteadineſs or darkneſs, without the allay of fears or temptations, with an ineffable ſenſe of the things themſelves on their hearts or minds, are the ſprings or motives of the holy worſhip which is in heaven.

3. In the glorious *manner* of the performance of it. Now, whereas it ariſeth from *ſight* and preſent enjoyment, it muſt conſiſt in a continual aſcription of glory and praiſe unto God; and ſo it is deſcribed in the ſcripture. See Rev. iv. 9. 10. 11. with Iſ. vi. 3. And how little a portion of the glory of theſe things is it, that we can apprehend?

Thirdly, In this ſolemn aſſembly before the throne of grace, *the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, the great High Prieſt, doth repreſent and render acceptable unto God, the *worſhip of the church here below*. So it is expreſſed, Rev. viii. 3. 4. *And an angel came and ſtood at the altar, having a golden cenſer; and there was given unto him much incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all ſaints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the ſmoke of the incenſe, which came with the prayers of the ſaints, aſcended up unto God out of the angel's hand.* It is a repreſentation of the high prieſt burning incenſe on the golden altar on the day of atonement, when he entered into the moſt holy place. For that altar was placed juſt at the entrance of it,

it, directly before the ark and mercy-seat, representing the throne of God. This angel therefore is our High Priest; none else could approach that altar, or offer incense on it, the smoke whereof was to enter into the holy place. And the prayers of all saints is a *synecdochical expression* of the whole worship of the church. And this is presented before the throne of God, by this High Priest. And it is not said that their *prayers* came unto the throne of God, but the *smoke of the incense out of the hand of the angel* did so. For it is the incense of the intercession of Christ alone that gives them their acceptance with God. Without this, none of our prayers, praises, or thanksgivings would ever have access into the presence of God, or unto the throne of grace. Blessed be God for this *relief*, under the consideration of the weakness and imperfection of them. Wherefore in him and by him alone, do we present all our desires, and prayers, and whole worship to God. And herein, in all our worship do we ourselves *enter into the most holy place*, Heb. x. 19. We do it not merely by faith, but by this especial exercise of it, in putting our prayers into the hand of this High Priest.

There are three things in all our worship that would hinder its access unto God, and acceptance with him, as also keep off comfort and peace from our consciences. The first is the *sin* or *iniquity* that cleaves unto it; secondly, the *weakness* or imperfection that at best is in it; and thirdly, the *unworthiness* of the persons by whom it is performed. With reference unto these things the *law* could never consummate or perfect the consciences of them that came unto God by the sacrifices of it. But there are three things in the sacerdotal ministration of Christ, that remove and take them all away, whereon we have access with boldness unto God. And they are, (1.) The *influence* of his oblation. (2.) The *efficacy* of his intercession; and, (3.) The *dignity* of his person. Through the first of these he bears and takes away all the iniquity of our holy things; as Aaron did typically of old, by virtue of the plate of gold, with the name of God (a figure of Christ) on his forehead, Exod. xxviii. 36. 37. 38. He hath made atonement for them in the blood of his oblation; and they appear

pear not in the preſence of God. Through the ſecond, or the efficacy of his interceſſion, he gives acceptance unto our prayers and holy worſhip, with power and prevalency before God: for this is that *incenſe*, whoſe ſmoak or ſweet perfume comes up with the prayers of all ſaints unto the throne of God. Through the third, or the dignity of his perſon, wherein he appears as the repreſentative of his whole myſtical body, he takes away from our conſciences that ſenſe of our own vileneſs and unworthineſs, which would not ſuffer us to approach with *boldneſs* unto the throne of grace. In theſe things conſiſts the life of the worſhip of the church, of all believers, without which, as it would not be acceptable unto God, ſo we could have neither peace nor conſolation in it ourſelves.

Fourthly, Herein hath the church that is *triumphant*, communion with that which is yet *militant*. The aſſembly *above* have not loſt their concernment in the church here below. As we rejoice in their glory, ſafety, and happineſs, that having paſſed through the ſtorms and tempeſts, the temptations, ſufferings, and dangers of this life and world, as they are harboured in eternal glory, unto the praiſe of God in Chriſt; ſo are they full of *affections* towards their brethren exerciſed with the ſame temptations, difficulties, and dangers, which they have paſſed through, with earneſt deſires for their deliverance and ſafety. Wherefore when they behold the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the great *High Prieſt* over the houſe of God, preſenting their prayers, with all their holy worſhip unto him, rendering them acceptable by the incenſe of his own interceſſion, it fills them with ſatisfaction, and continually excites them unto the aſſignation of praiſe, and glory, and honour unto him. This is the ſtate of the ſaints above, with reſpect unto the church here below. This is all which may be herein aſcribed unto them, and this may ſafely be ſo. What ſome have fancied about their own *perſonal interceſſion*, and that for *particular perſons*, is derogatory unto the honour of Jeſus Chriſt, and inconſiſtent with their preſent condition. But in theſe things conſiſt their *communion* with the church here below. A *love* they have unto it, from their union with it in the ſame myſtical body, Eph. i. 10. A *ſenſe* they have of its condition, from the experience they had of

it in the days of their fleſh. A great *concernment* they have for the glory of God in them, and a fervent deſire of their eternal ſalvation. They know that without them they ſhall not be abſolutely conſummate or made perfect in their whole perſons, Rev. vi. 11. In this ſtate of things, they continually behold the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, preſenting their prayers before the throne of grace, making interceſſion for them, appearing to plead their cauſe againſt all their adverſaries, tranſacting all their affairs in the preſence of God, taking care of their ſalvation that not one of them ſhall periſh. This continually fills them with an holy ſatisfaction and complacency, and is a great part of the ſubject matter of their *inceſſant praiſes* and aſcriptions of glory unto him. Herein lies the concernment of the church above in that here below; this is the communion that is between them, whereof the perſon of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office is the bond and centre.

Fifthly, There is herein a *full manifeſtation* made of the wiſdom of God, in all the holy inſtitutions of the tabernacle and temple of old. Herein the *vail* is fully taken off from them, and that obſcure repreſentation of heavenly things is brought forth unto light and glory. It is true, this is done unto a great degree in the diſpenſation of the goſpel. By the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, and the diſcharge of his mediatory office in this world, the ſubſtance of what they did prefigure is accompliſhed. And in the revelation of the goſpel, the nature and end of them is declared. Howbeit, they extended their ſignification alſo unto things *within the vail*, or the diſcharge of the prieſtly office of Chriſt in the heavenly ſanctuary, Heb. ix. 24. Wherefore, as we have not yet a perfection of light to underſtand the depth of the myſteries contained in them; ſo themſelves alſo were not abſolutely fulfilled until the Lord Chriſt diſcharged his office in the holy place. This is the glory of the pattern which God ſhewed unto Moſes in the mount, and made conſpicuous and evident unto all. Therein eſpecially do the *ſaints of the Old Teſtament*, who were exerciſed all their days in thoſe typical inſtitutions, whoſe end and deſign they could not comprehend, ſee the manifold wiſdom and goodneſs

of

of God in them all, rejoicing in them for evermore.

Sixthly, All that the Lord Christ receives of the Father on the account of this holy interposition and mediation for the church, he is endowed with *sovereign authority* and *almighty power* in himself to execute and accomplish. Therefore is he said, as a Priest, to be *made higher than the heavens*, and as a *Priest to sit down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*, Heb. viii. 2. This glorious power doth not immediately belong unto him on the account of his sacerdotal office, but it is that *qualification of his person* which is necessary unto the effectual discharge of it. Hence it is said of him, that he should *bear the glory, and sit and rule upon his throne, and should be a priest upon his throne*, Zech. vi. 13. A throne is *insigne regium*, and properly belongs unto Christ with respect unto his kingly office, Heb. i. 8. 9. Howbeit, the power accompanying and belonging unto his throne, being necessary unto the effectual discharge of his priestly office, as he sits and rules on his throne, so it is said that he is a *priest on his throne* also.

This is one instance of the *present state* of Christ in heaven, and of the work which he doth there perform, and the only instance I shall insist upon. He was made a Priest *after the power of an endless life*, the life which he now leads in heaven, and lives for ever to make intercession for us. He was dead, but is alive, and lives for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and death, all power over the enemies of his church. God on a throne of grace; Christ the High Priest, so on his right hand in glory and power, as yet to be *before the throne* in the virtue of his sacerdotal office, with the whole concernment of the church on his hand, transacting all things with God for them: all the *holy angels*, and the *spirits of just men made perfect* encompassing the throne with continual praises unto God, even the Father and him, on the account of the work of infinite wisdom, goodness, and grace in his incarnation, mediation, and salvation of the church thereby; *himself* continuing to manage the cause of the whole church before God, presenting all their prayers and services unto him, perfumed with his own intercession,

is that reſemblance of heaven and its *preſent glory*, which the ſcripture offers unto us. But, alas! how weak, how dark, how low are our conceptions and apprehenſions of theſe heavenly things? We ſee yet as through a glaſs darkly, and know but in part. The time is approaching when we ſhall ſee theſe things with *open face*, and know even as we are known. The beſt improvement we can make of this proſpect, whilſt faith ſupplies the place of future ſight, is to be ſtirred up thereby unto holy *longings* after a participation in this glory, and conſtant diligence in that holy obedience whereby we may arrive thereunto.

What remaineth yet to be ſpoken on this ſubject, hath reſpect unto theſe two enſuing propoſitions.

1. All the effects of the offices of Chriſt, *internal, ſpiritual*, and *eternal*, in grace and glory; all external fruits of their diſpenſation in providence towards the church, or its enemies, are wrought by divine power; or are the effects of an emanation of power from God. They are all wrought *by the exceeding greatneſs of his power, even as he wrought in Chriſt himſelf when he raiſed him from the dead*, Eph. i. 18. For all the outward works of God, ſuch as all theſe are, which are wrought in and for the church, are neceſſarily immediate effects of divine power; nor can be of another nature.

2. Upon ſuppoſition of the *obedience* of Chriſt in this life, and the *atonement* made by his blood for ſin, with his exaltation thereon, there is nothing in any eſſential property of the nature of God, nothing in the eternal unchangeable law of obedience to hinder, but that God might work all theſe things in us unto his own honour and glory, in the eternal ſalvation of the church, and the deſtruction of all its enemies, without a continuance of the *adminiſtration of the offices of Chriſt in heaven*, and all that ſacred ſolemnity of worſhip, wherewith it is accompanied.

Theſe things being certain and evident, we may inquire thereon, whence it is, that God hath ordered the *continuation of all theſe things in heaven above*, ſeeing theſe ends might have been accompliſhed without them, by immediate acts of divine power?

The

The great *works of God are ſought out of them that have pleaſure in them*, Pſal. cxi. 2. This therefore being a *great work of God*, which he hath wrought and revealed unto us, eſpecially in the effects and fruits of it, and that for the manifeſtation of his wiſdom and grace, it is our duty to inquire into it with all humble diligence. *For revealed things belong unto us and our children, that we may do the will of God for our good.* Wherefore,

1. God would have it ſo, *for the manifeſtation of his own glory.* This is the firſt great end of all the works of God. That it is ſo, is a fundamental principle of our religion. *And how his works do glorify him*, is our duty to inquire. The eſſential glory of God is always the ſame, eternal, and immutable. It is the being of God, with that reſpect which all creatures have unto it. For glory adds a ſuppoſition of relation unto being. But the manifeſtations of his glory are *various*, according to the pleaſure of his will. Wherefore, that which he chuſeth to manifeſt his glory in and by at one time, he may ceaſe from uſing it unto that end at another. For its being a means of the manifeſtation of his glory, may depend on ſuch circumſtances, ſuch a ſtate of things, which being removed, it ceaſeth to be. So of old, he manifeſted and repreſented his glory in the *tabernacle and temple*, and the holy pledges of his preſence in them, and was glorified in all the worſhip of the law. But now he ceaſeth ſo to do, nor is any more honoured by the ſervices and ceremonies of religion therein preſcribed. If the whole *ſtructure of the temple* and all its beautiful ſervices, were now in being on the earth, no glory would redound unto God thereby, he would receive none from it. To expect the glory of God in them, would be an high diſhonour unto him. And God may at any time begin to manifeſt his glory, by ſuch ways and means as he did not formerly make uſe of unto that purpoſe. So is it with all *goſpel-ordinances*, which ſtate will be continued unto the conſummation of all things here below, and no longer, for then ſhall they all ceaſe, God will be no more glorified in them or by them. So hath God choſen to *glorify himſelf in heaven* by this adminiſtration of all things in and by Jeſus Chriſt, whereunto alſo there is an end determined.

And

And in the continuation of this holy worſhip in the ſanctuary above, God doth manifeſt his glory on many accounts, and reſteth therein.

1ſt, He doth it in and unto the *ſaints who departed this life under the Old Teſtament*. They came ſhort in glory of what they now enter into, who die in the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. For not to diſpute about, nor determine poſitively, what was their ſtate and condition before the *aſcenſion of Chriſt into heaven*, or what was the nature of the bleſſed receptacle of their ſouls; it is manifeſt, that they *did not*, they could not behold the glory of God, and the *accompliſhment of the myſtery of his wiſdom* and will, in Jeſus Chriſt, nor was it perfectly made known unto them. Whatever was their reſt, refreſhment, and bleſſedneſs; whatever were their enjoyments of the preſence of God; yet was there no *throne of grace* erected in heaven, no *High Prieſt* appearing before it; no *Lamb* as it had been ſlain, no *joint aſcription* of glory unto him that ſits on the throne and the Lamb for ever; God *having ordained ſome better things for us, that they without us ſhould not be made perfect*. See Eph. iii. 9. 10.

This was that, and this was that alone, ſo far as in the ſcripture it is revealed, wherein they came ſhort of that glory which is now enjoyed in heaven. And herein conſiſts the advantage of the ſaints above them, who now die in faith. Their ſtate in heaven was ſuited unto their faith and worſhip on the earth. They had no clear diſtinct knowledge of the incarnation and mediatory office of Chriſt, by their revelations and ſervices. Only they believed that the *promiſe of deliverance*, of grace and mercy, ſhould be in and by him accompliſhed. Their *reception into heaven*, that which they were made meet and prepared for by their faith and worſhip, was ſuited thereunto. They had a *bleſſed reſt and happineſs* above what we can comprehend; for who knows what it is to be in the glorious preſence of God, though at the greateſt diſtance? They were not immediately ſurpriſed with an appearance of that glory which they had no diſtinct apprehenſions of in this world. Neither they nor the angels knew clearly either the *ſufferings of Chriſt*, or the *glory that ſhould enſue*. But they ſaw and knew, that there was yet ſomething farther to be done in

heaven

heaven and earth, as yet *hid in God* and the counſels of his will, for the exaltation of his glory in the complete ſalvation of the church. This they continued waiting for, in the holy place of their refreſhment above. Faith gave them, and it gives us an entrance into the preſence of God, and makes us meet for it. But what they immediately enjoyed, did not in its whole kind exceed what their faith directed unto; no more doth ours. Wherefore, they were not prepared for a view of the *preſent glory* of heaven; nor did enjoy it. But the ſaints under the New Teſtament, who are clearly inſtructed by the goſpel, in the myſteries of the incarnation and mediation of Chriſt, are by their faith and worſhip made *meet for an immediate entrance* into this glory. This they long for, this they expect and are ſecured of, from the prayer of our Saviour; that *they may be*, when they leave this world, *where he is, to behold his glory*.

But now upon the entrance of *Chriſt into the heavenly ſanctuary*, all thoſe holy ones were admitted into the ſame glory, with what the ſaints under the New Teſtament do enjoy. *Hereon*, with open face, they behold the uſe and end of thoſe *typical ſervices* and ordinances, wherein theſe things were ſhadowed out unto them. No heart can conceive that ineffable addition of glory which they received hereby. The myſtery of the wiſdom and grace of God in their redemption and ſalvation by Chriſt was now fully repreſented unto them; what they had prayed for, longed for, and deſired to ſee in the days of their fleſh on the earth, and waited for ſo long in heaven, was now gloriouſly made manifeſt unto them. Hereon did glorious light and bleſſed ſatisfaction come into and upon all thoſe bleſſed ſouls, who died in the faith, but *had not received the promiſe*, only beheld it afar off. And hereby did God greatly manifeſt his own glory in them and unto them, which is the firſt end of the *continuation of this ſtate* of things in heaven. This makes me judge, that the ſeaſon of Chriſt's entrance into heaven as the *holy ſanctuary* of God, was the greateſt inſtance of created glory, that ever was, or ever ſhall be unto the conſummation of all things. And this, as for other reaſons, ſo becauſe all the *holy ſouls* who had departed in the faith from the foundation of the

world,

world, were then received into the glorious light of the counſels of God, and knowledge of the effects of his grace by Jeſus Chriſt.

Want of a due apprehenſion of the truth herein, hath cauſed many, eſpecially thoſe of the *church of Rome*, to follow after vain imaginations about the ſtate of the *ſouls of the faithful* departed under the Old Teſtament. Generally they ſhut them up in a *ſubterranean limbus*, whence they were delivered by the *deſcent* of Chriſt. But it is contrary unto all notions and revelations of the reſpect of God unto his people; contrary to the life and nature of faith, that thoſe who have paſſed *through their courſe of obedience* in this world, and finiſhed the work given unto them, ſhould not enter upon their departure into *bleſſed reſt* in the preſence of God. Take away the perſuaſion hereof, and the whole nature of faith is deſtroyed. But into the fulneſs of preſent glory they could not be admitted, as hath been declared.

Moreover, God hereby manifeſts his glory unto the *holy angels* themſelves. Theſe things wherein it doth conſiſt were hid in himſelf, even from them, from the foundation of the world; *hidden* in the holy counſels of his will, Eph. iii. 9. Wherefore unto theſe *principalities and powers in heavenly places*, the manifold wiſdom of God was made known by the church, ver. 10. The church being redeemed by the blood of Chriſt, and himſelf thereon exalted in this glory, they came to know the *manifold wiſdom of God*, by the effects of it, which before they earneſtly deſired to look into, 1 Pet. i. 12. Hereby is all the glory of the counſels of God in Chriſt made conſpicuous unto them; and they receive themſelves no ſmall advancement in glory thereby. For in the preſent comprehenſion of the mind of God, and doing of his will, doth their bleſſedneſs conſiſt.

Heaven itſelf was not what it is, before the entrance of Chriſt into the *ſanctuary* for the adminiſtration of his office. Neither the *ſaints departed*, nor the *angels* themſelves, were participant of that glory which now they are. Neither yet doth this argue any *defect* in heaven, or the ſtate thereof in its primitive conſtitution. For the *perfection* of any ſtate hath reſpect unto that order of things which it

is

is originally ſuited unto. Take all things in the order of the firſt creation, and with reſpect thereunto, heaven was perfect in glory from the beginning. Howbeit, there was ſtill a relation and regard in it unto the church of mankind on the earth, which was to be tranſlated thither. But by the entrance of ſin, all this *order* was diſturbed, and all this relation was broken. And there followed thereon an imperfection in the *ſtate of heaven* itſelf; for it had no longer a relation unto, or communion with them on earth, nor was a receptacle meet for men who were ſinners to be received into. Wherefore, by the blood of the croſs, God *reconciled all things unto himſelf, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*, Col. i. 20.; or gathered all things into one in him, *both which are in heaven, and which are in the earth*, Eph. i. 10. Even the things in heaven ſo far ſtood in need of a *reconciliation*, as that they might be gathered together in one, with the things on earth; the glory whereof is manifeſted in this heavenly miniſtration. And the apoſtle affirms, that the *heavenly things themſelves were purified by the ſacrifice of Chriſt*, Heb. ix. 23. Not that they were *actually defiled* in themſelves, but without this purification they were not meet for the fellowſhip of this myſtery in the joint worſhip of the whole ſociety in heaven and earth, by Jeſus Chriſt. Hence therefore there is a continual manifeſtation of the glory of God unto the *angels* themſelves. They behold his manifold wiſdom and grace in the bleſſed effects of it, which were treaſured up in the holy counſels of his will from eternity. Hereby is their *own light and bleſſedneſs* advanced, and they are filled with admirations of God, aſcribing praiſe, honour, and glory unto him for evermore. For the beholding of the myſtery of the wiſdom of God in Chriſt, which is here ſo deſpiſed in the diſpenſation of the goſpel, is the principal part of the *bleſſedneſs of the angels in heaven*, which fills them with eternal delight, and is the ground of their aſcribing praiſe and glory unto him for evermore.

This is that *manifeſtative glory* wherewith God ſatisfieth himſelf, until the end determined ſhall be. On the account hereof, he doth and will bear with things in this world, unto the appointed ſeaſon. For whilſt the creation

is in its preſent poſture, a *revenue of glory* muſt be taken out of it for God, and longer than that is done it cannot be continued. But the world is ſo full of darkneſs and confuſion, of ſin and wickedneſs, of enmity againſt God, is ſo given up to villany, unto all the ways whereby God may be diſhonoured, that there is little or no appearance of any revenue of glory unto him from it. Were it not on the ſecret account of divine wiſdom, it would quickly receive the end of Sodom and Gomorrah. The ſmall remnant of the inheritance of Chriſt, is ſhut up in ſuch obſcurity, that as unto *viſible appearance* and manifeſtation, it is no way to be laid in the balance againſt the diſhonour that is done unto him by the whole world. But whilſt things are in this poſture here *below*, God hath a ſolemn honour, glory and worſhip *above*, in the preſence of all his holy ones, wherein he reſteth and takes pleaſure. In his ſatisfaction herein, he will continue things in this world unto all the ends of his wiſdom, goodneſs, righteouſneſs, and patience, let it rage in villany and wickedneſs as it pleaſeth. And ſo when any of the ſaints who are wearied and even worn out with the ſtate of things in this world, and it may be underſtand not the grounds of the patience of God, do *enter into this ſtate*, they ſhall, unto their full ſatisfaction, behold that glory which abundantly compenſates the preſent diſhonour done to God here below.

2. This ſtate of things is continued *for the glory of Chriſt himſelf*. The office of Mediator was committed by God the Father unto his only-begotten Son, no other being able to bear or diſcharge it. See Iſ. vi. 9. Rev. v. 1.—6. But in the diſcharge of this office it was neceſſary he ſhould condeſcend unto a *mean and low condition*, and to undergo things difficult, hard, and terrible, Phil. ii. 6. 7. 8. Such were the things which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt underwent in this world; his undergoing of them being neceſſary unto the diſcharge of his office; yea it conſiſted therein. Herein was he expoſed unto reproach, contempt, and ſhame, with all the evils that Satan or the world could bring upon him. And beſides, he was for us, and in our ſtead to undergo the *curſe of the law*, with the greateſt of terrors and ſorrows in his ſoul, until he gave up the ghoſt. Theſe things were neceſſary unto the

diſcharge

diſcharge of his office, nor could the ſalvation of the church be wrought out without them. But do we think, that God would commit ſo glorious an office unto his *only Son*, to be diſcharged in this manner only? Let it be granted, that after he had ſo accompliſhed the will of God in this world, he had himſelf entered into glory; yet if he ſhould ſo ceaſe the adminiſtration of his office, that muſt be looked on as the moſt *afflictive* and dolorous that ever was undergone. But it was the deſign of God, to glorify the *office itſelf*, as an effect of his wiſdom, and himſelf therein; yea ſo as that the very *office* itſelf ſhould be an everlaſting honour to his Son as incarnate. Unto this end, the adminiſtration of it is continued in glory in his hand, and he is exalted in the diſcharge of it. For this is that *glory* which he prays that all his diſciples may be brought unto him to behold. The time between his aſcenſion, and the end of all things, is allotted unto the glory of Chriſt in the adminiſtration of his office, in the heavenly ſanctuary. And from hence doth the apoſtle prove him *as an High Prieſt*, to be far more glorious than thoſe who were called unto that office under the law, Heb. viii. 1. 2. 3. Herein it is manifeſt unto angels and men, how glorious a thing it is to be the only King, Prieſt, and Prophet of the church. Wherefore, as it behoved Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office to ſuffer, ſo after his ſufferings, in the diſcharge of the ſame office he was to enter into his glory, Rev. i. 18.

3. God hath reſpect herein unto thoſe who *depart in the faith*, in their reſpective generations, eſpecially thoſe who died betimes, as the apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians. And ſundry things may be herein conſidered.

There are two things which *believers* put a great price and value on in this world, and which ſweeten every condition unto them; without them the world would be a noiſome dungeon unto them, nor could they be ſatisfied with a continuance therein. The one is the *ſervice of Chriſt*. Without an opportunity of being exerciſed herein, they could not abide here with any ſatisfaction. They who know it not ſo to be, are under the power of worldly-mindedneſs. The *meaneſt ſervice of Chriſt* hath refreſhment in it. And as to thoſe who have opportunities and

abilities for great inſtances of ſervice, they do not know on juſt grounds, nor are able to determine themſelves, whether it be beſt for them to *continue in their ſervice* here below, or to enter into the immediate ſervice of Chriſt above; ſo glorious, ſo excellent is it to be uſefully ſervice-able unto the Lord Jeſus. So was it with the apoſtle, Phil. i. 21.—26.; ſo may it be with others if they ſerve him in the ſame ſpirit, with the ſame ſincerity, though their ability in ſervice be not like unto his. For neither had he any thing but what he received. Again, they have the *enjoyment of Chriſt* in the ordinances of goſpel-worſhip. By theſe means do they live, in theſe things is the life of their ſouls.

In this ſtate of things God will not call them hence unto their *loſs*; he will not put an end unto theſe privileges, without an abundant recompenſe and advantage. Whatever we enjoy here, yet ſtill to *depart hence and to be with Chriſt*, ſhall be *far better*, Phil. i. 23. For,

1*ſt*, Although *ſervice* here below ſhall ceaſe, and be given over unto *other hands*, who are to have their ſhare herein, yet on the continuance of this ſtate of things in heaven, there is alſo a continuation of *ſervice* unto Chriſt, in a way inexpreſſibly more glorious, than what we are in this life capable of. Upon their admittance into this ſtate of things above, *they are before the throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his temple: and he that ſitteth on the throne ſhall dwell among them*, Rev. vii. 15. The whole ſtate of the glorious worſhip of God before deſcribed, is here reſpected; and herein is a continual *ſervice* performed unto him that ſits on the throne, and unto the Lamb. Wherefore it is ſo far from being loſs, in being called off from *ſervice* here below, as that in point of *ſervice* itſelf, it is an inconceivable advancement.

2*dly*, The *enjoyment of Chriſt in and by the ordinances of his worſhip*, is the immediate fountain and ſpring of all our refreſhments and conſolations in this world, Pſal. lxxxvii. 7. But what is it unto the bleſſed immediate enjoyment of him in heaven? Hence the bleſſedneſs of the ſtate above is deſcribed, by *being with Chriſt*, being *with Chriſt for ever*, in the preſence and immediate enjoyment of him. The light of the *ſtars* is uſeful and relieving in a dark night as we are on our way, but what are they

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when the *sun* ariseth? Will any man think it a loss, that upon the rising of the sun they shall not enjoy their light any more, though in the night they knew not what to have done without it? It may be we cannot conceive how it will be best for us, to forego the use of sacraments, ministry, and the scripture itself. But all the virtue of the streams is in the fountain; and the immediate enjoyment of Christ, unspeakably exceeds whatever by any means we can be made partakers of here below.

In this blessed state have the holy *apostles*, all the *primitive martyrs* and believers from the time of their dissolution, enjoyed full satisfaction and solace, in the glorious assembly above, Rev. vii. 15. 16. 17. *&c.*

3*dly*, Hereby there is a *continuation of communion* between the *church triumphant* above, and that yet *militant* here below. That there is such a communion between glorified saints and believers in this world, is an *article* of faith. Both societies are but one church, one *mystical body*, have one Head, and a mutual concernment in each other. Yea, the spring and means of this communion is no small part of the glory of the gospel. For before the saints under the Old Testament had the mystery of the glory of God in Christ, with our redemption thereby, revealed unto them, in the way before declared, this communion was very obscure; but we are now taken into the light and glory of it, as the apostle declares, Heb. xii. 22. 23. 24.

I know some have perverted the notions of this communion unto idolatrous superstition; and so have all other truths of the gospel been abused, and wrested unto the destruction of the souls of men; all the *scriptures* have been so dealt withal, 2 Pet. iii. 16. But they deceived themselves in this matter, the truth deceiveth none. Upon a supposition of *communion*, they gathered that there must of necessity be an *immediate communication* between them above, and us below. And if so, they knew no way for it, no means of it, but by our *praying unto them*, and their *praying for us*. But they were under the power of their own deceivings. Communion doth not require immediate mutual communication, unless it be among persons in the same state, and that in such acts as wherein they are mutually assisting and helpful unto one another.

another. But our *different ſtates* will admit of no ſuch intercourſe, nor do we ſtand in need of any relief from them, or can be helped by any acts of their love, as we may aid and help one another here below. Wherefore the *centre* of this communion is in Chriſt alone, and our exerciſe of it is upon him only, with reſpect unto them.

Yet hereon ſome deny that there is *any ſuch communion* between the members of the church, or the myſtical body of Chriſt in theſe divers ſtates. And they ſuppoſe it is ſo declared in that of the prophet, Iſa. lxiii. 16. *Doubtleſs, thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Iſrael acknowledge us not.* But there is nothing of any ſuch importance in theſe words. The church under a deep ſenſe of its preſent ſtate, in its unworthy walking and multiplied provocations, profeſs themſelves to be ſuch, as that their forefathers in covenant could not own them as their children and poſterity in the faith. Hereupon they appeal unto the *infinite mercy* and faithfulneſs of God, which extend themſelves even unto that condition of unworthineſs, which was enough to render them utterly diſowned by the beſt of men, however otherwiſe concerned in them. But to ſuppoſe the *church above*, which hath paſſed through its courſe of faith and obedience in afflictions, tribulations, and perſecutions, to be ignorant of the ſtate of the church here below in *general*, and unconcerned in it; to be without deſires of its ſucceſs, deliverance and proſperity unto the glory of Chriſt, is to lay them *aſleep* in a ſenſeleſs ſtate without the exerciſe of any grace, or any intereſt in the glory of God. And if they *cry for vengeance* on the obdurate perſecuting world, Rev. vi. 10. ſhall we ſuppoſe they have no conſideration nor knowledge of the ſtate of the church ſuffering the ſame things which they did themſelves? And to put it out of queſtion, they are minded of it in the next verſe by Chriſt himſelf, ver. 11.

But that which at preſent I alone intend, is the *joint communion* of the whole church in the worſhip of God in Chriſt. Were all that die in the Lord, immediately received into that ſtate wherein God *ſhall be all in all*, without any uſe of the mediation of Chriſt, or the wor-

ſhip

ship of praise and honour given unto God by him, without being exercised in the ascription of honour, glory, power and dominion unto him, on the account of the past and present discharge of his office, there could be no communion between them and us. But whilst they are in the *sanctuary*, in the *temple of God*, in the holy worship of Christ and of God in him, and we are not only employed in the same work in sacred ordinances suited unto our state and condition, but in the performance of our duties, do by faith *enter in within the vail*, and approach unto the same throne of grace in the most holy place, there is a *spiritual communion* between them and us. So the apostle expresseth it, Heb. xii. 22. 23. 24.

4thly, It is the way that God hath appointed *to prepare the holy souls above for the enjoyment of that eternal state which shall ensue* at the end of all things. As we are here in and by the word and other ordinances prepared and made meet for the present state of things in glory; so are they by the *temple-worship of heaven* fitted for that state of things, when Christ shall *give up the kingdom* unto the Father, that God may be all in all.

4. Respect is had herein unto the *faith of the church yet militant* on the earth, and that among others, in two things.

1st, For the *encouragement of their faith.* God could, as we have observed, upon the supposition of the atonement and reconciliation made by the blood of Christ, have saved the church by mere sovereign *acts of power.* But whereas it was unto his glory, that we should be saved in the way of *faith and obedience*, this way was necessary unto our encouragement therein. For it is in the nature of faith, it is a grace suited unto that end, to seek for and receive aid, help and relief, from God continually, to enable us unto obedience.

For this end the Lord Christ continueth in the discharge of his office, whereby he is *able to save us unto the uttermost*, that we may receive such supplies by and from him. The continual use that faith makes of Christ unto this purpose, as he gloriously exerciseth his *mediatory office* and power in heaven, cannot fully be declared. Neither can any believer who is acted by present gospel light and grace, conceive how the life of faith can be led or preserved without it.

it. No duties are we called unto, no temptations are we exercised withal, no sufferings do we undergo, no difficulties, dangers, fears, have we to conflict withal, nothing is there in life or death, wherein the glory of God or our own spiritual welfare is concerned, but faith finds and takes relief and encouragement, in the present mediatory life and power of Christ in heaven, with the exercise of his love, care, and compassion therein. So he proposeth himself unto our faith, Rev. i. 17. 18.

2*dly*, That our faith may be *guided and directed in all our accesses unto God* in his holy worship. Were nothing proposed unto us but the *immensity of the divine essence*, we should not know how to make our approaches unto it. And thence it is that those who are unacquainted with the glory of this dispensation, who know not how to make *use of Christ* in his present state for an access unto God, are always inventing ways of their own, (as by saints, angels, images), for that end; for an immediate access unto the divine essence they cannot fancy. Wherefore to end this discourse in one word; all the present faith and worship of God in the church here on earth, all access unto him for grace, and all acceptable ascriptions of glory unto his divine Majesty, do all of them in their being and exercise, wholly depend on, and are resolved into the continuation of the mediatory actings of Christ, in heaven and glory.

I shall close this discourse with a little *review* of somewhat that passed before. From the consideration of that place of the apostle, wherein he affirms, *that at the end, Christ shall give up the kingdom unto the Father*, I declared, that all the state of things which we have described, shall then cease, and all things issue in the immediate enjoyment of God himself. I would extend this no farther, than as unto what concerneth the *exercise of Christ's mediatory office, with respect unto the church here below, and the enemies of it*. But there are some things which belong unto the essence of this state, which shall continue unto all eternity. As,

1. I do believe, that the person of Christ, in and by his human nature, shall be for ever the *immediate head of the whole glorified creation*. God having gathered all things unto an head in him, the knot or centre of that collection

collection ſhall never be diſſolved. We ſhall never loſe our relation unto him, nor he his unto us.

2. I do therefore alſo believe, that he ſhall be the *means and way of communication* between God and his glorified ſaints for ever. What are, what will be the glorious communications of God unto his ſaints for ever, in life, light, power, joy, reſt, and ineffable ſatisfaction, (as all muſt be from him unto eternity), I ſhall not now inquire. But this I ſay, they ſhall be all made in and through the perſon of the Son, and the human nature therein. That *tabernacle* ſhall never be folded up, never be laid aſide as uſeleſs. And if it be ſaid, that I cannot declare the way and manner of the eternal communications of God himſelf unto his ſaints in glory by Chriſt; I ſhall only ſay, that I cannot declare the way and manner of his communications of himſelf in grace by Chriſt, unto the ſouls of men in this world, and yet I do believe it. How much more muſt we ſatisfy ourſelves with the evidence of faith alone in thoſe things, which as yet, are more incomprehenſible? And our *adherence* unto God by love and delight, ſhall always be through Chriſt. For God will be conceived of unto eternity, according to the manifeſtation that he hath made of himſelf in him, and no otherwiſe. This ſhall not be by acting faith, with reſpect unto the actual exerciſe of the mediation of Chriſt, as now we cleave unto God; but it ſhall be by the *all-ſatisfying acting* of love unto God, as he hath manifeſted himſelf, and will manifeſt himſelf in Chriſt.

3. The perſon of Chriſt, and therein his *human nature*, ſhall be the *eternal object of divine glory*, praiſe, and worſhip. The life of glory is not a mere ſtate of contemplation. Viſion is the principle of it, as faith is of the life of grace. Love is the great vital acting of that principle, in adherence unto God with eternal delight: but this is active in it alſo. It ſhall be exerciſed in the continual aſcription and aſſignation of glory, praiſe, and honour unto God, and the glorious exerciſe of all ſorts of grace therein; hereof the Lamb, the *perſon of Chriſt*, is the eternal object, with that of the Father and the Spirit; the *human nature* in the Son, admitted into the communion of the ſame eternal glory.

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PREFACE

TO THE

READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THE design of the enſuing diſcourſe, is to declare ſome part of *that glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which is revealed in the ſcripture, and propoſed as the principal object of our faith, love, delight, and admiration. But, alas! after our utmoſt and moſt diligent inquiries, we muſt ſay, *How little a portion is it of him that we can underſtand!* His glory is incomprehenſible, and his praiſes are unutterable. Some things an illuminated mind may conceive of it; but what we can expreſs in compariſon of what it is in itſelf, is *even leſs than nothing*. But as for thoſe who have forſaken the only true guide herein, endeavouring to be *wiſe above what is written*, and to raiſe their contemplations by fancy and imagination above ſcripture-revelation, (as many have done), they have *darkened counſel without knowledge, uttering things which they underſtand not*, which have no ſubſtance or ſpiritual food of faith in them.

Howbeit, that real view which we may have of *Chriſt and his glory* in this world by faith, however weak and obſcure, that knowledge which we may attain of them by divine revelation, is inexpreſſibly to be preferred above all other wiſdom, underſtanding, or knowledge whatever. So it is declared by him, who will be acknowledged a competent judge in theſe things: *Yea doubtleſs*, (ſaith he) *I account all theſe things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord.* He who doth not ſo, hath no part in him.

The revelation made of Chriſt in the *bleſſed goſpel*, is far more excellent, more glorious, and more filled with rays of divine wiſdom and goodneſs, than the whole creation; and

the

the juſt comprehenſion of it, if attainable, can contain or afford. Without the knowledge hereof, the mind of man, however priding itſelf in other inventions and diſcoveries, is wrapped up in darkneſs and confuſion.

This therefore deſerves the ſevereſt of our thoughts, the beſt of our meditations, and our utmoſt diligence in them. For if our future bleſſedneſs ſhall conſiſt in *being where he is, and beholding of his glory*; what better preparation can there be for it, than in a conſtant previous contemplation of that glory in the revelation that is made in the goſpel, unto this very end, that by a view of it, we may be gradually tranſformed into the ſame glory?

I ſhall not therefore uſe any *apology* for the publiſhing of the enſuing meditations, intended firſt for the exerciſe of my own mind, and then for the *edification of a private congregation*, which is like to be the laſt ſervice I ſhall do them in that kind. Some may by the conſideration of them be called to attend unto the ſame duty with more diligence than formerly, and receive directions for the diſcharge of it; and ſome may be provoked to communicate their greater light and knowledge unto the good of many. And that which I deſign farther in the preſent diſcourſe, is to give a brief account of the *neceſſity* and *uſe*, in life and death, of the duty exhorted unto.

Particular *motives* unto the diligent diſcharge of this duty, will be preſſed in the diſcourſe itſelf. Here ſome things more general only ſhall be premiſed. For all perſons not immerſed in ſenſual pleaſures, not overdrencht in the love of this world, and preſent things, who have any generous or noble thoughts about their own nature, being and end, are under the higheſt obligation to betake themſelves unto this *contemplation of Chriſt and his glory*. Without this they ſhall never attain true reſt or ſatisfaction in their own minds. He it is alone in whom the race of mankind may boaſt and glory, on whom all its felicities do depend. For,

1. He it is in whom our *nature*, which was debaſed as low as hell by *apoſtaſy* from God, is exalted above the whole creation. Our nature in the original conſtitution of it, in the perſons of our firſt parents, was *crowned with honour and dignity*. The *image of God* wherein it was made, and the dominion over the lower world wherewith it was intruſted, made it the ſeat of excellency, of beauty and of glory. But

of

of them all it was at once diveſted and made naked by ſin, and laid grovelling in the duſt from whence it was taken. *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return*, was its righteous doom. And all its internal faculties were invaded by deformed luſts; every thing that might render the whole *unlike* unto God, whoſe *image* it had loſt. Hence it became the contempt of angels, the dominion of Satan, who being the enemy of the whole creation, never had any thing or place to *reign* in, but the debaſed nature of man. Nothing was now more vile and baſe, its glory was utterly departed. It had both loſt its peculiar *nearneſs* unto God, which was its honour, and was fallen into the greateſt *diſtance* from him of all creatures, the devils only excepted, which was its ignominy and ſhame. And in this ſtate, as unto any thing in itſelf, it was left to periſh eternally.

In this condition, loſt, poor, baſe, yea curſed, the Lord Chriſt the Son of God found our nature. And herein in infinite condeſcenſion and compaſſion, ſanctifying a portion of it unto himſelf, he took it to be his own, in an holy ineffable ſubſiſtence in his own perſon. And herein again, the ſame nature ſo depreſſed into the utmoſt miſery, is exalted above the whole creation of God. For in that very nature, God hath *ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come.* This is that which is ſo celebrated by the pſalmiſt, with the higheſt admiration, Pſal. viii. 3. *When I conſider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the ſtars which thou haſt ordained;* ver. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him?* ver. 5. *For thou haſt made him a little lower than the angels, and haſt crowned him with glory and honour.* ver. 6. *Thou madeſt him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things under his feet:* ver. 7. *All ſheep and oxen, yea, and the beaſts of the field:* ver. 8. *The fowl of the air, and the fiſh of the ſea, and whatſoever paſſeth through the paths of the ſeas.* This is the greateſt privilege we have among all our fellow-creatures; this we may glory in, and value ourſelves upon. Thoſe who engage this nature on the ſervice of ſenſual luſts and pleaſures, who think that its *felicity* and *utmoſt capacities* conſiſt in their ſatisfaction, with the accompliſhment of

other earthly temporary desires, are satisfied with it in its state of *apostasy* from God. But those who have received the light of faith and grace; so as rightly to understand the being and end of that nature whereof they are partakers, cannot but rejoice in its deliverance from the utmost debasement, into that glorious exaltation, which it hath received in the person of Christ. And this must needs make thoughts of him full of refreshment unto their souls. Let us take care of our persons; the glory of our nature is safe in him. For,

2. In him the *relation of our nature unto God*, is eternally secured. We were created in a *covenant-relation* unto God. Our nature was related unto him in a way of friendship, of likeness, and complacency. But the bond of this relation and union was quickly broken by our *apostasy* from him. Hereon our whole nature became to be at the utmost *moral distance* from God, and enmity against him, which is the depth of misery. But God in infinite wisdom and grace did design once more to recover it, and take it again near unto himself. And he would do it in such a way, as should render it utterly impossible that there should ever be a *separation* between him and it any more. Heaven and earth may pass away, but there shall never be a dissolution of the union between God and our nature any more. He did it therefore, by *assuming it into a substantial union with himself*, in the person of the Son. Hereby the *fulness of the Godhead dwelt in it bodily*, or substantially, and eternally. Hereby is its relation unto God eternally secured. And among all the mysterious excellencies which relate hereunto, there are two which continually present themselves unto our consideration.

(1.) That this nature of ours, is *capable of this glorious exaltation and subsistence in God.* No creature could conceive how omnipotent wisdom, power, and goodness, could actuate themselves unto the production of this effect. The mystery hereof, is the object of the admiration of angels, and will be so of the whole church unto all eternity. What is revealed concerning the glory, way and manner of it in the scripture, I have declared in my treatise concerning the *Mystery of godliness, or the person of Christ* *. What mind can conceive, what tongue can express, who can sufficiently admire the wisdom, goodness, and condescension of God herein!

* Now printed along with this.

herein! And whereas he hath propoſed unto us this glorious object of our faith and meditation, how vile and fooliſh are we, if we ſpend our thoughts about other things in a neglect of it!

(2.) This is alſo an ineffable pledge of the *love of God* to our nature. For although he will not take it in any other inſtance, ſave *that of the man Chriſt Jeſus*, into this relation with himſelf, by virtue of perſonal union; yet therein he hath given a glorious pledge of his love unto, and valuation of that nature. For *verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* And this kindneſs intends unto our perſons, as participant of that nature. For he deſigned this glory unto the man Chriſt Jeſus, that he might be the firſt-born of the new creation, that we might be made conformable unto him according to our meaſure; and as the members of that body, whereof he is the head, we are participant in this glory.

3. It is he, in whom our nature hath been carried ſucceſsfully and victorioufly, through all the oppoſitions that it is liable unto, and even *death itſelf*. But the glory hereof I ſhall ſpeak unto diſtinctly in its proper place, which follows, and therefore ſhall here paſs it by.

4. He it is, who in himſelf hath given us a pledge of the capacity of our nature to inhabit thoſe *bleſſed regions of light*, which are far above theſe aſpectable heavens. Here we dwell in tabernacles of clay, that are *cruſhed before the moth*; ſuch as cannot be raiſed, ſo as to abide one foot-breadth above the earth we tread upon. The heavenly luminaries which we can behold, appear too great and glorious for our cohabitation. We are as graſhoppers in our own eyes, in compariſon of thoſe *gigantic* beings; and they ſeem to dwell in places, which would immediately ſwallow up, and extinguiſh our natures. How then ſhall we entertain an apprehenſion of being carried and exalted above them all; to have an everlaſting ſubſiſtence in places incomprehenſibly more glorious than the *orbs* wherein they reſide? What capacity is there in our nature of ſuch an habitation? But hereof the Lord Chriſt hath given us a pledge in himſelf. Our nature in him is paſſed through theſe aſpectable heavens, and is exalted far above them. Its eternal habitation is in the bleſſed regions of light and glory; and he hath promiſed, that where he is, there we ſhall be, and that for ever.

Other encouragements there are inummerable to ſtir us up unto diligence in the diſcharge of the duty here propoſed; namely, a continual *contemplation of the glory of Chriſt in his perſon, office, and grace.* Some of them, the principal of them which I have any acquaintance with, are repreſented in the enſuing diſcourſe. I ſhall therefore here add the peculiar advantage which we may obtain in the diligent diſcharge of this duty. Which is, *That it will carry us chearfully, comfortably, and victoriouſly, through life and death, and all that we have to conflict withal in either of them.*

And let it be remembered, that I do here ſuppoſe what is written on this ſubject in the enſuing diſcourſe, as being deſigned to prepare the minds of the readers for the due improvement of it.

As unto this *preſent life,* it is well known what it is unto the moſt of them, who concern themſelves in theſe things. Temptations, afflictions, changes, ſorrows, dangers, fears, ſickneſs and pains, do fill up no ſmall part of it. And on the other hand, all our earthly reliſhes, refreſhments and comforts, are uncertain, tranſitory, and unſatisfactory; all things of each ſort being embittered by the remainders of ſin. Hence every thing wherein we are concerned, hath the root of trouble and ſorrow in it. Some labour under wants, poverty, and ſtraits, all their days; and ſome have very few hours free from pains and ſickneſs. And all theſe things, with others of an alike nature, are heightened at preſent, by the *calamitous ſeaſon* wherein our lot is fallen. All things almoſt in all nations are filled with confuſions, diſorders, dangers, diſtreſſes, and troubles; wars and rumours of wars, do abound, with tokens of farther approaching judgements; *diſtreſs of nations, with perplexities, mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the earth.* There is in many places *no peace unto him that goeth out, nor to him that cometh in, but great vexations are on the inhabitants of the world; nation is deſtroyed of nation, and city of city, for God doth vex them with all adverſity.* And in the mean time, *vexation, with the ungodly deeds of wicked men,* doth greatly further the troubles of life; the ſufferings of many alſo for the teſtimony of their conſciences are deplorable, with the diviſions and animoſities that abound amongſt all ſorts of Chriſtians.

But

But the ſhortneſs, the vanity, the miſeries of human life, have been the ſubject of the complaints of all ſort of conſidering perſons, Heathens as well as Chriſtians; nor is it my preſent buſineſs to inſiſt upon them. My inquiry is only after the *relief* which we may obtain againſt all theſe evils, that we faint not under them, that we may have the victory over them. This in general is declared by the apoſtle; 2 Cor. iv. 8. *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed, but not in deſpair;* ver. 9. *Perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* ver. 16. *But for this cauſe we faint not, but though our outward man periſh, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* ver. 17. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;* ver. 18. *While we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen: for the things which are ſeen, are temporal; but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal.*

Our beholding by faith things that are not *ſeen*, things ſpiritual and eternal, will alleviate all our afflictions, make their burden light, and preſerve our ſouls from fainting under them. Of theſe things the *glory of Chriſt* whereof we treat, is the principal, and in a due ſenſe comprehenſive of them all. For we *behold the glory of God himſelf, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* He that can at all times retreat unto the contemplation of this glory, will be carried above the perplexing prevailing ſenſe of any of theſe evils, of a confluence of them all. *Crus nil ſentit in nervo dum animus eſt in cœlo.*

It is a woful kind of life, when men ſcramble for poor periſhing reliefs in their diſtreſſes. This is the *univerſal remedy* and cure, the only balſam for all our diſeaſes. Whatever preſſeth, urgeth, perplexeth; if we can but retreat in our minds unto a view of this glory, and a due conſideration of our own intereſt therein; comfort and ſupportment will be adminiſtered unto us. Wicked men in their diſtreſſes (which ſometimes overtake them alſo) are like *a troubled ſea that cannot reſt.* Others are heartleſs and deſpond, not without ſecret repinings at the wiſe diſpoſals of divine providence, eſpecially when they look on the better conditions (as they ſuppoſe) of others. And the beſt of us are apt all to wax faint and weary, when theſe things preſs upon us in an unuſual manner, or under their long continuance without a

proſpect

proſpect of relief. This is the *ſtrong-hold* which ſuch *priſoners of hope* are to turn themſelves unto. In this contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, they will find reſt unto their own ſouls. For,

1. It will herein, and in the diſcharge of this duty, be made evident, how ſlight and inconſiderable all theſe things are from whence our troubles and diſtreſſes do ariſe. For they all grow on this root of an *over-valuation of temporal things*. And unleſs we can arrive unto a fixed judgement, that all things here below are tranſitory and periſhing, reaching only unto the outward man, or the body (perhaps unto the *killing* of it), that the beſt of them have nothing that is truly ſubſtantial or abiding in them, that there are other things wherein we have an aſſured intereſt, that are incomparably better than they, and above them, it is impoſſible but that we muſt ſpend our lives in fears, ſorrows, and diſtractions. One real *view of the glory of Chriſt*, and of our own concernment therein, will give us a full relief in this matter. For what are all the things of this life, what is the good or evil of them, in compariſon of an intereſt in this tranſcendent glory? When we have due apprehenſions hereof, when our minds are poſſeſſed with thoughts of it, when our affections reach out after its enjoyments, let pain, and ſickneſs, and ſorrows, and fears, and dangers, and death, ſay what they will, we ſhall have in readineſs wherewith to combat with them, and overcome them; and that on this conſideration, that they are all outward, tranſitory, and paſſing away; whereas our minds are fixed on thoſe things which are eternal, and filled with incomprehenſible glory.

2. The minds of men are apt by their troubles to be *caſt into diſorder*, to be toſſed up and down and diſquieted with various affections and paſſions. So the pſalmiſt found it in himſelf, in the time of his diſtreſs; whence he calls himſelf unto that account; *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted in me?* And indeed the mind on all ſuch occaſions, is its own greateſt troubler. It is apt to let looſe its paſſions of fear and ſorrow, which act themſelves in innumerable perplexing thoughts, until it is carried utterly out of its own power. But in this ſtate a due contemplation of the *glory of Chriſt*, will reſtore and compoſe the mind, bring it into a ſedate quiet frame, wherein faith will be able

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to say unto the winds and waves of distempered passions, *Peace, be still*, and they shall obey it.

3. It is the way and means of conveying a *sense of God's love* unto our souls, which is that alone wherein ultimately we find rest in the midst of all the troubles of this life, as the apostle declares, Rom. v. 2. *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.* ver. 3. *And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience;* ver. 4. *And patience, experience; and experience, hope:* ver. 5. *And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.* It is the Spirit of God, who alone communicates a sense of this love unto our souls: it is *shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.* Howbeit there are ways and means to be used in our part, whereby we may be disposed and made meet to receive these communications of divine love. Among these, the principal is the contemplation of the glory of Christ insisted on, and of God the Father in him. It is the season, it is the way and means, at which and whereby the Holy Ghost will give a sense of the love of God unto us, causing us thereon to *rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.* This will be made evident in the ensuing discourse. This will lift the minds and hearts of believers above all the troubles of this life, and is the sovereign *antidote* that will expel all the poison that is in them, which otherwise might perplex and enslave their souls.

I have but touched on these things, as designing to enlarge somewhat on that which doth ensue. And this is the advantage we may have in the discharge of this duty with respect unto *death itself.* It is the *assiduous contemplation of the glory of Christ*, which will carry us chearfully and comfortably into it, and through it. My principal work having been now for a long season to *die daily*, as living in a continual expectation of my dissolution, I shall on this occasion acquaint the reader with some few of my thoughts and reliefs, with reference unto death itself.

There are sundry things required of us, that we may be able to encounter death chearfully, constantly, and victoriously. For want of these, or some of them, I have known gracious souls, who have lived in a *kind of bondage for fear of death* all their days. We know not how God will manage

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any of our minds and ſouls in that ſeaſon, in that trial. For he acts towards us in all ſuch things, in a way of ſovereignty. But theſe are the things which he requireth of us in a way of duty.

Firſt, Peculiar actings of faith to reſign and commit our departing ſouls into the hand of him, who is able to receive them, to keep and preſerve them, alſo to diſpoſe of them into a ſtate of reſt and bleſſedneſs, are required of us.

The ſoul is now parting with all things here below, and that for ever. None of all the things which it hath ſeen, heard or enjoyed, by its own outward ſenſes, can be prevailed with to ſtay with it one hour, or to take one ſtep with it, in the voyage wherein it is engaged. It muſt alone by itſelf lanch into eternity. It is entering an *inviſible world*, which it knows no more of than it hath received by faith. None hath come from the dead to inform us of the ſtate of the other world. Yea, God ſeems on purpoſe ſo to conceal it from us, that we ſhould have no evidence of it, at leaſt as unto the manner of things in it, but what is given unto faith by divine revelation. Hence thoſe who died and were raiſed again from the dead, unto any continuance among men, as Lazarus, probably knew nothing of the inviſible ſtate. Their ſouls were preſerved by the power of God in their being, but bound up as unto preſent operations. This made a great emperor cry out on the approach of death; *O animula, tremula, vagula, blandula; quæ nunc abibis in loca horrida, ſqualida!* &c. "O poor trembling, wandering ſoul, into "what places of darkneſs and defilement art thou going!"

How is it like to be after the few moments, which under the pangs of death we have to continue in this world? Is it an *annihilation* that lies at the door? Is death the deſtruction of our whole being, ſo as that after it we ſhall be no more? So ſome would have the ſtate of things to be. Is it a ſtate of ſubſiſtence in a wandering condition, up and down the world, under the influence of other more powerful ſpirits that rule in the air, viſiting tombs and ſolitary places, and ſometimes making appearances of themſelves by the impreſſions of thoſe more powerful ſpirits, as ſome imagine from the ſtory concerning Samuel and the witch of Endor, and as it is commonly received in the Papacy, out of a compliance with their imagination of purgatory? Or is it a ſtate of univerſal miſery and wo? a ſtate incapable of comfort or joy? Let them pre-

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could what they pleaſe, who can underſtand no comfort or joy in this life, but what they receive by their ſenſes, they can look for nothing elſe. And whatever be the ſtate of this invisible world, the ſoul can undertake nothing of its own conduct after its departure from the body. It knows that it muſt be abſolutely at the diſpoſal of another.

Wherefore no man can comfortably venture on, and into this condition, but in the exerciſe of that faith, which enables him to reſign and give up his departing ſoul into the hand of God, who alone is able to receive it, and to diſpoſe it into a condition of reſt and bleſſedneſs. So ſpeaks the apoſtle, *I am not aſhamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, againſt that day.*

Herein, as in all other graces, is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt our great example. He reſigned his departing ſpirit into the hands of his Father, to be owned and preſerved by him, in its ſtate of ſeparation. *Father, into thy hands I commit my ſpirit*, Luke xxiii. 46.; as did the pſalmiſt his type, in a like condition, Pſal. xxxi. 5. But the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt herein, the object and exerciſe of it, what he believed and truſted unto, in this reſignation of his ſpirit into the hand of God, is at large expreſſed in the 16th Pſalm, ver. 8.—11. *I have* (ſaith he) *ſet the Lord always before me: becauſe he is at my right hand, I ſhall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope. For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption. Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life: in thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.* He left his ſoul in the hand of God, in full aſſurance that it ſhould ſuffer no evil in its ſtate of ſeparation, but ſhould be brought again with his body into a bleſſed reſurrection, and eternal glory. So Stephen reſigned his ſoul departing under violence, into the hands of Chriſt himſelf. When he died, he ſaid, *Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit.*

This is the laſt victorious act of faith, wherein its conqueſt over its laſt enemy death itſelf doth conſiſt. Herein the ſoul ſays, in and unto itſelf, Thou art now taking leave of time unto eternity; all things about thee are departing as ſhades, and will immediately diſappear. The things which thou art entering into are yet inviſible; ſuch as *eye hath not ſeen, nor*

ear heard, nor will they enter into the heart of man fully to conceive. Now therefore with quietneſs and confidence give up thyſelf unto the ſovereign power, grace, truth, and faithfulneſs of God, and thou ſhalt find aſſured reſt and peace.

But Jeſus Chriſt it is, who doth immediately receive the ſouls of them who believe in him. So we ſee in the inſtance of Stephen. And what can be a greater encouragement to reſign them into his hands, than a daily contemplation of his glory in his perſon, his power, his exaltation, his office and grace? Who that believes in him, that belongs unto him, can fear to commit his departing ſpirit unto his love, power and care? Even we alſo ſhall hereby in our dying moments ſee, by faith, heaven opened, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God, ready to receive us. This added unto the love which all believers have unto the Lord Jeſus, which is enflamed by contemplation of his glory, and their deſires to be with him where he is, it will ſtrengthen and confirm our minds in the reſignation of our departing ſouls into his hand.

Secondly, It is required in us unto the ſame end, that we be *ready and willing to part with the fleſh, wherewith we are cloathed*, with all things that are uſeful and deſirable thereunto. The alliance, the relation, the friendſhip, the union, that are between the ſoul and the body, are the greateſt, the neareſt, the firmeſt, that are or can be among mere created beings. There is nothing like it, nothing equal unto it. The union of three perſons in the one ſingle divine nature, and the union of two natures in one perſon of Chriſt, are infinite, ineffable, and exempted from all compariſon. But among created beings, the union of theſe two eſſential parts of the ſame nature in one perſon, is moſt excellent. Nor is any thing equal to it, or like it found in any other creatures. Thoſe who among them have moſt of life, have either no bodies, as angels; or no ſouls but what periſh with them, as all brute creatures below.

Angels being pure immaterial ſpirits, have nothing in them, nothing belonging unto their eſſence that can die. *Beaſts* have nothing in them that can live when their bodies die. The ſoul of a *beaſt* cannot be preſerved in a *ſeparate condition*, no not by an act of almighty power; for it is not; and that which is not, cannot live. It is nothing but the body itſelf in an act of its material powers.

Only

Only the nature of man in all the works of God is capable of this convulsion. The essential parts of it are separable by death, the one continuing to exist and act its especial powers in a separate state or condition. The powers of the whole entire nature acting in soul and body in conjunction, are all scattered and lost by death. But the powers of *one essential part* of the same nature, that is, of the soul, are preserved after death in a more perfect acting and exercise than before. This is peculiar unto human nature, as a mean partaking of heaven and earth, of the perfection of angels above, and of the imperfection of the beasts below. Only there is this difference in these things: our participation of the heavenly spiritual perfections of the *angelical nature*, is for eternity; our participation of the imperfections of the animate creatures here below, is but for a season. For God hath designed our bodies unto such a glorious refinement at the resurrection, as that they shall have no more alliance unto that brutish nature, which perisheth for ever. For we shall be like unto angels, or equal to them. Our bodies shall no more be capable of those acts and operations which are now common to us with other living creatures here below.

This is the preeminence of the nature of man, as the wise man declares. For unto that objection of *atheistical Epicureans*, *As the one dieth, so dieth the other; they have all one breath, so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast, and all go into one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to the dust again*: he granteth, that as unto their bodies it is for a season, in them we have a present participation of their nature; but, saith he, here lieth the difference, *who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast that goeth downward unto the earth?* Unless we know this, unless we consider the different state of the spirit of men and beasts, we cannot be delivered from this atheism; but the thoughts hereof will set us at liberty from it. They die in like manner, and their bodies go equally to the dust for a season; but the beast hath no spirit, no soul, but what dies with the body and goes to the dust. If they had, their bodies also must be raised again unto a conjunction with them. Otherwise death would produce a new race of creatures unto eternity. But man hath an immortal soul, saith he, an heavenly spirit, which when

the body goes into the duſt for a ſeaſon, aſcends to heaven, (where the guilt of ſin, and the curſe of the law, interpoſe not), from whence it is there to exiſt and to act all its native powers in a ſtate of bleſſedneſs.

But as I ſaid, by reaſon of this peculiar intimate union and relation between the ſoul and body; there is in the whole nature a fixed averſation from a diſſolution. The ſoul and body are naturally and neceſſarily unwilling to fall into a ſtate of ſeparation, wherein the one ſhall ceaſe to be what it was, and the other knows not clearly how it ſhall ſubſiſt. The body claſpeth about the ſoul, and the ſoul receiveth ſtrange impreſſions from its embraces, the entire nature exiſting in the union of them both, being unalterably averſe unto a diſſolution.

Wherefore, unleſs we can overcome this inclination, we can never die comfortably or chearfully. We would indeed rather chuſe to be *cloathed upon, that mortality might be ſwallowed up of life*, that the cloathing of glory might come on our whole nature, ſoul and body, without diſſolution. But if this may not be, yet then do believers ſo conquer this inclination by faith and views of the glory of Chriſt, as to attain a deſire of this diſſolution. So the apoſtle teſtifies of himſelf, *I have a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better* than to abide here, Phil. i. 23. Not an ordinary deſire, not that which worketh in me now and then, but a conſtant habitual inclination working in vehement acts and deſires. And what doth he ſo deſire? It is to *depart*, ſay we, out of this body, from this tabernacle, to leave it for a ſeaſon. But it is ſuch a departure as conſiſts in the *diſſolution* of the preſent ſtate of his being, that it ſhould not be what it is. But how is it poſſible that a man ſhould attain ſuch an inclination unto ſuch a readineſs for ſuch a vehement deſire of a *diſſolution?* It is from a view by faith of Chriſt and his glory, whence the ſoul is ſatisfied, that to be with him is incomparably better than in its preſent ſtate and condition.

He therefore that would die comfortably, muſt be able to ſay within himſelf and to himſelf; Die then, thou frail and ſinful fleſh; *duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return*; I yield thee up unto the righteous doom of the holy One. Yet therein alſo I give thee into the hand of the great Refiner, who will hide thee in thy grave, and by thy

conſumption purify thee from all thy corruption and diſpoſition to evil. And otherwiſe this will not be. After a long ſincere endeavour for the mortification of all ſin, I find it will never be abſolutely perfect, but by this reduction into the duſt. Thou ſhalt no more be a reſidence for the leaſt remainder of ſin unto eternity, nor any clog unto my ſoul in its actings on God. Reſt therefore in hope: for God in his appointed ſeaſon, when he *ſhall have a deſire unto the work of his hands, will call unto thee, and thou ſhalt anſwer him out of the duſt.* Then ſhall he by an act of his almighty power, not only reſtore thee unto thy priſtine glory, as at the firſt creation when thou waſt the pure workmanſhip of his hands; but enrich and adorn thee with inconceivable privileges and advantages. Be not then afraid; away with all reluctancy, go into the duſt, reſt in hope, for *thou ſhalt ſtand in thy lot at the end of the days.*

That which will enable us hereunto, in an eminent manner, is that view and conſideration of the *glory of Chriſt*; which is the ſubject of the enſuing meditations. For he who is now poſſeſſed of all that glory, underwent this diſſolution of nature as truly and really as ever we ſhall do.

Thirdly, There is required hereunto, a readineſs to comply with the *times and ſeaſons* wherein God would have us depart and leave this world. Many think they ſhall be willing to die when their time is come; but they have many reaſons, as they ſuppoſe, to deſire that it may not yet be, which for the moſt part ariſe merely from fear, and an averſation of death. Some deſire to live, that they may ſee more of that *glorious work of God for his church*, which they believe he will accompliſh. So Moſes prayed that he might not die in the wilderneſs, but *go over Jordan, and ſee the good land, and that goodly mountain, and Lebanon*, the ſeat of the church, and of the worſhip of God; which yet God thought meet to deny unto him. And this *denial* of the requeſt of Moſes, made on the higheſt conſideration poſſible, is inſtructive unto all in the like caſe. Others may judge themſelves to have ſome work to do in the world, wherein they ſuppoſe that the glory of God, and the good of the church is concerned, and therefore would be ſpared for a ſeaſon. Paul knew not clearly whether it were not beſt for him to abide a while longer in the fleſh on this account. And David often deprecates the preſent ſeaſon of death, becauſe of the work which he

had

had to do for God in the world. Others riſe no higher than their own private intereſts or concerns, with reſpect unto their perſons, their families, their relations, and goods in this world. They would ſee theſe things in a better or more ſettled condition before they die, and then they ſhall be moſt willing ſo to do. But it is the love of life that lies at the bottom of all theſe deſires in men, which of itſelf will never forſake them. But no man can die *chearfully* or *comfortably*, who lives not in a conſtant reſignation of the *time and ſeaſon of his death* unto the will of God, as well as himſelf with reſpect unto death itſelf. *Our times are in his hand*, at his ſovereign diſpoſal, and his will in all things muſt be complied withal. Without this reſolution, without this reſignation, no man can enjoy the leaſt ſolid peace in this world.

Fourthly, As the times and ſeaſons, ſo the *ways and means* of the approaches of death have eſpecial trials, which unleſs we are prepared for them, will keep us under bondage with the fear of death itſelf. *Long waſting*, *wearing conſumptions*, *burning fevers*, *ſtrong pains of the ſtone*, or the like, from within, or *ſword*, *fire*, *tortures*, with *ſhame* and *reproach* from without, may be in the way of the acceſs of death unto us. Some who have been wholly freed from all fears of death, as a diſſolution of nature, who have looked on it as amiable, and deſirable in itſelf, have yet had great exerciſe in their minds about theſe ways of its approach: they have earneſtly deſired, that this peculiar *bitterneſs of the cup* might be taken away. To get above all perplexities on the account of theſe things, is part of our wiſdom in dying daily. And we are to have always in a readineſs, thoſe graces and duties which are neceſſary thereunto. Such are a conſtant *reſignation* of ourſelves, *in all events*, unto the ſovereign will, pleaſure, and diſpoſal of God. *May he not do what he will with his own?* is it not right and meet it ſhould be ſo? Is not his will in all things infinitely holy, wiſe, juſt, and good? Doth he not know what is beſt for us, and what conduceth moſt unto his own glory? doth not he alone do ſo? So is it to live in the *exerciſe of faith*, that if God calls us unto any of thoſe things, which are peculiarly dreadful unto our natures, he will give us ſuch ſupplies of *ſpiritual ſtrength* and patience, as ſhall enable us to undergo them, if not with eaſe and joy, yet with peace and quietneſs beyond our expectation. Multitudes have had experience, that thoſe things

things which *at a diſtance* have had an aſpect of *overwhelming dread*, have been far from unſupportable in their approach, when ſtrength hath been received from above to encounter with them. And moreover, it is in this caſe required, that we be frequent and ſteady in comparing theſe things with thoſe which are *eternal*, both as unto the miſery which we are freed from, and that bleſſedneſs which is prepared for us. But I ſhall proceed no further with theſe particulars.

There is none of all the things we have inſiſted on, neither the *reſignation of a departing ſoul into the hand of God*, nor a *willingneſs to lay down this fleſh in the duſt*, nor a *readineſs to comply with the will of God, as to the times and ſeaſons, or the way and manner of the approach of death*, that can he attained unto, without a proſpect of that glory that ſhall give us a new ſtate, far more excellent than what we here leave or depart from. This we cannot have, whatever we pretend, unleſs we have ſome preſent views of the glory of Chriſt. An apprehenſion of the future manifeſtation of it in heaven will not relieve us, if here we know not what it is, and wherein it doth conſiſt; if we have not ſome previous diſcovery of it in this life. This is that which will make all things eaſy and pleaſant unto us, even death itſelf, as it is a means to bring us unto its full enjoyment.

Other great and glorious advantages, which may be obtained in the diligent diſcharge of the duty here propoſed, might be inſiſted on; but that the things themſelves diſcourſed of will evidently diſcover, and direct us unto the ſpring and reaſons of them: beſides, weakneſs, wearineſs, and the near approaches of death, do call me off from any further labour in this kind.

MEDI-

MEDITATIONS

AND

DISCOURSES

ON THE

Glory of Chriſt, &c.

JOHN xvii. 24.

Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.

THE high prieſt under the law, when he was to enter into the holy place on the ſolemn day of atonement, was to take *both his hands full of ſweet incenſe* from the *golden table of incenſe*, to carry along with him in his entrance. He had alſo a *cenſer* filled with *fire*, that was taken from the altar of *burnt-offerings*, where atonement was made for ſin with blood. Upon his actual entrance through the vail, he put the *incenſe on the fire in the cenſer*, until the *cloud of its ſmoak* covered the *ark*, and the *mercy-ſeat*. See Lev. xvi. 12. 13. And the end hereof was to preſent unto God, in the behalf of the people, a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour from the ſacrifice of propitiation. See the declaration of theſe things in our Expoſition of Heb. ix.

In anſwer unto this *myſtical type*, the great *High Prieſt* of the church, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, being to enter into the *holy place not made with hands*, did by the glorious prayer recorded in this chapter, influenced from the *blood of his ſacrifice*, fill the heavens above, the glorious place of God's reſidence, with a *cloud of incenſe*, or the *ſweet perfume* of his bleſſed interceſſion, typed by the *incenſe* offered by the high

prieſt of old. By the ſame *eternal fire*, wherewith he offered himſelf a *bloody ſacrifice* to make atonement for ſin, he kindled in his moſt holy ſoul, thoſe deſires for the *application* of all its benefits unto his *church*, which are here expreſſed, and wherein his interceſſion doth conſiſt.

It is only one paſſage in the verſe above named, that at preſent I deſign an inquiry into. And this is the *ſubject-matter* of what the Lord Chriſt here deſires, in the behalf of thoſe *given him by the Father*, namely, that they may *behold his glory*.

It is evident, that in this prayer the Lord Chriſt hath reſpect unto his *own glory*, and the *manifeſtation* of it, which he had in the entrance aſked of the Father, ver. 4. 5. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* But in this place he hath not ſo much reſpect unto it as *his own*, as unto the advantage, benefit, ſatisfaction, and bleſſedneſs of his diſciples, in the *beholding* of it. For theſe things were the end of all that *mediatory glory* which was given unto him. So Joſeph charged his *brethren*, when he had revealed himſelf unto them, that they ſhould *tell his father of all his glory in Egypt*, Gen. xlv. 13. This he did, not for an *oſtentation* of his own glory, but for the *ſatisfaction* which he knew his father would take in the knowledge of it. And ſuch a *manifeſtation of his glory* unto his diſciples, doth the Lord Chriſt here deſire, as might fill them with bleſſed ſatisfaction for evermore.

This alone which is here prayed for, will give them ſuch ſatisfaction, and nothing elſe. The hearts of believers are like the *needle* touched by the *load-ſtone*, which cannot reſt until it comes to the point whereunto by the ſecret virtue of it, it is directed. For being once touched by the love of Chriſt, receiving therein an impreſſion of ſecret ineffable virtue, they will ever be in motion, and reſtleſs, until they come unto him, and *behold his glory*. That ſoul which can be ſatisfied *without it*, that cannot be eternally ſatisfied *with it*, is not partaker of the efficacy of his interceſſion.

I ſhall lay the foundation of the enſuing meditations in this one aſſertion, namely, *That one of the greateſt privileges and advancements of believers, both in this world, and unto eternity, conſiſts in their BEHOLDING THE GLORY OF CHRIST.*

CHRIST. This therefore he desires for them in this solemn intercession, as the complement of all his other requests in their behalf; that they may *behold my glory*; that they may *see, view, behold* or contemplate on *my glory*. The reasons why I assign not this glorious privilege only unto the *heavenly state*, which is principally respected in this place, but apply it unto the state of believers in this world also, with their duties and privileges therein, shall be immediately declared.

All unbelievers do in their heart call Christ *Ichabod, Where is the glory?* They see neither *form nor comeliness in him*, that he should be desired. They look on him as Michal Saul's daughter did on David *dancing before the ark*, when she despised him in her heart. They do not indeed (many of them) *call Jesus anathema*, but cry, *Hail Master*, and then crucify him.

Hence have we so many cursed opinions advanced in derogation unto his glory, some of them really destructive of all that is truly so; yea, denying the *only Lord that bought us*, and substituting a false Christ in his room. And others there are who express their slight thoughts of him and his glory, by bold irreverent inquiries, *of what use his person is in our religion;* as though there were any thing in our religion, that hath either reality, substance, or truth, but by virtue of its relation thereunto. And by their *answers*, they bring their own *inquiries* yet nearer unto the borders of blasphemy.

Never was there an age since the name of Christians was known upon the earth, wherein there was such a direct opposition made unto the *person and glory of Christ*, as there is in that wherein we live. There were indeed in the first times of the church, swarms of proud, doting, brainsick persons, who vented many foolish imaginations about him, which issued at length in *Arianism*, in whose ruins they were buried. The *gates of hell* in them, prevailed not against the Rock on which the church is built. But as it was said of Cesar, *Solus accessit sobrius, ad perdendam rempublicam*; "He alone went soberly about the destruction of "the commonwealth;" so we now have great numbers who oppose the person and glory of Christ, under a pretence of *sobriety of reason*, as they vainly plead. Yea, the disbelief of the mysteries of the *Trinity, and the incarnation of*

the Son of God, the ſole foundation of Chriſtian religion, is ſo diffuſed in the world, as that it hath almoſt devoured the power and vitals of it. And not a few, who dare not yet expreſs their minds, do give broad intimations of their intentions and good-will towards him, in making them the object of their ſcorn and reproach, who deſire to know nothing but him, and him crucified.

God in his appointed time, will effectually vindicate his *honour* and *glory* from the vain attempts of men of corrupt minds againſt them.

In the mean time, it is the duty of all thoſe who *love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*, to give teſtimony in a peculiar manner unto his divine perſon and glory, according unto their ſeveral capacities, becauſe of the oppoſition that is made againſt them.

I have thought myſelf on many accounts obliged to caſt my mite into this treaſury. And I have choſen ſo to do, not in a way of *controverſy*, (which formerly I have engaged in), but ſo, as together with the vindication of the truth, to promote the ſtrengthening of the faith of true believers, their edification in the knowledge of it; and to expreſs the experience which they have, or may have of the power and reality of theſe things.

That which at preſent I deſign to demonſtrate, is, That the *beholding of the glory of Chriſt, is one of the greateſt privileges and advancements that believers are capable of in this world, or that which is to come.* It is that whereby they are firſt gradually *conformed* unto it, and then fixed in the eternal *enjoyment* of it. For here in this life, *beholding his glory, they are changed* (or *transformed*) *into the likeneſs of it*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.; and hereafter, they ſhall be *for ever like unto him*, becauſe they *ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 John iii. 1. 2. Hereon do our preſent comforts, and future bleſſedneſs depend. This is the life and reward of our ſouls. He that *hath ſeen him, hath ſeen the Father alſo*, John xiv. 9. For we diſcern the *light of the knowledge of God, only in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

There are therefore, two ways or degrees *of beholding the glory of Chriſt*, which are conſtantly diſtinguiſhed in the ſcripture. The one is by *faith* in this world, which is the evidence of things not ſeen. The other is by *ſight*, or immediate viſion in eternity, 2 Cor. v. 7. *We walk by faith, and*

and not by sight. We do so whilst we are in this world, *whilst we are present in the body, and absent from the Lord*, ver. 8. But we shall live and walk by *sight* hereafter. And it is the Lord Christ and his glory, which are immediate objects both of this *faith* and *sight*. For we here *behold him darkly in a glass*, (that is, by faith), *but we shall see him face to face* (by immediate vision). *Now we know him in part; but then we shall know him as we are known*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. What is the difference between these two ways of *beholding the glory of Christ*, shall be afterwards declared.

It is the second way, namely, by *vision* in the light of glory, that is principally included in that prayer of our blessed Saviour, that his disciples may be *where he is, to behold his glory*. But I shall not confine my inquiry thereunto; nor doth our Lord Jesus exclude from his desire, that sight of his glory which we have *by faith* in this world; but prays for the perfection of it in heaven. It is therefore the *first way*, that in the first place I shall insist upon, and that for the reasons ensuing.

1. No man shall ever behold the glory of Christ by *sight* hereafter, who doth not in some measure behold it by *faith* here in this world. *Grace* is a necessary preparation for *glory*, and *faith* for *sight*. Where the subject, the soul, is not previously seasoned with *grace* and *faith*, it is not capable of *glory*, or *vision*. Nay, persons not disposed hereby unto it, cannot desire it, whatever they pretend; they only deceive their own souls, in supposing that so they do. Most men will say with confidence, living and dying, *that they desire to be with Christ, and to behold his glory*; but they can give no reason, why they should desire any such thing; only they think it somewhat that is better than to be in that evil condition which otherwise they must be cast into for ever, when they can be here no more. If a man pretend himself to be enamoured on, or greatly to desire what he never *saw*, nor was ever represented unto him, he doth but dote on his own imaginations. And the pretended desires of many, to *behold the glory of Christ* in heaven, who have no view of it by faith whilst they are here in this world, are nothing but self-deceiving imaginations.

So do the Papists delude themselves. Their carnal affections are excited by their outward senses, to delight in *images* of Christ, in his sufferings, his resurrection, and glory above.

Hereon

Hereon they ſatisfy themſelves, that they *behold the glory of Chriſt* himſelf, and that with love and great delight. But whereas there is not the leaſt true repreſentation made of the Lord Chriſt, or his glory, in theſe things, that being confined abſolutely unto the goſpel alone, and this way of attempting it being laid under a ſevere interdict, they do but ſport themſelves with their own deceivings.

The apoſtle tells us concerning himſelf, and other believers, when the Lord Chriſt was preſent, and converſed with them in the days of his fleſh, that they *ſaw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John i. 14. And we may inquire, what was this glory of Chriſt, which they ſo ſaw, and by what means they obtained a proſpect of it. For, (1.) It was not the glory of his *outward condition*, as we behold the glory and grandeur of the kings and potentates of the earth; for he made *himſelf of no reputation*, but being in the form of a ſervant, he walked in the condition of a man of low degree. The ſecular grandeur of his *pretended vicar*, makes no repreſentation of that glory of his, which his diſciples ſaw. He kept no court, nor houſe of entertainment, nor (though he made all things) had of his own where to lay his head. Nor, (2.) Was it with reſpect to the outward form of the *fleſh which he was made*, wherein he took our nature on him, as we ſee the glory of a comely or beautiful perſon; for he had therein neither *form nor comelineſs*, that he ſhould be deſired, *his viſage was ſo marred more than any man, and his form more than the ſons of men*, Iſ. lii. 14. chap. liii. 2. 3. All things appeared in him as became *a man of ſorrows*. Nor, (3.) Was it abſolutely the *eternal eſſential glory of his divine nature*, that is intended. For this no man can ſee in this world. What we ſhall attain in a view thereof hereafter, we know not. But, (4.) It was his glory, as he was *full of grace and truth*. They ſaw the glory of his perſon and his office in the adminiſtration of *grace and truth*. And how, or by what means did they ſee this glory of Chriſt? It was by *faith*, and no otherwiſe. For this privilege was granted unto them only who *received him, and believed on his name*, John i. 12. This was that glory which John Baptiſt ſaw, when upon his coming unto him he ſaid unto all that were preſent, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world*, John i. 29.—33.

Wherefore

Wherefore let no man deceive himſelf: he that hath no ſight of the glory of Chriſt here, ſhall never have any of it hereafter unto his advantage. It is not therefore unto edification, to diſcourſe of beholding the glory of Chriſt in heaven by *viſion*, until we go through a trial, whether we ſee any thing of it in this world by *faith* or no.

2. The *beholding of Chriſt in glory*, is that which in itſelf is too high, illuſtrious, and marvellous for us in our preſent condition. It hath a ſplendor and glory too great for our preſent ſpiritual *viſive faculty*; as the direct, immediate ſight of the ſun darkens our ſight, and doth not relieve or ſtrengthen it at all. Wherefore we have no way to take into our minds any true ſpiritual apprehenſions of the nature of *immediate viſion*, or what it is to ſee the glory of Chriſt in heaven, but by that *view* which we have by *faith* in this life of the ſame glory. Whatever otherwiſe falls into our minds, is but conjecture and imagination; ſuch as are the contemplations of moſt about heavenly things.

I have ſeen and read ſomewhat of the writings of learned men, concerning the *ſtate of future glory*; ſome of them are filled with *excellent notions of truth*, and *elegancy of ſpeech*, whereby they cannot but much affect the minds of them who duly conſider what they ſay. But I know not well whence it comes to paſs, many complain, that in reading of ſuch diſcourſes, they are like a man who *behold his natural face in a glaſs, and immediately forgets what manner of man he was*; as one of old complained to the ſame purpoſe upon his peruſal of Plato's contemplations about the immortality of the ſoul. The things ſpoken do not abide nor incorporate with our minds. They *pleaſe* and *refreſh* for a little while, like a ſhower of rain in a dry ſeaſon, that ſoaketh not unto the roots of things; the power of them doth not enter into us. Is it not all from hence, that their *notions of future things* are not induced out of the *experience* which we have of the beginnings of them in this world; without which, they can make no permanent abode in our minds, nor continue any influence upon our affections? Yea, the ſoul is diſturbed, not edified, in all *contemplations of future glory*, when things are propoſed unto it, whereof in this life it hath neither foretaſte, ſenſe, experience, nor evidence. No man ought to look for any thing in heaven, but what one way or other he hath ſome *experience* of in this life. If men were fully perſwaded

ſwaded hereof, they would be, it may be, more in the exerciſe of faith and love about heavenly things, than for the moſt part they are. At preſent they know not what they enjoy, and they look for they know not what.

Hence is it, that men utterly ſtrangers unto all experience of the beginning of glory in themſelves as an effect of faith, have filled their divine worſhip with *images*, *pictures*, and *muſic*, to repreſent unto themſelves ſomewhat of that glory which they fancy to be above. For into that which is truly ſo, they have no proſpect, nor can have; becauſe they have no experience of its power in themſelves; nor do they taſte of its goodneſs by any of its firſt-fruits in their own minds. Wherefore by that view alone, and not otherwiſe, which we have of the *glory of Chriſt by faith* here in this world, we may attain ſuch bleſſed conceptions of our beholding *his glory above* by *immediate viſion*, as ſhall draw out our hearts unto the admiration of it, and deſires of its full enjoyment.

3. Herein then our preſent *edification* is principally concerned. For in this preſent *beholding of the glory of Chriſt*, the life and power of faith are moſt eminently acted. And from this exerciſe of *faith*, doth *love* unto Chriſt principally, if not ſolely ariſe and ſpring. If therefore we deſire to have *faith in its vigour*, or *love in its power*, giving reſt, complacency, and ſatisfaction unto our own ſouls, we are to ſeek for them in the diligent diſcharge of this duty; elſewhere they will not be found. Herein would I live; herein would I die; hereon would I dwell in my thoughts and affections, to the withering and conſumption of all the painted beauties of this world, unto the crucifying all things here below, until they become unto me a dead and deformed thing, no way meet for affectionate embraces.

For theſe, and the like reaſons, I ſhall firſt inquire into our beholding of the *glory of Chriſt in this world by faith*; and therein endeavour to lead the ſouls of them that believe, into the more retired walks of faith, love, and holy meditation, *whereby the King is held in his galleries*, Cant. vii. 5.

But becauſe there is no benefit in, nor advantage by the contemplation of this ſacred truth, but what conſiſts in an improvement of the practice of the duty declared in it, namely, the *conſtant beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith*; I ſhall for the promotion of it, premiſe ſome few advantages which we may have thereby.

1. We

1. We ſhall hereby be made *fit and meet for heaven.* Every man is not ſo, who deſires it, and hopes for it. For ſome are not only unworthy of it, and excluded from it by reaſon of ſin; but they are *unmeet* for it, and incapable of any advantage by it. All men indeed think themſelves *fit enough for glory,* (what ſhould hinder them?) if they could attain it. But it is becauſe they know not what it is. Men ſhall not be *cloathed with glory,* as it were, whether they will or no. It is to be received in that exerciſe of the faculties of their ſouls, which ſuch perſons have no ability for. Muſic hath no pleaſure in it unto them that cannot hear; nor the moſt beautiful colours unto them that cannot ſee. It would be no benefit unto a fiſh to take him from the bottom of the ocean, filled with cold and darkneſs, and to place him under the beams of the ſun. For he is no way meet to receive any refreſhment thereby. Heaven itſelf would not be more advantageous unto perſons not renewed by the Spirit of grace in this life.

Hence the apoſtle gives thanks *unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light,* Col. i. 12. Indeed the beginning here, and the fulneſs of glory hereafter, are communicated unto believers by an almighty act of the will and grace of God. But yet he hath ordained ways and means whereby they may be made meet *receptive ſubjects* of the glory ſo to be communicated unto them. That this way and means is by the *beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith,* ſhall be fully declared in our progreſs. This therefore ſhould excite us unto this duty; for all our *preſent* glory conſiſts in our preparation for *future* glory.

2. No man can by faith take a real view of this glory, but *virtue will proceed from it* in a transforming power, to *change him into the ſame image,* 2 Cor. iii. 18. How this is done, and how we become like unto Chriſt, by beholding his glory, ſhall be fully declared in our progreſs.

3. The conſtant contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, will give reſt, ſatisfaction, and complacency unto the ſouls of them who are exerciſed therein. Our minds are apt to be filled with a multitude of perplexed thoughts, fears, cares, dangers, diſtreſſes, paſſions, and luſts, which make various impreſſions on the minds of men, filling them with diſorder, darkneſs, and confuſion. But where the ſoul is fixed in its

thoughts and contemplations on this glorious object, it will be brought into, and kept in an holy, ſerene, ſpiritual frame. For to be *ſpiritually minded, is life and peace.* And this it doth, by taking off our hearts from all undue regard unto all things below, in compariſon of the great worth, beauty, and glory of what we are converſant withal: Phil. iii. 7. *But what things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt.* ver. 8. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt,* ver. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith:* ver. 10. *That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death;* ver. 11. *If by any means I might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead.* A defect herein makes many of us ſtrangers unto an heavenly life; and to live beneath the ſpiritual refreſhments and ſatisfactions that the goſpel doth tender unto us.

4. The ſight of the glory of Chriſt, is the ſpring and cauſe of our everlaſting bleſſedneſs. We *ſhall be ever with the Lord,* 1 Theſ. iv. 17.; or, *be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all,* Phil. i. 23. For there ſhall we *behold his glory,* John xvii. 24. and by *ſeeing him as he is, we ſhall be made like him,* 1 John iii. 2. which is our everlaſting bleſſedneſs.

The enjoyment of God by *ſight,* is commonly called the *beatific viſion;* and it is the ſole fountain of all the actings of our ſouls in the ſtate of bleſſedneſs, which the old philoſophers knew nothing of; neither do we know diſtinctly what they are, or what is this ſight of God. Howbeit, this we know, that God in his *immenſe eſſence* is *inviſible* unto our corporeal eyes, and will be ſo to eternity; as alſo *incomprehenſible* unto our minds. For nothing can perfectly comprehend that which is infinite, but what is itſelf infinite. Wherefore the bleſſed and *bleſſing ſight* which we ſhall have of God, will be always *in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* Therein will that manifeſtation of the glory of God in his infinite perfections, and all their bleſſed operations, ſo ſhine into our ſouls, as ſhall immediately fill us with peace, reſt, and glory.

Theſe things we here admire, but cannot comprehend We know not well what we ſay, when we ſpeak of them; et

yet is there in true believers a foreſight, and foretaſte of this glorious condition. There enters ſometimes by the word and Spirit in their hearts, ſuch a ſenſe of the *uncreated glory* of God, ſhining forth in Chriſt, as affects and ſatiates their ſouls with ineffable joy. Hence ariſeth that *peace of God* which is *above all underſtanding*, keeping our hearts and minds through Jeſus Chriſt, Phil. iv. 7. *Chriſt in believers* the *hope of glory*, gives them to taſte of the firſt-fruits of it; yea, ſometimes to bathe their ſouls in the *fountain of life*, and to *drink of the rivers of pleaſure* that are at his right hand. Where any are utterly unacquainted with theſe things, they are carnal, yea, blind, *and ſeeing nothing afar off*. Theſe enjoyments indeed are rare, and for the moſt part of ſhort continuance. *Rara hora, brevis mora.* But it is from our own ſloth and darkneſs that we do not enjoy more *viſits* of this grace; and that the dawnings of glory do not more ſhine on our ſouls. Such things as theſe may excite us to diligence in the duty propoſed unto us.

And I ſhall inquire, (1.) *What* is that *glory of Chriſt*, which we do, or may *behold* by faith? (2.) *How* do we *behold* it? (3.) *Wherein* our doing ſo differs from immediate viſion in heaven. And in the whole we ſhall endeavour an anſwer unto the inquiry made unto the ſpouſe, by the daughters of Jeruſalem, Cant. v. 9. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou faireſt among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?*

CHAP. II.

The glory of the perſon of Chriſt, as the only repreſentative of God unto the church.

THE *glory of Chriſt* is the glory of the perſon of Chriſt. So he calls it, John xvii. 22. *That glory which is mine*, belongeth to me, unto my perſon.

The perſon of Chriſt may be conſidered two ways. (1.) *Abſolutely* in itſelf. (2.) In the *ſuſception* and diſcharge of his office, with what enſued thereon. His glory on theſe diſtinct accounts, is diſtinct and different; but all equally *his own*. How in both reſpects we may *behold* it by faith is that which we inquire into.

The firſt thing wherein we may behold the glory of the *perſon of Chriſt*, God and man, which was given him of his Father, conſiſts in the *repreſentation* of the nature of God, and of the divine perſon of the *Father*, unto the church in him; *For we behold the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Otherwiſe we know it not, we ſee it not, we ſee nothing of it; that is the way of *ſeeing* and *knowing* God, declared in the ſcripture as our duty and bleſſedneſs. The glory of God comprehends both the holy properties of his nature, and the counſels of his will; and the *light of the knowledge of theſe things*, we have only in the *face* or perſon of Jeſus Chriſt. Whatever obſcure imperfect notions we may have of them otherwiſe, we cannot have the light of the illuminating, irradiating knowledge of the glory of God, which may enlighten our minds, and ſanctify our hearts, but only *in the face* or perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*; for he is the *image of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the *expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 3. the *image of the inviſible God*, Col. i. 15. I do here only mention theſe things, becauſe I have handled them at large in my diſcourſe of the *Myſtery* of *godlineſs*, or the *perſon of Chriſt*; whereunto I refer the readers for their full declaration and vindication *. Herein is he glorious, in that he is the great *repreſentative* of the nature of God and his will unto us, which without him would have been eternally hid from us, or been inviſible unto us; we ſhould never have *ſeen* God at any time, here nor hereafter, John i. 18.

In his divine perſon abſolutely conſidered, he is the eſſential image of God, even the Father: *He is in the Father*, and the Father in him, in the unity of the ſame divine eſſence, John xiv. 10. Now he is *with the Father*, John i. 1. in the diſtinction of his perſon, ſo is he his eſſential image, Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. In his incarnation, he becomes the repreſentative image of God unto the church, 2 Cor. iv. 6. without whom our underſtandings can make no ſuch approach unto the divine excellencies, but that God continues to be *unto us*, what he is in *himſelf*, *the inviſible God*. In the face of Jeſus Chriſt we ſee his glory.

This is the *original glory of Chriſt given him by his Father*, and which by faith we may behold. He, and he alone de-

* Which ſhews the propriety of printing both treatiſes together.

clares,

clares, represents, and makes known unto angels and men, the *essential glory* of the invisible God, his attributes and his will, without which, a perpetual comparative darkness would have been on the whole creation, especially that part of it here below.

This is the foundation of our religion, the *rock whereon the church is built*, the ground of all our hopes of salvation, of life and immortality. All is resolved into this, namely, the *representation* that is made of the nature and will of God in the person and office of Christ: if this fail us, we are lost for ever; if this rock stand firm, the church is safe here, and shall be triumphant hereafter.

Herein then is the Lord Christ exceedingly glorious. Those who cannot *behold this glory of his by faith*, namely, as he is the great divine ordinance to *represent God* unto us, they know him not. In their worship of him, they worship but an image of their own devising.

Yea, in the ignorance and neglect hereof, consists the *formal nature of unbelief*, even that which is inevitably ruinous unto the souls of men. He that discerns not the *representation of the glory of God* in the person of Christ unto the souls of men, is an unbeliever. Such was the state of the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles of old; they did not, they would not, they could not behold the glory of God in him, nor how he did represent him. That this was both the cause, and the *formal nature* of their unbelief, the apostle declares at large, 1 Cor. i. 21. *For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.* ver. 22. *For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:* ver. 23. *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;* ver. 24. *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.* ver. 25. *Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.* Not to see the wisdom of God, and the power of God, and consequently all the other holy properties of his nature in Christ, is to be an unbeliever.

The essence of faith consists in a due ascription of glory to God, Rom. iv. 20. This we cannot attain unto, without the manifestation of those *divine excellencies* unto us, wherein he is glorious. This is done in Christ alone, so as that

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we may glorify God in a ſaving and acceptable manner. He who diſcerns not the glory of divine wiſdom, power, goodneſs, love, and grace, in the perſon and office of Chriſt, with the way of the ſalvation of ſinners by him, is an unbeliever.

Hence the great deſign of the devil in the beginning of the preaching of the goſpel, was to *blind the eyes of men*, and fill their minds with prejudices, that they *might not behold* this glory of his; ſo the apoſtle gives an account of his ſucceſs in this deſign, 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4. *If our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* By various ways and methods of deceit, to ſecure the reputation he had got, of being *god of this world*, by pretences and appearances of ſupernatural power and wiſdom, he laboured to blind the eyes of men with prejudices againſt that *glorious light of the goſpel*, which propoſed the Lord Chriſt as the only *image of God*. This blindneſs, this darkneſs is cured in them that believe, by the mighty power of God; for *God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath irradiated our hearts with the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. wherein true ſaving faith doth conſiſt. Under this *darkneſs* periſhed the unbelieving world of Jews and Gentiles; and ſuch is the preſent condition of all by whom the divine perſon of Chriſt is denied; for no mere creature can ever make a perfect repreſentation of God unto us. But we muſt a little further inquire into this myſtery.

Since men fell from God by ſin, it is no ſmall part of their miſery and puniſhment, that they are covered with *thick darkneſs and ignorance* of the nature of God. They know him not, they have not ſeen him at any time. Hence is that promiſe to the church in Chriſt, Iſ. lx. 2. *For behold, the darkneſs ſhall cover the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people: but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee.*

The ancient philoſophers make great inquiries into, and obtained many notions of the divine *Being*, its exiſtence and excellencies. And theſe notions they adorned with great elegancy of ſpeech, to allure others unto the admiration of them. Hereon they boaſted themſelves to be the only *wiſe*

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men in the world, Rom. i. 22. they *boasted* that they were the wise. But we must abide in the judgement of the apostles concerning them in their inquiries: he assures us, that the *world in its wisdom*, that is, these wise men in it, by their wisdom *knew not God*, 1 Cor. i. 21. And he calls the authors of their best notions *Atheists*, or *men without God in the world*, Eph. ii. 12. For,

1. They had no certain guide, rule, nor light, which being attended unto, might lead them infallibly into the knowledge of the divine nature. All they had of this kind was their own *reasonings* or imaginations, whereby they commenced *the great disputers of the world*; but in them they *waxed vain, and their foolish heart was darkened*, Rom. i. 21. They did at best but endeavour *to feel after God*, as men do in the dark, after what they cannot clearly discern, Acts xvii. 27. Among others, Cicero's book *de natura deorum*, gives us an exact account of the intention of the apostle in that expression. And it is at this day not want of wit, but hatred of the mysteries of our religion, which makes so many prone to forego all *supernatural religion*, and to betake themselves unto a religion declared, as they suppose, by reason and the light of nature; like bats and owls, who being not able to bear the light of the sun, betake themselves unto the twilight, to the dawnings of light and darkness.

2. Whatever they did attain, as unto *rational notions* about things invisible and incomprehensible, yet could they never deliver themselves from such principles and practices in idolatry, and all manner of flagitious sins, as that they could be of any benefit unto them. This is so effectually demonstrated by the apostle, in the *first chapter of the epistle to the Romans*, as that we need not to insist upon it.

Men may talk what they please of a *light within them*, or of the power of reason to conduct them unto that knowledge of God, whereby they may live unto him: but if they had nothing else, if they did not boast *themselves* of that light which hath its foundation and original in divine revelation alone, they would not excel them, who in the best management of their own reasonings, *knew not God*, but waxed vain in their imaginations.

With respect unto this *universal darkness*, that is, ignorance of God, with horrid confusion accompanying it in the minds of men, Christ is called, and is the *light of men*, the

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light of the world, becauſe in and by him alone this darkneſs is diſpelled, as he is the *Sun of righteouſneſs*.

3. This darkneſs in the minds of men, this ignorance of God, his nature and his will, was the *original of all evil* unto the world, and yet continues ſo to be. For,

(1.) Hereon did Satan erect his kingdom and throne, obtaining in his deſign until he bare himſelf as *the god of this world*, and was ſo eſteemed by the moſt. He exalted himſelf by virtue of this *darkneſs* (as he is *the prince of darkneſs*), into the place and room of God, as the object of the religious worſhip of men. For the things which the *Gentiles ſacrificed, they ſacrificed unto devils, and not to God*, 1 Cor. x. 21. Lev. xvii. 7. This is the territory of Satan; yea, the power and ſceptre of his kingdom in the minds of the *children of diſobedience*. Hereby he maintains his dominion unto this day in many and great nations, and with individual perſons innumerable.

(2.) This is the ſpring of all wickedneſs and confuſion among men themſelves. Hence aroſe that flood of abominations in the *old world*, which God took away with a *flood of deſolation*: hence were the ſins of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, which he revenged with *fire from heaven*. In brief: all the rage, blood, confuſion, deſolations, cruelties, oppreſſions, villanies, which the world hath been, and is filled withal, whereby the ſouls of men have been, and are *flooded* into eternal deſtruction, have all ariſen from this corrupt fountain of the ignorance of God.

(3.) Of ſuch as thoſe deſcribed, we are the *poſterity* and offſpring. Our fore-fathers in this nation, were given up unto as brutiſh a *ſervice of the devil*, as any nation under the ſun. It is therefore an effect of infinite mercy, that the day hath dawned on us, poor Gentiles, and that the *day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us*. The glory of this grace is expreſſed Eph. iii. 5. *Which in other ages was not made known unto the ſons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apoſtles and prophets by the Spirit*; ver. 6. *That the Gentiles ſhould be fellow-heirs, and of the ſame body, and partakers of his promiſe in Chriſt, by the goſpel*: ver. 7. *Whereof I was made a miniſter, acoording to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power.* ver. 8. *Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable*

riches of Christ; ver. 9. *And to make all men see, what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ*: ver. 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.* God might have left us to perish in the blindness and ignorance of our forefathers; but of his own accord, and by his own powerful grace alone, he hath *translated us out of darkness into his marvellous light.* But alas! the horrible ingratitude of men, for the glorious light of the gospel, and the abuse of it, will issue in a sore revenge.

God was known under the Old Testament, by *the revelation of his word*, and the institution of his worship. This was the glory and privilege of Israel, as the psalmist declares, Psal. cxlvii. 19. 20. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgements unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation.* The church then *knew him*, yet so as that they had an apprehension that he dwelt in *thick darkness*, where they could not have any clear views of him, Exod. xx. 21. Deut. v. 22. 1 Kings viii. 12. 2 Chron. vi. 1. And the reason why God so represented himself in *darkness* unto them, was to instruct them in their imperfect state, wherein they could not comprehend that glory which should afterwards be revealed. For as he is now made known in Christ, we see that *he is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.*

4. Hitherto darkness in general covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, as unto the knowledge of God; only there was a twilight in the church. The day did not yet dawn, the *shadows did not flee away*, nor the *Day star shine* in the hearts of men. But when the *Sun of righteousness* did arise in his strength and beauty, when the Son of God *appeared in the flesh*, and in the discharge of his office; God himself, as unto his being, and manner of existence in *three distinct persons*, with all the glorious properties of the divine nature, were illustriously manifested unto them that did believe, and the light of the knowledge of them dispelled all the *shadows* that were in the church, and shone into the *darkness* which was in the world, so as that none continued ignorant of God, but those who would not see; John i. 5. *And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* ver. 14. *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the*

only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. ver. 17. *For the law was given by Moſes, but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* ver. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4. *But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

Herein is the Lord Chriſt glorious. And this is that which I ſhall now ſpeak unto; namely, *How we may behold the glory of Chriſt* in the repreſentation and revelation that is made of God and his glory, in his perſon and office, unto all that do believe. For it is not ſo much the declaration of the nature of the things themſelves, wherein the glory of Chriſt doth conſiſt, as our *way* and *duty*, in the *beholding of them*, which at preſent is deſigned.

He calls unto us, ſaying, *Behold me, look unto me, and be ſaved*, Iſa. xlv. 22. What is it that we ſee in Chriſt? what do we behold in him? He aſketh that queſtion concerning his church, *What will ye ſee in the Shulamite?* Whereunto he anſwers, *As it were the company of two armies*, Cant. vi. 13. or the two churches of the Old and New Teſtament, in order and beauty. We may inquire, what ſhall we, what do we ſee in him? Do we ſee him as the *image of the inviſible God*, repreſenting him, his nature, properties, and will unto us? Do we ſee him as the *character*, the *expreſs image of the perſon of the Father*, ſo as that we have no need of Philip's requeſt, *Lord, ſhew us the Father*, becauſe having ſeen him, *we have ſeen the Father alſo?* John xiv. 9.

This is our firſt ſaving view of Chriſt, the firſt inſtance of our *beholding his glory by faith.* So to ſee him, as to ſee God in him, is to behold his glory; for herein is he eternally glorious. And this is that glory whoſe view we ought to long for, and labour after. And if we ſee it not, we are yet in darkneſs; yea, though we ſay we ſee, we are blind like others. So David longed and prayed for it, when yet he could behold it only in types and ſhadows, Pſal. lxiii. 1. 2. *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee: my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee; to ſee thy power and thy glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in the ſanctuary.* For

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there was in the ſanctuary an obſcure repreſentation of the glory of God in Chriſt. How much more ſhould we prize that view of it, which we may have with open face, though yet *as in a glaſs?* 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Moſes when he had ſeen the works of God, which were great and marvellous, yet found not himſelf ſatisfied therewith: wherefore after all, he prays that God *would ſhew him his glory*, Exod. xxxiii. 18. He knew that the ultimate reſt, bleſſedneſs and ſatisfaction of the ſoul, is not in ſeeing the *works* of God, but the *glory of God* himſelf. Therefore did he deſire ſome immediate dawnings of it upon him in this world. *I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy glory.* And if we have right apprehenſions of the future ſtate of bleſſedneſs, we cannot but have the ſame deſire of ſeeing *more of his glory* in this life. But the queſtion is, how we may attain it? If we are left unto ourſelves in this inquiry, if we have no other way for it, but the immediate fixing of our thoughts on the immenſity of the divine nature, we muſt come every one to the concluſion that Agur makes on the like conſideration; *Surely I am more brutiſh than any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man. I neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath aſcended up into heaven, or deſcended? who hath gathered the wind in his fiſts? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath eſtabliſhed all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his ſon's name, if thou canſt tell?* Prov. xxx. 2. 3. 4.

It is in Chriſt alone, that we may have a clear diſtinct view of the glory of God and his excellencies: for him, and him *alone* hath he appointed the repreſentative of himſelf unto us: John i. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Chap. xiv. 7. *If ye had known me, ye ſhould have known my Father alſo: and from henceforth ye know him, and have ſeen him.* ver. 8. *Philip ſaith unto him, Lord, ſhew us the Father, and it ſufficeth us.* ver. 9. *Jeſus ſaith unto him, Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip? He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father; and how ſayſt thou then, Shew us the Father?* ver. 10. *Believeſt thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I ſpeak unto you, I ſpeak not of myſelf: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the works.* 2 Cor. iv. 6. *For God who commanded the*

light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. Col. i. 15. *Who is the image of the inviſible God.* Eph. iii. 4. *Whereby when ye read ye may underſtand my knowledge in the myſtery of Chriſt,* ver. 5. *Which in other ages was not made known unto the ſons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apoſtles and prophets by the Spirit;* ver. 6. *That the Gentiles ſhould be fellow-heirs, and of the ſame body, and partakers of his promiſe in Chriſt, by the goſpel:* ver. 7. *Whereof I was made a miniſter, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power.* ver. 8. *Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt;* ver. 9. *And to make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt:* ver. 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.* Heb. i. 2. *God hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the worlds.* And we ſhall take an account hereof in one or two eſpecial inſtances.

1. *Infinite wiſdom* is one of the moſt glorious properties of the divine nature; it is that which is directive of all the external works of God, wherein the glory of all the other excellencies of God is manifeſted: wherefore the manifeſtation of the whole glory of God proceeds originally from *infinite wiſdom.* But as Job ſpeaks, *Where ſhall this wiſdom be found? and what is the place of underſtanding?* chap. xxviii. 12. *Can we by ſearching find out God? can we find out the Almighty to perfection?* chap. xi. 7. As it is in itſelf an eſſential, eternal property of the divine nature, we can have no comprehenſion of it; we can but adore it in that infinite diſtance wherein we ſtand from God: but in its operations and effects it may be diſcerned; for they are deſigned of God for its manifeſtation. Among theſe the moſt excellent is the contrivance of the great work of the ſalvation of the church; ſo it is celebrated by the apoſtle, Eph. iii. 9. 10. *To make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt: to the intent that now*

unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.

If we have any interest in God, if we have any hopes of blessedness in *beholding of his glory* unto eternity, we cannot but desire a view (such as is attainable) of this infinite *manifold wisdom of God* in this life. But it is in Christ alone that we can discern any thing of it; for him hath the Father chosen and sealed to represent it unto us. *All the treasures of this wisdom are hid*, laid up, and laid out *in him*. Herein lies the essence and form of faith. Believers by it do see the wisdom of God in Christ, in his person and office, *Christ the wisdom of God*; unbelievers see it not, as the apostle argues, 1 Cor. i. 22. *For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom*: ver. 23. *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness*: ver. 24. *But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

In beholding the glory of this infinite wisdom of God in Christ, we *behold his own glory* also; the glory given him of his Father; for this is his glory, that in and by him, and him alone, the wisdom of God is manifested and represented unto us. When God appointed him as the great and only means of this end, *he gave him honour and glory* above the whole creation; for it is but little of divine wisdom which the works of it declare, in comparison of what is manifested in Christ Jesus. We no way deny or extenuate the manifestation that is made of the *wisdom of God* in the works of creation and providence. It is sufficient to detect the folly of Atheism and idolatry, and was designed of God unto that end. But its *comparative insufficiency*, with respect unto the representation of it in Christ, as unto the ends of knowing God aright, and living unto him, the scripture doth abundantly attest. And the abuse of it was *catholic*, as the apostle declares, Rom. i. 20. *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse*, &c. To see this wisdom clearly, is our wisdom; and a due apprehension of it, fills the souls of believers with *joy unspeakable, and full of glory*.

2. We may also instance in the *love of God*. The apostle tells us, that *God is love*, 1 John iv. 8. Divine love is not to be considered only in its effects, but in its nature and essence;

ſence; and ſo it is *God himſelf; for God is love.* And a bleſſed revelation this is of the divine nature: it caſts out envy, hatred, malice, revenge, with all their fruits, in rage, fierceneſs, impiacability, perſecution, murder, into the territories of Satan. They belong not unto God in his nature or actings; for *God is love.* So the ſame apoſtle tells us, that he who *ſlew his brother, was of the wicked one,* 1 John iii. 12. He was of the devil his father, and his works did he do.

But the inquiry is as before; How ſhall we have a view of this *love,* of God as love? By what way or means ſhall we behold the glory of it? It is hidden from all living, in God himſelf. The wiſe philoſophers, who diſcourſed ſo much of the *love of God,* knew nothing of this, that *God is love.* The *moſt* of the natural notions of men about it are *corrupt,* and the *beſt* of them *weak* and imperfect. Generally the thoughts of men about it, are, that he is of a facile and eaſy nature, one that they may make bold withal in all their occaſions, as the pſalmiſt declares, Pſal. l. 21. *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence: thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thyſelf: but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes.* And whereas it muſt be learned in its effects, operations, and divine ways of its manifeſtation, thoſe who know not Chriſt, know nothing of them. And many things in providence do interpoſe to hinder our view of this love; for although that indeed *God is love,* yet *his wrath is revealed from heaven againſt the ungodlineſs of men:* as all things at this day are filled with evidences of his anger and diſpleaſure. How then ſhall we know, wherein ſhall we behold the glory of God in this, that he is *love?* The apoſtle declares it in the next words, 1 John iv. 9. *Herein was manifeſt the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* This is the only evidence given us that *God is love.* Hereby alone is the divine nature as *ſuch* made known unto us; namely, in the miſſion, perſon, and office of the Son of God; without this all is in darkneſs as unto the true nature and ſupreme operation of this divine love.

Herein do we behold the glory of Chriſt himſelf, even in this life. This glory was given him of the Father; namely, that he now ſhould declare and evidence that *God is love;* and he did ſo, *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.*

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Herein we may ſee how excellent, how beautiful, how glorious and deſirable he is, ſeeing in him alone we have a due repreſentation of God *as he is love*, which is the moſt joyful ſight of God that any creature can obtain. He who beholds not the glory of Chriſt herein, is utterly ignorant of thoſe heavenly myſteries; he knoweth neither God nor Chriſt; he hath neither the Father nor the Son. He knows not God, becauſe he knows not the holy properties of his nature in the principal way deſigned by infinite wiſdom for their manifeſtation; he knows not Chriſt, becauſe he ſees not the glory of God in him. Wherefore, whatever notions men may have from the light of nature, or from the works of providence, that there is *love in God*, however they may adorn them in elegant affecting expreſſions; yet from them no man can know that *God is love*; in the revelation hereof Chriſt hath the pre-eminence; nor can any man comprehend any thing of it aright but in him. It is that which the whole light of the creation cannot diſcover; for it is the ſpring and centre of the myſtery of godlineſs.

Theſe things are of the *deep things of God*, ſuch as belong unto that *wiſdom of God in a myſtery*, which they that are carnal cannot receive, as the apoſtle teſtifies, 1 Cor. ii. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* But the meaneſt believer who lives in the exerciſe of faith, may have an underſtanding of them ſo far as is needful unto his love and obedience. The ſum of the whole is this: If you would behold the glory of Chriſt, as the great means of your ſanctification and conſolation, as the only preparation for the beholding of his glory in eternal bleſſedneſs; conſider what of God is made known and *repreſented* unto you in him, wherein God purpoſed and deſigned to glorify himſelf in him: now this is all that may be known of God in a ſaving manner; eſpecially his *wiſdom*, his *love*, his goodneſs, grace, and mercy, whereon the life of our ſouls doth depend; and the Lord Chriſt being appointed the only way and means hereof, how exceeding glorious muſt he be in the eyes of them that do believe!

Theſe things being premiſed, I ſhall cloſe this firſt conſideration of that *glory of Chriſt which we behold by faith in this world*, with ſome ſuch obſervations, as may excite us

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unto the practice of this great duty, and improvement of this great privilege; the greateſt which on this ſide heaven we can be made partakers of.

There are ſome who regard not theſe things at all, but rather deſpiſe them. They never entertain any ſerious thoughts of obtaining a view of the glory of God in Chriſt, which is to be unbelievers. They look on him as a *teacher* that came forth from God to reveal his will, and to teach us his worſhip; and ſo indeed he was: but this they ſay was the *ſole uſe of his perſon in religion*, which is Mahumetiſm. The manifeſtation of all the holy properties of the divine nature, with the repreſentation of them unto angels above, and the church in this world, as he is the *image of the inviſible God*, in the conſtitution of his perſon, and the diſcharge of his office, are things they regard not; yea, they deſpiſe and ſcorn what is profeſſed concerning them; for pride and contempt of others were always the ſafeſt covert of ignorance; otherwiſe it would ſeem ſtrange, that men ſhould openly boaſt of their own blindneſs. But theſe conceptions of mens minds are influenced by that unbelief of his divine perſon, which maketh havock of Chriſtianity at this day in the world.

I ſpeak of them, whoſe minds are better diſpoſed towards heavenly things; and unto them I ſay, *Wherefore do you love Jeſus Chriſt?* for ſo you profeſs to do. Wherefore do you truſt in him? wherefore do you honour him? wherefore do you deſire to be in heaven with him? Can you give a *reaſon of this hope* that is in you? an account why you do all or any of theſe things? If you cannot, all that you pretend towards him, is but fancy and imagination; you *fight uncertainly as men beating the air*. Or is one of your reaſons hereof, that in him you *do by faith behold that glory of God*, with the holy properties of his nature, and their principal operations, in order unto your own ſalvation and bleſſedneſs, which otherwiſe would have been eternally hid from you? Hereon is he *precious unto them that do believe*.

Let us therefore, as many as *are ſpiritual, be thus minded*. Let us make uſe of this *privilege* with rejoicing, and be found in the diſcharge of this *duty* with diligence: for thus to *behold the glory of Chriſt* is both our privilege and our duty. The duties of the law were a burden and a yoke; but thoſe of the goſpel are privileges and advantages.

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It is a promise concerning the days of the New Testament, that our *eyes shall see the King in his beauty*, Is. xxxiii. 17.; we shall behold the glory of Christ in its lustre and excellency. What is this *beauty* of the King of saints? Is it not that God is in him, and he is the great representative of his glory unto us? Wherefore, in the contemplation of this glory consists the principal exercise of faith: and who can declare the glory of this privilege, that we who are born in darkness, and deserved to be cast out into utter darkness, should be *translated into this marvellous light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ?*

What are all the stained glories, the fading beauties of this world? of all that the devil shewed our Saviour from the mount? what are they in comparison of one view of the glory of God represented in Christ, and of the glory of Christ as his great representative?

The most pernicious effect of unbelief under the preaching of the gospel, is, that together with an influence of power from Satan, *it blinds the eyes of mens minds, that they should not see this glory of Christ*, whereon they perish eternally, 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4.

But the most of those who at this day are *called Christians*, are strangers unto this duty. Our Lord Jesus Christ told the Pharisees, that notwithstanding all their boasting of the knowledge of God, they had not *heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape*; that is, as Moses did. They had no real acquaintance with him, they had no spiritual view of his glory. And so is it amongst ourselves; notwithstanding the general profession that is of the knowledge of Christ, they are but few who thus behold his glory; and therefore few who are transformed into his image and likeness.

Some men speak much of the *imitation of Christ*, and *following of his example*; and it were well if we could see more of it really in effect. But no man shall ever become *like unto him*, by bare *imitation* of his actions, without that view or intuition of his glory which alone is accompanied with a transforming power to *change them into the same image*.

The truth is, the best of us all are wofully defective in this duty, and many are discouraged from it, because a pretence of it in some hath degenerated into superstition: but we are loth at any time seriously to engage in it, and come with

an unwilling kind of willingneſs, unto the exerciſe of our minds in it.

Thoughts of this *glory of Chriſt* are too *high* for us, or too *hard* for us, ſuch as we cannot long delight in; we turn away from them with a kind of wearineſs; yet are they of the ſame nature in general with our beholding of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, wherein there ſhall be no wearineſs or fatiety unto eternity. Is not the cauſe of it, that we are unſpiritual or carnal, having our thoughts and affections wonted to give entertainment unto other things? For this is the principal cauſe of our unreadineſs and incapacity to exerciſe our minds in and about the great myſteries of the goſpel, 1 Cor. iii. 1. 2. 3. *And I, brethren, could not ſpeak unto you as unto ſpiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Chriſt. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* And it is ſo with us moreover, becauſe we do not ſtir up ourſelves with watchfulneſs and diligence in continual actings of faith on this bleſſed object. This is that which keeps many of us at ſo low an ebb, as unto the powers of an heavenly life, and ſpiritual joys.

Did we abound in this duty, in this exerciſe of faith, our life in walking before God would be more ſweet and pleaſant unto us; our ſpiritual light and ſtrength would have a daily increaſe; we ſhould more repreſent the glory of Chriſt in our ways and walking, than uſually we do; and death itſelf would be moſt welcome unto us.

The *angels* themſelves *deſire to look* into the things of the glory of Chriſt, 1 Pet. i. 10. *Of which ſalvation the prophets have inquired, and ſearched diligently, who propheſied of the grace that ſhould come unto you.* ver. 12. *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the goſpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven; which things the angels deſire to look into.* There is in them matter of inquiry and inſtruction for the moſt high and holy ſpirits in heaven. The manifold wiſdom of God in them is made known unto *principalities and powers in heavenly places by the church,* Eph. iii. 10. And ſhall we neglect that which is the object of angelical

lical diligence to inquire into; eſpecially conſidering that we are more than they concerned in it?

Is Chriſt then thus glorious in our eyes? Do we *ſee the Father in him*, or by ſeeing of him? Do we ſedulouſly, daily contemplate on the wiſdom, love, grace, goodneſs, holineſs, and righteouſneſs of God, as revealing and manifeſting themſelves in him? Do we ſufficiently conſider, that the *immediate viſion* of this glory in heaven will be our everlaſting bleſſedneſs? Doth the *imperfect view* which we have of it here, increaſe our deſires after the *perfect ſight* of it above? With reſpect unto theſe inquiries, I ſhall briefly ſpeak unto ſundry ſorts of men.

Some will ſay they underſtand not theſe things, nor any concernment of their own in them. If they are true, yet are they *notions* which they may ſafely be without the knowledge of; for ſo far as they can diſcern, they have no influence on Chriſtian practice, or duties of morality. And the preaching of them doth but take off the minds of men from more neceſſary duties. But *if the goſpel be hid, it is hid unto them that periſh.* And unto the objection I ſay,

1. Nothing is more fully and clearly revealed in the goſpel, than that unto us Jeſus Chriſt is the *image of the inviſible God*, that he is the *character of the perſon of the Father*, ſo as that in *ſeeing him*, we ſee the Father alſo; that we have the *light of the knowledge of the glory of God in his face alone*, as hath been proved. This is the principal fundamental myſtery and truth of the goſpel; and which if it be not received, believed, owned, all other truths are uſeleſs unto our ſouls. To refer all the teſtimonies that are given hereunto, to the doctrine which he taught, in contradiſtinction unto his perſon, as acting in the diſcharge of his office, is *antievangelical*, *antichriſtian*, turning the whole goſpel into a fable.

2. It is ſo, that the *light of faith* is given unto us principally to enable us to *behold the glory of God in Chriſt*; to contemplate on it, as unto all the ends of its manifeſtation. So is it expreſsly affirmed, 2 Cor. iv. 6. *For God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* If we have not this light, as it is communicated by the power of God unto them that

do believe, Eph. i. 17. 18. 19.; we muſt be ſtrangers unto the whole myſtery of the goſpel, 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4.

3. That in the *beholding of the glory of God in Chriſt*, we behold his glory alſo. For herein is he infinitely glorious above the whole creation, in that in and by him alone the glory of the inviſible God is repreſented unto us. Herein do our ſouls live. This is that whereby the image of God is renewed in us, and we are made like unto the Firſt-born.

4. This is ſo far from being unneceſſary unto *Chriſtian practice, and the ſanctified duties of morality*, that he knows not Chriſt, he knows not the goſpel, he knows not the faith of the catholic church, who imagines that they can be performed acceptably without it. Yea, this is the root whence all other *Chriſtian duties* do ſpring and whereon they grow, whereby they are diſtinguiſhed from the works of Heathens. He is no Chriſtian who believes not that faith in the perſon of Chriſt is the ſpring of all evangelical obedience; or who knows not that this faith reſpects the revelation of the glory of God in him.

If theſe things are ſo, as they are the moſt important truths of the goſpel, and whoſe denial overthrows the foundation of faith, and is ruinous to Chriſtian religion; certainly it is our duty to live in the conſtant exerciſe of faith with reſpect unto this glory of Chriſt. And we have ſufficient experience of what kind of morality the ignorance of it hath produced.

Others there are who may be ſome way *ſtrangers*, but are no way *enemies* unto this myſtery, and to the practical exerciſe of faith therein: unto ſuch I ſhall tender the enſuing directions.

1. Reckon in your minds, that this *beholding of the glory of Chriſt*, by beholding the glory of God, and all his holy properties in him, is the greateſt *privilege* whereof in this life we can be made partakers. The dawning of heaven is in it, and the *firſt-fruits of glory*; for this is *life eternal* to know the Father, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, John xvii. 3. Unleſs you value it, unleſs you eſteem it as ſuch a *privilege*, you will not enjoy it; and that which is not valued according unto its worth, is deſpiſed. It is not enough to think it a *privilege*, an *advantage*; but it is to be *valued* above other things according unto its *greatneſs* and excellency. *Deſtruction and death ſay, We have heard the fame*

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of it with our ears, Job xxviii. 22. And if we do *no more*, we ſhall die ſtrangers unto it: we are to *cry after this knowledge, and lift up our voice for this underſtanding*, if we deſign to attain it.

2. As it is a great *privilege*, which requires a due valuation; ſo it is a great *myſtery*, which requires much ſpiritual wiſdom to the right underſtanding of it, and to direct in its practice, 1 Cor. ii. 4. 5. *And my ſpeech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wiſdom, but in demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power: that your faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God.* Fleſh and blood will not reveal it unto us, but we muſt be taught of God to apprehend it, John i. 12. 13. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Matth. xvi. 16. 17. *And Simon Peter anſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* Mere unſanctified reaſon will never enable us unto, nor guide us in the diſcovery of this duty. Men are not ſo vain as to hope for ſkill and underſtanding in the myſtery of a ſecular art or trade, without the diligent uſe of thoſe means whereby it may be attained; and ſhall we ſuppoſe that we may be furniſhed with ſpiritual ſkill and wiſdom in this ſacred myſtery, without diligence in the uſe of the means appointed of God for the attaining of it? The principal of them is *fervent prayer*. Pray then with Moſes, that God would *ſhew you this his glory*; pray with the apoſtle, that *the eyes of your underſtandings may be enlightened to behold it*; pray that the *God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.* Fill your minds with ſpiritual thoughts and contrivances about them. Slothful and lazy ſouls never obtain one view of this glory; the *lion in the way* deters them from attempting it. Being carnal, they abhor all diligence in the uſe of ſpiritual means, ſuch as prayer and meditation on things unto them uneaſy, unpleaſing, and difficult. Unto others the way partakes of the nature of the end; the means of obtaining a view of the glory of Chriſt are of the

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ſame kind; of the ſame pleaſantneſs, with that view itſelf, in their proportion.

3. Learn the uſe hereof from the actings of *contrary vitious habits.* When the minds of men are vehemently fixed on the purſuit of their luſts, they will be continually ruminating on the objects of them, and have a thouſand contrivances about them, until their *eyes become full of an adultereſs, and they cannot ceaſe from ſinning,* as the apoſtle ſpeaks. The objects of their luſts have framed and raiſed an image of themſelves in their minds, and transformed them into their own likeneſs. Is this the way of them who *go down to the chambers of death?* do they thus frame their ſouls and make them meet for deſtruction, until their words, geſtures, actions, proclaim the frame of their minds unto all that look upon them? and ſhall we be ſlothful and negligent in the contemplation of that glory which transforms our minds into its own likeneſs, ſo as that the eyes of our underſtandings ſhall be continually filled with it, until we ſee him and behold him continually, ſo as never to ceaſe from the holy acts of delight in him, and love unto him?

4. Would we then *behold the glory of God,* as he manifeſteth it in and by the holy properties of his nature, with their bleſſed operations and effects, without which we have nothing of the power of religion in us, whatever we pretend? this alone is the way of it. Go to the whole creation and all things contained in it; they can ſay no more, but *we have heard the fame and report of theſe things,* and what we have heard we declare; but it is but a *little portion* of them that we are acquainted withal. *The heavens* indeed *declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work. The inviſible things of God are underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* But comparatively, it is but *little* that we can hence learn of theſe things, as unto what we may behold of them in Chriſt Jeſus. How blind herein was the beſt *philoſopher* in compariſon of the meaneſt of the *apoſtles,* yea, of him who is leaſt in the kingdom of *heaven?*

But herein it is required, that we reſt not in the *notions of this truth,* and a bare aſſent unto the doctrine of it. The effecting power of it upon our hearts, is that which we ſhould aim at. Wherein doth the bleſſedneſs of the ſaints

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bove conſiſt? is it not herein, that they behold and ſee he glory of God in Chriſt? And what is the effect of it pon thoſe bleſſed ſouls? doth it not change them into the ame image, or make them like unto Chriſt? doth it not ll and ſatiate them with joy, reſt, delight, complacency, nd ineffable ſatisfaction? Do we expect, do we deſire the ame ſtate of bleſſedneſs? It is our *preſent view* of the glo- y of Chriſt which is our *imitation* thereinto, if we are ex- ciſed in it, until we have an experience of its *transform- ing power* in our ſouls.

Theſe things are, it may be, of little uſe unto ſome. Such as are babes in ſpiritual knowledge and underſtanding, either becauſe they are *carnal*, 1 Cor. iii. 1. 2. or *ſlothful in hearing*, Heb. v. 11.—14. are not capable of theſe divine myſteries. And therefore the apoſtle did in an eſpecial manner declare this wiſdom of God in a myſtery unto them that were *perfect*, 1 Cor. ii. 6. 7.; that is, who were more grown in *ſpiritual knowledge, and had their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern good and evil.* It is unto them who are exerciſed in the contemplation of inviſible things, who delight to walk in the more retired paths of faith and love, to whom they are precious.

Some few inferences from the whole of what hath been declared, ſhall put a cloſe to this part of our diſcourſe.

1. The holy properties of the divine nature are not only repreſented unto our faith in Chriſt as unto their own eſſen- tial glory, but as they are in the *exerciſe of their powers* for the ſalvation of the church. In him do we behold the wiſ- dom, goodneſs, love, grace, mercy and power of God act- ing themſelves in the *contrivance, conſtitution*, and efficacious *accompliſhment* of the great work of our redemption and ſalvation. This gives, as unto us, an unutterable luſtre unto the native amiableneſs of the divine excellencies. The *wiſdom* and *love* of God are in themſelves infinitely glorious, infinitely amiable; nothing can be added unto them, there can be no increaſe of their eſſential glory. Howbeit, as they are eternally reſident in the *divine nature*, and abſolutely the ſame with it, we cannot ſo comprehend them, as to have an endearing ſatiating view of their glory: but as they are exerted in the work of the redemption and ſalvation of the church, as they are expreſſed, communicating their bleſſed effects unto the ſouls of them that do believe, which is done only

only in Chriſt; ſo the beams of their glory ſhine unto us with unſpeakable refreſhment and joy, 2 Cor. iv. 6. *For God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* Hence the apoſtle on the conſideration of the actings of the holy properties of God in this bleſſed work, falls into that contemplation: *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his judgements, and his ways paſt finding out? For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller? Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen,* Rom. xi. 33.—36.

2. *In and through Chriſt we do believe in God,* 1 Pet. i. 21. This is the life of our ſouls. God himſelf in the infinite perfections of his divine nature, is the *ultimate* object of our faith, but he is not here the *immediate* object of it, but the divine way and means of the manifeſtation of himſelf and them unto us, are ſo. *Through Chriſt we believe in God.* By our belief in him, we come to place our faith ultimately in God himſelf; and this we can no otherwiſe do, but by *beholding the glory of God* in him, as hath been declared.

3. This is the only way whereby we may attain the *ſaving, ſanctifying knowledge of God;* without this, every *beam of divine light* that ſhines on us, or gleans from without, (as the *light ſhineth into darkneſs,* when the *darkneſs comprehendeth it not,* John i. 5.); every ſpark that ariſeth from the remainders of the light of nature *within,* do rather amaze the minds of men, than lead them into the ſaving knowledge of God. So a glance of light in a dark night, giving a tranſient view of various objects, and paſſing away, doth rather amaze than direct a traveller, and leave him more expoſed unto wandering than before. Such were all thoſe notions of the divine Being and its excellencies, which thoſe who *boaſted themſelves to be wiſe* among the Heathen embraced and improved. They did but fluctuate in their minds, they did not transform them into the image and likeneſs of God, as the ſaving knowledge of him doth, Col. iii. 10. *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.*

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So the apostle expresseth this truth; *Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God,* 1 Cor. i. 20.—24.

After it was evident unto all, that the *world*, the *wise*, the studious, the contemplative part of it, in the *wisdom of God*, disposing them into that condition, wherein they were left unto themselves, in their own wisdom, their natural light and reason, did not, could not come to the saving knowledge of God, but were puffed up into a contempt of the only way of the revelation of himself, as weakness and folly; it pleased God then to manifest all their *wisdom* to be folly; and to establish the only means of the knowledge of himself in Christ Jesus.

CHAP. III.

The glory of Christ, in the mysterious constitution of his person.

THE second thing wherein we may *behold the glory of Christ given him of his Father*, is *in the mysterious constitution of his person*, as he is God and man in one and the same person. There are in him, in his one single *individual person*, two distinct natures; the one eternal, infinite, immense, almighty, the form and essence of God; the other having a beginning in time, finite, limited, confined unto a certain place, which is our nature, which he took on him when he was *made flesh, and dwelt among us*. The declaration of the nature of this glory, is a *part of my* DISCOURSE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST, whereunto I refer the reader. My present design is of another nature.

This is that *glory* whose beams are so illustrious, as that the blind world cannot bear the light and beauty of them.

Multitudes begin openly to deny this *incarnation of the Son of God*, this *perſonal union* of God and man in their diſtinct natures; they deny that there is either glory or truth in it; and it will ere long appear, it begins already to evidence itſelf, what *greater multitudes* there are, who yet *do not*, who yet *dare not* openly reject the doctrine of it, who in truth believe it not, nor ſee any glory in it. Howbeit, this glory is the glory of our religion, the glory of the church, the ſole rock whereon it is built, the only ſpring of preſent grace and future glory.

This is that glory which the *angels* themſelves deſire to behold, the myſtery whereof they *bow to look into*, 1 Pet. i. 12. So was their deſire repreſented by the *cherubims* in the moſt holy place of the tabernacle; for they were a ſhadow of the miniſtry of angels in the church. The ark and mercy-ſeat were a type of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office; and theſe *cherubims* were made ſtanding over them, as being in heaven above; but earneſtly looking down upon them in a poſture of reverence and adoration. So they did of old, and in their preſent contemplation of it, conſiſts no ſmall part of their eternal bleſſedneſs.

Hereon depends the ruin of Satan and his kingdom. His ſin, ſo far as we can conceive, conſiſted of two parts. (1.) His *pride* againſt the *perſon of the Son of God*, by whom he was created. *For by him were all things created that are* (or were when firſt created) *in heaven, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers*, Col. i. 16. Againſt him he lifted up himſelf, which was the beginning of his tranſgreſſion. (2.) Envy againſt mankind made in the image of God, of the Son of God the firſt-born. This completed his ſin; nothing was now left whereon to act his pride and malice. Unto his eternal confuſion and ruin, God in infinite wiſdom, unites both the natures he had ſinned againſt, in the one perſon of the Son, who was the firſt object of his pride and malice. Hereby his deſtruction is attended with *everlaſting ſhame* in the diſcovery of his folly, wherein he would have contended with infinite wiſdom, as well as miſery, by the powers of the two natures united in one perſon.

Here lies the *foundation* of the church. The foundation of the whole old creation was laid in an act of abſolute ſovereign power. Hereby God *hanged the earth upon nothing*. But the foundation of the church is on this myſterious immove-

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able rock, *Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God;* on the moſt intimate conjunction of the two natures, the divine and human, in themſelves infinitely diſtant, in the ſame perſon.

We may name one place wherein it is glorioufly repreſented unto us, Iſ. ix. 6. *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a ſon is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder: and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, The mighty God, The everlaſting Father, The Prince of peace.* Here muſt the whole church fall down and worſhip the author of this wonderful contrivance, and captivating their underſtandings unto the obedience of faith, humbly adore what they cannot comprehend.

This was obſcurely repreſented unto the church of old, Exod. iii. 2.—6. *And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midſt of a buſh: and he looked, and behold, the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh was not conſumed. And Moſes ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt. And when the Lord ſaw that he turned aſide to ſee, God called unto him, out of the midſt of the buſh, and ſaid, Moſes, Moſes. And he ſaid, Here am I. And he ſaid, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy ſhoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt is holy ground. Moreover he ſaid, I am the God of thy fathers,* &c.

This *fire* was a type or declaration of the preſence of God in the perſon of the Son. For with reſpect unto the Father he is called an *Angel*, the Angel of the covenant; but abſolutely in himſelf, he was *Jehovah*, the *God of Abraham*, &c. And of his preſence the *fire* was a proper repreſentation; for in his *nature* he is as a *conſuming fire*; and his preſent work was the delivery of the church out of a *fiery trial*. This *fire* placed itſelf in a *buſh*, where it burned, but the *buſh* was not conſumed. And although the continuance of the *fire* in the *buſh* was but for a ſhort ſeaſon, a preſent appearance; yet thence was God ſaid to *dwell* in the buſh; *The good-will of him that dwelt in the buſh*, Deut. xxxiii. 16. And this is ſo ſpoken, becauſe the being of the fire in the buſh for a ſeaſon, was a type of him in whom the *fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, and that for ever, Col. ii. 9.; of him who was made *fleſh, and dwelt among us*, John i. 14. The eternal *fire* of the divine nature dwells in the *buſh* of our frail nature,

yet is not conſumed thereby. God thus *dwells in this buſh*, with all his *good-will* towards ſinners.

Moſes looked on this ſight as a *marvellous* and *wondrous* thing. And if it were ſo in the *type*, what is it in the *truth*, ſubſtance, and reality of it?

And by direction given unto him, to *put off his ſhoes*, we are taught to caſt away all fleſhly *imaginations*, and carnal affections, that by pure acts of faith, we may behold this glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father.

I deſign not here to inſiſt on the explication, or confirmation of this glorious truth, concerning the conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt in and by his incarnation. What I can comprehend, what I do believe concerning it, I have fully declared in a LARGE PECULIAR TREATISE. Here I take the truth itſelf as known, or as it may be thence learned. My preſent buſineſs is only to ſtir up the minds of believers unto a due *contemplation* of the glory of Chriſt in the ſacred myſterious conſtitution of his perſon, as God and man in one. So much as we abide herein, ſo much do *we live by the faith of the Son of God;* and God can by a Spirit of wiſdom and revelation open the eyes of our underſtandings, that we may *behold this glory* unto our ineffable conſolation and joy. And unto the diligent diſcharge of our duty herein, I ſhall offer the enſuing directions.

1. Let us get it fixed on our ſouls, and in our minds, that this *glory of Chriſt*, in the divine conſtitution of his perſon, is the beſt, the moſt noble, uſeful, beneficial object, that we can be converſant about in our thoughts, or cleave unto in our affections.

What are all other things in compariſon of the *knowledge of Chriſt?* In the judgement of the great apoſtle, they are but *loſs and dung*, Phil. iii. 8. 9. 10. So they were to him, and if they are not ſo to us, we are carnal.

What is the world, and what are the things thereof which moſt men ſpend their thoughts about, and fix their affections on? The pſalmiſt gives his judgement about them in compariſon of a view of this glory of Chriſt, Pſal. iv. 6. *Many ſay, Who will ſhew us any good?* who will give and help us to attain ſo much in and of this world, as will give reſt and ſatisfaction unto our minds? That is the good inquired after. But, ſaith he, *Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us.* The light of the glory of God

in the face of Chriſt Jeſus, is that ſatisfactory good alone, which I deſire and ſeek after.

The ſcripture reproacheth the vanity and folly of the minds of men, in that *they ſpend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which profiteth not.* They engage the vigour of their ſpirits about periſhing things, when they have durable ſubſtance and riches propoſed unto them.

How do men for the moſt part exerciſe their minds? what are they converſant about in their thoughts?

Some by them *make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil it in the luſts thereof*, as Rom. xiii. 14. They ſearch about continually in their thoughts for objects ſuited unto their luſts and carnal affections, coining, framing and ſtamping of them in their imaginations. They fix their eyes with delight on toads and ſerpents, with all noiſome filthy objects; refuſing in the mean time, to behold the beauty and glory of the light of the ſun. So is it with all that ſpend their thoughts about the objects of their ſinful pleaſures, refuſing to look up after one view of this *glory of Chriſt.*

Some keep their thoughts in continual exerciſe about the things of this world, as unto the advantages and emoluments which they expect from them. Hereby are they transformed into the image of the world, becoming earthly, carnal, and vain. Is it becauſe there is *no God in Iſrael, that theſe applications are made unto the idol of Ekron?* that there is no glory, no deſireableneſs in Chriſt for men to inquire after, and fix their minds upon? Oh the blindneſs, the darkneſs, the folly of poor ſinners! *Whom* do they deſpiſe, and *for what?*

Some of more refined parts and notional minds, do ariſe unto a ſedulous meditation on the works of creation and providence. Hence many excellent diſcourſes on that ſubject, adorned with eloquence, are publiſhed among us. And a work this is worthy of our nature, and ſuited unto our rational capacities; yea, the firſt end of our natural endowment with them. But in all theſe things, there is *no glory* in compariſon of what is propoſed unto us in the myſterious conſtitution of the perſon of Chriſt. The ſun hath no glory, the moon and ſtars no beauty, the order and influence of the heavenly bodies, have no excellency in compariſon of it.

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This is that which the pſalmiſt deſigns to declare, Pſal. viii. 1. *O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who haſt ſet thy glory above the heavens.* ver. 3. *When I conſider thy heavens; the work of thy fingers, the moon and the ſtars which thou haſt ordained;* ver. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him?* ver. 5. *For thou haſt made him a little lower than the angels, and haſt crowned him with glory and honour.* ver. 6. *Thou madeſt him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things under his feet.*

He is engaged in a contemplation of the glory of God in his works; and he concludes that the fabric of heaven, with the *moon and ſtars* therein, (for it was his meditation by night, when he beheld them), was exceeding glorious, and greatly to be admired. This caſts his thoughts on the poor, weak, infirm nature of man, which ſeems as nothing in compariſon of thoſe glories above: but immediately hereon falls into an admiration of the wiſdom, goodneſs, and love of God, *exalting that nature* incomparably above all the works of creation, in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, as the apoſtle expounds this place, Heb. ii. 5. 6. *For unto the angels hath he not put in ſubjection the world to come, whereof we ſpeak. But one in a certain place teſtified, ſaying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?*

This therefore is the higheſt, the beſt, the moſt uſeful object of our thoughts and affections. He who hath had a real view of *this glory*, though he know himſelf to be a poor ſinful, dying *worm* of the earth, yet would he not be an *angel* in heaven, if thereby he ſhould loſe the ſight of it; for this is the centre wherein all the lines of the manifeſtation of the divine glory do meet and reſt.

Look unto the things of this world, wives, children, poſſeſſions, eſtates, power, friends, and honour; how amiable are they! how deſireable unto the thoughts of the moſt of men! But he who hath obtained a view of the glory of Chriſt, will in the midſt of them all ſay, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I deſire beſides thee*, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. *For who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord? who among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* Pſal. lxxxix. 6.

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He himſelf out of his infinite love and ineffable condeſcenſion, upon the ſight and view of his church, and his own graces in her, wherewith ſhe is adorned, doth ſay; *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe; thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck*, Cant. iv. 9. How much more ought a believing ſoul, upon a view of the glory of Chriſt, in whom it pleaſed the Father that all fulneſs ſhould dwell, to ſay, Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, taken it away from me, *O thou whom my ſoul loveth*; one glance of thy glorious beauty upon me, hath quite overcome me, hath left no heart in me unto things here below? If it be not thus with us frequently, if we value not this object of our minds and affections, if we are not diligent in looking up to him, to behold his glory, it is becauſe we are *carnal*, and not in any good meaſure partakers of the promiſe, that *our eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty*.

2. Our ſecond direction unto the ſame end is, That *we diligently ſtudy the ſcriptures, and the revelations that are made of this glory of Chriſt therein*. To behold it, is not a work of fancy or imagination. It is not converſing with an image framed by the art of men *without*, or that of our own fancy *within*; but of faith exerciſed on divine revelations. This direction he gives us himſelf, John v. 39. *Search the ſcriptures, for they are they that teſtify of me.* The way whereby this is done, is fully ſet before us in the example of the holy prophets under the Old Teſtament, 1 Pet. i. 11. 12. 13. *Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the goſpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven; which things the angels deſire to look into. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be ſober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.*

This principle is always to be retained in our minds in *reading of the ſcripture*, namely, that the revelation and doctrine of the perſon of Chriſt and his office, is the foundation whereon all other inſtructions of the prophets and apoſtles for the edification of the church are built, and whereinto they

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are reſolved, as is declared, Eph. ii. 20. 21. 22. *And are built upon the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom you alſo are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit.* So our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf at large makes it manifeſt, Luke xxiv. 26. 27. *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moſes, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the ſcriptures the things concerning himſelf.* ver. 45. *Then opened he their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the ſcriptures,* ver. 46. *And ſaid unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead the third day.* Lay aſide the conſideration hereof, and the ſcriptures are no ſuch thing as they pretend unto; namely, a revelation of the glory of God in the ſalvation of the church; nor are thoſe of the Old Teſtament ſo at this day unto the Jews, who own not this principle, 2 Cor iii. 13.—16. *And not as Moſes, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed. But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the ſame vail untaken away, in the reading of the Old Teſtament; which vail is done away in Chriſt. But even unto this day, when Moſes is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheleſs, when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the vail ſhall be taken away.* There are therefore ſuch *revelations* of the perſon and glory of Chriſt treaſured up in the ſcripture, from the beginning unto the end of it, as may exerciſe the faith and contemplation of believers in this world; and ſhall never, during this life, be fully diſcovered or underſtood; and in the divine meditations of theſe revelations, doth much of the *life of faith* conſiſt.

There are three ways whereby the glory of Chriſt is repreſented unto us in the ſcripture. *Firſt,* By *direct deſcriptions* of his glorious perſon and incarnation. See among other places, Gen. iii. 15. Pſal. ii. 7. 8. 9. Pſal. xlv. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. Pſal. xlviii. 17. 18. Pſal cx. Iſ. vi. 1. 2. 3. 4. chap. ix. 6. Zech. ii. 8. John i. 1. 2. 3. Phil. ii. 6. 7. 8. Heb. i. 1. 2. 3. Chap. ii. 14. 15. 16. Rev. i. 17. 18. *Secondly,* By *prophecies,* promiſes, and expreſs inſtructions concerning him, all leading unto the contemplation of his glory, which

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are innumerable. *Thirdly*, By the ſacred inſtitutions of divine worſhip under the Old Teſtament: for the end of them all was to repreſent unto the church the glory of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

We may take notice of an inſtance in one kind under the Old Teſtament, and of one and another under the New.

His *perſonal appearances* under the Old Teſtament, carried in them a demonſtration of his glory: ſuch was that in the viſion which Iſaiah had, *when he ſaw his glory, and ſpake of him*, chap. vi. 1. 2. *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it ſtood the ſeraphims*, &c. It was a repreſentation of the glory of the divine preſence of Chriſt filling his human nature, the *temple of his body*, with a *train* of all glorious graces. And if this *typical* repreſentation of it was ſo glorious, as that the *ſeraphims* were not able ſtedfaſtly to behold it, but *covered their faces* upon its appearance, ver. 2. how exceeding glorious is it in itſelf, as it is openly revealed in the goſpel?

Of the ſame nature are the immediate teſtimonies given unto him from heaven in the New Teſtament: ſo the apoſtle tells us, *he received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came ſuch a voice unto him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, 2 Pet. i. 17. The apoſtle intends the time of his transfiguration in the mount, for ſo he adds, ver. 18. *And this voice which came from heaven we heard, who were with him in the holy mount.* Howbeit, at ſundry other times he had the ſame teſtimony, or to the ſame purpoſe, from God even the Father in heaven. Herein God gave him *honour and glory*, which all thoſe that believe in him ſhould behold and admire; not only thoſe who heard this teſtimony with their bodily ears, but all unto whom it is teſtified in the ſcripture, are obliged to look after, and contemplate on the glory of Chriſt, as thus revealed and propoſed. From the throne of his excellency by audible voices, by viſible ſigns, by the opening of the heavens above, by the deſcent of the Holy Spirit upon him, God teſtified unto him as his eternal Son, and gave him therein honour and glory. The thoughts of this divine teſtimony, and the glory of Chriſt therein, hath often filled the hearts of ſome with joy and delight.

This therefore in reading and ſtudying the holy ſcripture, we

we ought with all diligence to ſearch and attend unto, as did the prophets of old, 2 Tim. iii. 15. if we intend by them to be made *wiſe unto ſalvation.*

We ſhould herein be as the *merchant-man* that ſeeks for pearls; he ſeeks for all ſorts of them, but when he hath found one of *great price*, he parts with all to make it his own, Matth. xiii. 45. 46. The ſcripture is the field, the place, the mine where we ſearch and dig for pearls; Prov. ii. 1.—5. *My ſon, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ſo that thou incline thine ear unto wiſdom, and apply thine heart to underſtanding: yea, if thou crieſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding: if thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her, as for hid treaſures: then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord; and find the knowledge of God.* Every ſacred truth that is made effectual unto the good of our ſouls, is a pearl, whereby we are enriched; but when we meet with, when we fall upon this pearl of price, the glory of Chriſt, this is that which the ſoul of a believer cleaves unto with joy.

Then do we find *food for our ſouls* in the word of truth, then do we taſte how gracious the Lord is therein, then is the ſcripture full of refreſhment unto us, as a ſpring of living water, when we are taken into bleſſed views of the glory of Chriſt therein. And we are in the beſt frame of duty, when the principal motive in our minds to contend earneſtly for retaining the poſſeſſion of the ſcripture, againſt all that would deprive us of it, or diſcourage us from a daily diligent ſearch into it, is this, that they would take from us the only *glaſs* wherein we may behold the glory of Chriſt. This is the glory of the ſcripture, that it is the great, yea, the *only* outward means of repreſenting unto us the glory of Chriſt; and he is the Sun in the firmament of it, which only hath light in itſelf, and communicates it unto all other things beſides.

3. Another direction unto this ſame end, is, That having attained the light of the knowledge of the glory of Chriſt from the ſcripture, or by the diſpenſation of the truth in the preaching of the goſpel, *we would eſteem it our duty frequently to meditate thereon.*

Want hereof is that fundamental miſtake which keeps many among us ſo low in their grace, ſo regardleſs of their privileges. They hear of theſe things, they aſſent unto their truth,

truth, at leaſt they do not gainſay them; but they never *ſolemnly meditate* upon them. This they eſteem a work that is *above* them, or are *ignorant* totally of it, or eſteem themſelves not much concerned in it, or *diſlike* it as *fanataciſm*. For it is that which no conſiderations can engage a carnal mind to delight in. The mind muſt be ſpiritual and holy, freed from earthly affections and incumbrances, raiſed above things here below, that can in a due manner meditate on the glory of Chriſt. Therefore are the moſt ſtrangers unto this duty, becauſe they will not be at the trouble and charge of that mortification of earthly affections, that extirpation of ſenſual inclinations, that retirement from the occaſion of life, which are required thereunto. See the *Treatiſe of ſpiritual-mindedneſs*.

It is to be feared that there are ſome who profeſs religion with an *appearance of ſtrictneſs*, who never ſeparate themſelves from all other occaſions to *meditate on Chriſt and his glory*. And yet with a ſtrange inconſiſtency of apprehenſions, they will profeſs that they deſire nothing more, than to *behold his glory in heaven for ever*. But it is evident even in the light of reaſon, that theſe things are irreconcileable. It is impoſſible that he who never meditates with delight on the glory of Chriſt here in this world, who labours not to behold it by *faith* as it is revealed in the ſcripture, ſhould ever have any real *gracious deſire* to behold it in heaven. They may love and deſire the fruition of their imaginations, they cannot do ſo of the glory of Chriſt whereof they are ignorant, and wherewith they are unacquainted. It is therefore to be lamented, that men can find time for, and have inclinations to think and meditate on other things, it may be earthly and vain; but have neither heart nor inclinations, nor leiſure to meditate on this glorious object. What is the faith and love which ſuch men profeſs? How will they find themſelves deceived in the iſſue?

4. Let your *occaſional thoughts of Chriſt be many*, and multiplied every day; he is not far from us, we may make a ſpeedy addreſs unto him at any time: ſo the apoſtle informs us, Rom. x. 6. 7. 8. *Say not in thine heart, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven? (that is, to bring Chriſt down from above) or, Who ſhall deſcend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Chriſt again from the dead) For the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart.* The things that Chriſt did, were

done at a diſtance from us, and they are long ſince paſt. But ſaith the apoſtle, the *word of the goſpel* wherein theſe things are revealed, and whereby an application is made of them unto our ſouls, is *nigh unto us, even in our hearts*; that is, if we are true believers, and have mixed the word with faith; and ſo it exhibiteth Chriſt and all the benefits of his mediation unto us. If therefore this word is in our hearts, Chriſt is nigh unto us. If we turn at any time into ourſelves to converſe with the word that abideth in us, there we ſhall find him ready to receive us into communion with himſelf; that is, in the light of the knowledge of Chriſt which we have by the word, we may have ſudden occaſional thoughts of him continually; and where our minds and affections are ſo filled with other things, that we are not ready for converſe with him who is thus nigh unto us by the word, we are ſpiritually indiſpoſed.

So to manifeſt how nigh he is unto us, it is ſaid that *he ſtands at the door and knocks*, Rev. iii. 20. in the continual tender that he makes of himſelf and his grace unto our ſouls. For he is always accompanied with the glorious train of his graces, and if they are not received, he himſelf is not ſo. It is to no purpoſe to boaſt of Chriſt, if we have not an evidence of his graces in our hearts and lives. But unto whom he is the *hope of future glory*, unto them he is the *life* of preſent grace.

Sometimes it may be, that he is withdrawn from us, ſo as that we cannot *hear his voice, nor behold his countenance*, nor obtain any ſenſe of his love, though we ſeek him with diligence. In this ſtate all our thoughts and meditations concerning him will be barren and fruitleſs, bringing in no ſpiritual refreſhment into our ſouls. And if we learn to be content with ſuch lifeleſs, inaffecting thoughts of him, as bring in no experience of his love, nor give us a real view of the glory of his perſon, we ſhall wither away as unto all the power of religion.

What is our duty in this caſe, is ſo fully expreſſed by the ſpouſe in the Canticles, as repreſents it plainly unto the minds of believers, who have any experience of theſe things, Chap. iii. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now, and go about the city in the ſtreets, and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but*

but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city, found me: to whom I ſaid, Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth? It was but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go. The like account ſhe gives of herſelf, and of her behaviour on the like occaſion, Chap. v. 2.—8. *I ſleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, ſaying, Open to me, my ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them? My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I roſe up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with ſweet-ſmelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone: my ſoul failed when he ſpake: I ſought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no anſwer. The watchmen that went about the city, found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my vail from me. I charge you, O daughters of Jeruſalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am ſick of love.*

This is the ſubſtance of what by this example we are inſtructed unto. The Lord Chriſt is pleaſed ſometimes to withdraw himſelf from the *ſpiritual experience* of believers, as unto any refreſhing ſenſe of his love, or the freſh communications of conſolatory graces. Thoſe who never had experience of any ſuch thing, who never had any refreſhing communion with him, cannot be ſenſible of his *abſence*, they never were ſo of his *preſence*. But thoſe whom he hath viſited, to whom he hath *given of his loves*, with whom he hath made his *abode*, whom he hath refreſhed, relieved, and comforted, in whom he hath lived in the power of his grace, they know what it is to be *forſaken* by him, though but *for a moment*. And their trouble is increaſed, when they ſeek him with diligence in the wonted ways of obtaining his preſence, and cannot find him. Our duty in this caſe is, to perſevere in our inquiries after him in prayer, meditation, mourning, reading, and hearing of the word, in all ordinances of divine worſhip, private and public, in diligent obedience, until we find him, or he return unto us, as in former days.

It were well if all churches and profeſſors now would manifeſt the ſame diligence herein, as did the church of old in this example. Many of them, if they are not hardened by the deceitfulneſs of ſin, cannot but be ſenſible that the Lord Chriſt is variouſly withdrawn from them, if ever they had experience of the power of his preſence: yet are the generality of them far from the frame of heart here deſcribed in the *ſpouſe*; for they are ſlothful, careleſs, negligent, and ſtir not up themſelves to inquire after him, or his return unto their ſouls. So was it with Laodicea of old, ſo was it with Sardis, and ſo it is to be feared that it is with many at preſent. But to return.

Generally Chriſt is *nigh unto believers*, and of a ready acceſs; and the principal actings of the life of faith, conſiſts in the frequency of our thoughts concerning him; for hereby *Chriſt liveth* in us, as he is ſaid to do, Gal. ii. 20. This we cannot do, unleſs we have frequent thoughts of him, and converſe with him. It is often ſaid among men, that one lives in another; this cannot be but where the affections of one are ſo engaged unto another, that night and day he thinks of him, and is thereby as it were preſent with him. So ought it to be between Chriſt and believers. He dwells in them by faith; but the actings of this life in them (as where-ever life is, it will be in act and exerciſe) are proportionable unto their thoughts of him, and delight in him.

If therefore we would *behold the glory of Chriſt*, the preſent direction is, that on all occaſions, and frequently when there are no occaſions for it by the performance of other duties, we would abound in thoughts of him and his glory. I intend not at preſent, fixed and ſtated *meditations*, which were ſpoken unto before; but ſuch *thoughts* as are more tranſient, according as our opportunities are. And a great rebuke it ought to be unto us, when Chriſt hath at any time in a day been long out of our minds. The ſpouſe affirms, that *ere ſhe was aware, her ſoul made her as the chariots of Amminadib*, Cant. vi. 12. It ſo fell out, that when ſhe had no thoughts, no deſign or purpoſe for attendance or communion with Chriſt, that ſhe was ſurpriſed into a readineſs and willingneſs unto it. So will it be with them that love him in ſincerity. Their own *ſouls*, without previous

tious deſigns or outward occaſions, will frequently engage them in holy thoughts of him, which is the moſt eminent character of a truly ſpiritual Chriſtian.

5. The next direction is, That all our thoughts concerning Chriſt and his glory, ſhould be accompanied with *admiration, adoration, and thankſgiving*. For this is ſuch an object of our thoughts and affections, as in this life we can never fully comprehend; an ocean whoſe depths we cannot look into. If we are ſpiritually renewed, all the faculties of our ſouls are enabled by grace to exert their reſpective powers towards this glorious object. This muſt be done in various duties, by the exerciſe of various graces, as they are to be acted by the diſtinct powers of the faculties of our minds. This is that which is intended, where we are commanded *to love the Lord with all our ſouls, with all our minds, with all our ſtrength.* All the diſtinct powers of our ſouls are to be acted by diſtinct graces and duties, in cleaving unto God by love. In heaven, when we are come to our centre, that ſtate of reſt and bleſſedneſs which our nature is ultimately capable of, nothing but one infinite invariable object of our minds and affections received by *viſion*, can render that ſtate uninterrupted and unchangeable. But whilſt we are here, we *know*, or *ſee but in part*, and we muſt alſo act our faith and love, on parts of that glory, which is not at once entirely propoſed unto us, and which as yet we cannot comprehend. Wherefore we muſt act various graces in great variety about it; ſome at one time, ſome at another, according unto the powers of all our renewed faculties. Of this ſort are thoſe mentioned of *adoration, admiration*, and *thankſgiving*; which are thoſe acts of our minds wherein all others do iſſue, when the object is incomprehenſible. For unto them we are enabled by grace.

One end of his illuſtrious coming unto the judgement of the laſt day is, that he may be *admired in all them that believe*, 2 Theſſ. i. 10. Even believers themſelves ſhall be filled with an overwhelming admiration, upon his glorious appearance. Or, if the meaning be, not that he ſhall be admired *by them*, but admired *in them*, becauſe of the mighty works of his grace and power in their redemption, ſanctification, reſurrection, and glory, it is to the ſame purpoſe, he *comes to be admired.* And according to the proſpect which we have of that glory ought our admiration to be.

And

And this *admiration* will iſſue in *adoration* and *thankſgiving*; whereof we have an eminent inſtance and example in the whole church of the redeemed, Rev. v. 9.—13. *They ſang a new ſong, ſaying, Worthy art thou to receive the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt bought us unto God by thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt made us kings and prieſts unto God: and we ſhall reign upon the earth. And I ſaw, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and of the living creatures, and of the elders: and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands; ſaying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. And every creature that is in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and that are in the ſea, and all things in them, heard I, ſaying, Bleſſing, and honour, and power, and glory, be unto him that ſits on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

The deſign of this diſcourſe is no more, but that when by faith we have attained a view of the glory of Chriſt, in our contemplations on his perſon, we ſhould not paſs it over as a notion of truth which we aſſent unto, namely, that he is thus glorious in himſelf; but endeavour to affect our hearts with it, as that wherein our own principal intereſt doth lie; wherein it will be effectual unto the *tranſformation* of our ſouls into his image.

But ſome it may be will ſay, at leaſt I fear ſome may truly ſay, that theſe things do not belong unto them, they do not find that ever they had any benefit by them. They hope to be ſaved as well as others by the mediation of Chriſt; but as unto this *beholding of his glory*, by conſtant meditation and actings of faith therein, they know nothing of it, nor are concerned in it. The doctrine which they are taught out of the ſcripture concerning the perſon of Chriſt, they give their aſſent unto; but his glory they hope they ſhall ſee in another world; here they never yet inquired after it.

So it will be. It is well if theſe things be not only *neglected*, becauſe the minds of men are carnal, and cannot diſcern ſpiritual things; but alſo *deſpiſed*, becauſe they have an enmity unto them. It is not for all to walk in theſe retired paths; not for them who are negligent and ſlothful, whoſe minds

minds are earthly and carnal. Nor can they herein ſit at the feet of Chriſt with Mary, when ſhe *choſe the better part*, who like Martha, are *cumbered about many things* here in this world. Thoſe whoſe principal deſign is to add unto their preſent enjoyments, (in the midſt of the proſecution whereof, they are commonly taken from them, ſo as that their thoughts do periſh, becauſe not accompliſhed), will never underſtand theſe things. Much leſs will they do ſo, whoſe work it is to make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil it in the luſts thereof.

They muſt make it their deſign to be heavenly-minded, who will find a reliſh in theſe things. Thoſe who are ſtrangers unto holy meditation in general, will be ſtrangers unto this myſtery in a peculiar manner.

Some men can think of the world, of their relations, and the manifold occaſions of life; but as unto the things that are above and within the vail, they are not concerned in them.

With ſome it is otherwiſe. They profeſs their deſire to *behold the glory of Chriſt by faith*, but they find it, as they complain, too high and difficult for them. They are at a loſs in their minds, and even overwhelmed, when they begin to *view his glory*. They are like the diſciples, who ſaw him in his *transfiguration*; they were filled with amazement, and knew not what to ſay, or ſaid they knew not what. And I do acknowledge, that the *weakneſs* of our minds in the comprehenſion of this eternal glory of Chriſt, and their inſtability in meditations thereon, whence we cannot ſtedfaſtly look on it, or behold it, gives us an afflicting, abaſing conſideration of our preſent ſtate and condition. And I ſhall ſay no more unto this caſe but this alone: When faith can no longer hold open the eyes of our underſtandings, unto the beholding of the Sun of righteouſneſs ſhining in his beauty, nor exerciſe orderly thoughts about this incomprehenſible object, it will betake itſelf unto that holy *admiration* which we have ſpoken unto; and therein it will put itſelf forth in pure acts of love and complacency.

CHAP. IV.

The glory of Chriſt, in his ſuſception of the office of a Mediator.

Firſt, In his condeſcenſion.

THE things whereof we have thus far diſcourſed, relating immediately unto the perſon of Chriſt in itſelf, may ſeem to have ſomewhat of difficulty in them, unto ſuch whoſe minds are not duly exerciſed in the contemplation of heavenly things. Unto others they are evident in their own experience, and inſtructive unto them that are willing to learn. That which remains will be yet more plain unto the underſtanding and capacity of the meaneſt believer. And this is the glory of Chriſt in his office of Mediator, and the diſcharge thereof.

In our *beholding of the glory of Chriſt* herein, doth the exerciſe of faith in this life principally conſiſt; ſo the apoſtle declares it, Phil. iii. 8.—12. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord:—To know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, and to be made conformable unto his death.* This therefore we muſt treat of ſomewhat more at large.

There is one God, ſaith the apoſtle, *and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus,* 1 Tim. ii. 5. In that great difference between God and man, occaſioned by our ſin and apoſtaſy from him, which of itſelf could iſſue in nothing but the utter ruin of the whole race of mankind, there was none in heaven or earth in their original nature and operations, who was meet or able to make up a *righteous peace* between them. Yet muſt this be done by a *Mediator*, or ceaſe for ever.

This Mediator could not be God himſelf abſolutely conſidered; *for a Mediator is not of one, but God is one,* Gal. iii. 20. Whatever God might do herein in a way of ſovereign grace, yet he could not do it in the way of mediation, which yet was neceſſary unto his own glory, as we have at large diſcourſed elſewhere.

And

And as for *creatures*, there was none in heaven or earth that was meet to undertake this office. *For if one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him: but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* 1 Sam. ii. 25. *There is not any days-man betwixt us, to lay his hand upon us both,* Job ix. 33.

In this ſtate of things, the Lord Chriſt as the Son of God ſaid, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; ſacrifice and burnt-offerings thou wouldſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me: and, lo, I come to do thy will,* Heb. x. 5.—9. By the aſſumption of our nature into union with himſelf, in his one divine perſon, he became every way meet for the diſcharge of this office, and undertakes it accordingly.

That which we inquire after at preſent, is the glory of Chriſt herein, and how we may behold that glory. And there are three things wherein we may take a proſpect of it.

I. In his ſuſception of this office.
II. In his diſcharge of it.
III. In the event and conſequence thereof; or what enſued thereon.

In the ſuſception of this office, we may behold the glory of Chriſt, (1.) In his *condeſcenſion*. (2.) In his *love*.

Firſt, We may behold his glory in his *infinite condeſcenſion* to take this office on him, and our nature to be his own unto that end. It did not befal him by lot or chance, it was not *impoſed* on him againſt his will, it belonged not unto him by any *neceſſity* of nature or condition, he ſtood not in need of it, it was no addition unto him; but of his own mind and accord, he graciouſly condeſcended unto the ſuſception and diſcharge of it.

So the apoſtle expreſſeth it, Phil. ii. 5.—8. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himſelf of no reputation, and took on him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men: and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.*

It was the *mind that was in Jeſus Chriſt*, which is propoſed unto our conſideration and imitation; what he was inclined and diſpoſed unto from himſelf and his *own mind* alone. And that in general which is aſcribed unto him, is *exinani-*

tion or *ſelf-emptineſs; he emptied himſelf.* This the ancient church called his συγκαταβασις, as we do his *condeſcenſion*, an act of which kind in God is called the *humbling of himſelf*, Pſal. cxiii. 6.

Wherefore the ſuſception of our nature for the diſcharge of the office of mediation therein, was an *infinite condeſcenſion* in the Son of God, wherein he is exceedingly glorious in the eyes of believers.

And I ſhall do theſe three things. (1.) Shew in general the *greatneſs* of this condeſcenſion. (2.) Declare the *eſpecial nature* of it. And, (3.) Take what view we are able of the *glory of Chriſt* therein.

1*ſt*, Such is the tranſcendent excellency of the divine nature, that it is ſaid of God, that *he dwelleth on high, and humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth*, Pſal. cxiii. 5. 6. He *condeſcends* from the prerogative of his excellency, to behold, to look upon, to take notice of the moſt glorious things in heaven above, and the greateſt things in the earth below. All his reſpect unto the creatures, the moſt glorious of them, is an act of *infinite condeſcenſion*. And it is ſo on two accounts.

1. Becauſe of the *infinite diſtance* that is between his eſſence, nature, or being, and that of the creatures. Hence *all nations before him are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the balance; yea, that they are as nothing, that they are accounted unto him leſs than nothing and vanity.* All being is eſſentially in him, and in compariſon thereunto, all other things are as *nothing*. And there are no meaſures, there is no proportion between *infinite being* and *nothing*; nothing that ſhould induce a regard from the one unto the other. Wherefore, the infinite, eſſential greatneſs of the nature of God, with its infinite diſtance from the nature of all creatures thereby, cauſeth all his dealings with them to be in the way of *condeſcenſion* or humbling himſelf. So it is expreſſed, Iſ. lvii. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him alſo who is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* He is ſo the high and lofty One, and ſo inhabiteth eternity, or exiſteth in his own eternal being, that it is an act of mere grace in him, to take notice

notice of things below; and therefore he doth it in an eſpecial manner of thoſe whom the world doth moſt deſpiſe.

2. It ariſeth from his *infinite ſelf-ſufficiency* unto all the acts and ends of his own eternal bleſſedneſs. What we have a regard unto, what we reſpect and deſire, it is that it may add unto our ſatisfaction. So it is, ſo it muſt be with every creature; no creature is ſelf-ſufficient unto its own bleſſedneſs. The human nature of Chriſt himſelf in heaven is not ſo; it lives in God, and God in it, in a full dependence on God, and in receiving bleſſed and glorious communications from him. No rational creature, angel or man, can do, think, act any thing, but it is all to add to their perfection and ſatisfaction, they are not *ſelf-ſufficient*. God alone wants nothing, ſtands in need of nothing, nothing can be added unto him, ſeeing he *giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things*, Acts xvii. 25. The whole creation in all its excellency cannot contribute one mite unto the ſatisfaction or bleſſedneſs of God. He hath it all in infinite perfection from himſelf and his own nature; our goodneſs extends not unto him; *A man cannot profit God as he may profit his neighbour. If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? and if thy tranſgreſſions are multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?* (God loſeth nothing of his own ſelf-ſufficiency and bleſſedneſs therein, by all this): *and if thou be righteous, what giveſt thou unto him, or what receiveth he at thy hand?* Job xxxv. 6. 7. 8. And from hence alſo it follows, that all God's concernment in the creation, is by an act of condeſcenſion.

How glorious then is the *condeſcenſion* of the Son of God in his *ſuſception of the office of mediation?* For if ſuch be the perfection of the divine nature, and its diſtance ſo abſolutely infinite from the whole creation, and if ſuch be his ſelf-ſufficiency unto his own eternal bleſſedneſs, as that nothing can be taken from him, nothing added unto him, ſo that every regard in him unto any of the creatures, is an act of *ſelf-humiliation* and *condeſcenſion* from the prerogative of his being and ſtate; what heart can conceive, what tongue can expreſs the glory of that *condeſcenſion* in the Son of God, whereby he took our nature upon him, took it to be his own in order unto a diſcharge of the office of mediation on our behalf?

But, 2*dly*, That we may the better behold the glory of Chriſt herein,

herein, we may briefly consider the *especial nature* of this condescension, and wherein it doth consist.

But whereas, not only the denial, but misapprehensions hereof have pestered the church of God in all ages, we must in the first place reject them, and then declare the truth.

1. This *condescension* of the Son of God did not consist in a *laying aside*, or *parting with*, or *separation from* the divine nature, so as that he should cease to be God, by being man. The foundation of it lay in this, that *he was in the form of God, and counted it not robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. ii. 6. That is, being really and essentially God in his divine nature, he professed himself therein to be equal with God or the person of the Father. He was in the *form* of *God*, that is, he was God, participant of the divine nature, for God hath no *form* but that of his essence and being; and hence he was equal with God, in authority, dignity, and power. Because he was in the form of God, he must be equal with God, for there is *order* in the divine persons, but no *inequality* in the divine Being. So the Jews understood him, that when he said, *God was his Father, he made himself equal with God.* For in his so saying, he ascribed unto himself equal power with the Father, as unto all divine operations, *My Father*, saith he, *worketh hitherto, and I work*, John v. 17. 18. And they by whom his divine nature is denied, do cast this *condescension of Christ* quite out of our religion, as that which hath no reality or substance in it. But we shall speak of them afterwards.

Being in this state, it is said that he *took on him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man*, Phil. ii. 7. This is his condescension. It is not said, that he ceased to be in the form of God; but continuing so to be, he *took on him the form of a servant* in our nature: he became what he was not, but he ceased not to be what he was; so he testifieth of himself, John iii. 13. *No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the Son of man which is in heaven.* Although he was then on earth as the Son of man; yet he ceased not to be God thereby; in his divine nature he was then also in heaven.

He who *is God*, can no more be *not God*, than he who is *not God*, can *be God*: and our difference with the Socinians herein is, we believe that Christ being God, was made *man* for

for our ſakes; they ſay, that being only a man, he was *made a God* for his own ſake.

This then is the foundation of the glory of Chriſt in this condeſcenſion, the life and ſoul of all heavenly truth and myſteries; namely, that the *Son of God* becoming in *time* to be what he was not, the *Son of man*, ceaſed not thereby to be what he was, even the *eternal* Son of God. Wherefore,

2. Much leſs did this condeſcenſion conſiſt in the *converſion of the divine nature into the human*, which was the imagination of ſome of the Arians of old, and we have yet (to my own knowledge) ſome that follow them in the ſame dotage. They ſay that the *Word which was in the beginning*, by which all things were made, being in itſelf an effect of the divine will and power, was in the fulneſs of time *turned into fleſh*; that is, the *ſubſtance* of it was ſo, as the *water* in the miracle wrought by our Saviour, was turned into *wine*; for by an act of the divine power of Chriſt it ceaſed to be *water* ſubſtantially, and was *wine* only; not water mixed with wine: ſo theſe men ſuppoſe a *ſubſtantial change* of the one nature into the other, of the divine nature into the human; like what the Papiſts imagine in their *tranſubſtantiation*: ſo they ſay God was made man, his eſſence being turned into that of a man.

But this no way belongs unto the condeſcenſion of Chriſt. We may call it *Ichabod*, it hath *no glory* in it. It deſtroys both his natures, and leaves him a perſon in whom we are not concerned. For according unto this imagination, that *divine nature* wherein he was in the form of God, did in its own form ceaſe to be, yea, was utterly deſtroyed, as being *ſubſtantially* changed into the nature of man; as the *water* did ceaſe to be, when it was turned into *wine*; and that human nature which was made thereof, hath no alliance or kindred unto us, or our nature, ſeeing it was not *made of a woman*, but of the ſubſtance of the Word.

3. There was not in this *condeſcenſion*, the leaſt *change* or alteration in the divine nature. Eutyches, and thoſe that followed him of old, conceived that the two natures of Chriſt, the *divine and human*, *were mixed* and compounded as it were into one: and this could not be without an alteration in the divine nature, for it would be made to be eſſentially what it was not; for one nature hath but one and the ſame eſſence.

But

But as we ſaid before; although the Lord Chriſt himſelf in his perſon was made to be what he was not before, in that our nature hereby was made to be his, yet his divine nature was not ſo: there is in it neither *variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning*. It abode the ſame in him in all its eſſential properties, actings, and bleſſedneſs, as it was from eternity. It neither did, acted, nor ſuffered any thing, but what is proper unto the divine Being: the Lord Chriſt did and ſuffered many things in life and death, in his own perſon, by his human nature, wherein the divine neither did, nor ſuffered any thing at all; although in the doing of them, his perſon be denominated from that nature; ſo *God purchaſed his church with his own blood*, Acts xx. 28.

It may then be ſaid, What did the Lord Chriſt in this *condeſcenſion*, with reſpect unto his divine nature? The apoſtle tells us, that he *humbled himſelf, and made himſelf of no reputation*, Phil. ii. 7. 8. He vailed the glory of his divine nature in ours, and what he did therein, ſo as that there was no outward appearance or manifeſtation of it. The world hereon was ſo far from looking on him as the *true God*, that it believed him not to be a *good man*. Hence they could never bear the leaſt intimation of his divine nature, ſuppoſing themſelves ſecured from any ſuch thing, becauſe they looked on him with their eyes to be a *man*, as he was indeed, no leſs truly and really than any one of themſelves. Wherefore on that teſtimony given of himſelf, *Before Abraham was, I am*, which aſſerts a pre-exiſtence from eternity in another nature than what they ſaw, they were filled with rage, and *took up ſtones to caſt at him*, John viii. 58. 59. And they give a reaſon of their madneſs, John x. 33. namely, that *he being a man, ſhould make himſelf to be God*. This was ſuch a thing, they thought, as could never enter into the heart of a wiſe and ſober man, namely, that being ſo, owning himſelf to be ſuch, he ſhould yet ſay of himſelf, that he was *God*: this is that which no *reaſon* can comprehend, which nothing in nature can parallel or illuſtrate, that one and the ſame perſon ſhould be both God and man. And this is the principal plea of the Socinians at this day, who through the Mahumetans ſucceed unto the Jews in an oppoſition unto the divine nature of Chriſt.

But all this difficulty is ſolved by the *glory of Chriſt in this condeſcenſion*; for although in himſelf, or his own divine perſon,

perſon, he was *over all God bleſſed for ever*, yet he *humbled himſelf for the ſalvation* of the church, unto the eternal glory of God, to take our nature upon him, and to be made man: and thoſe who cannot ſee a divine glory in his ſo doing, do neither know him, nor love him, nor believe in him, nor do any way belong unto him.

So is it with the men of theſe abominations. Becauſe they cannot behold the *glory* hereof, they deny the foundation of our religion, namely, the divine perſon of Chriſt. Seeing he would be made *man*, he ſhall be eſteemed by them *no more* than a man. So do they reject that glory of God, his infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and grace, wherein he is more concerned than in the whole creation. And they dig up the root of all evangelical truths, which are nothing but branches from it.

It is true, and muſt be confeſſed, that herein it is that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is a *ſtumbling ſtone, and a rock of offence* unto the world. If we ſhould confeſs him *only as a prophet; a man ſent by God*, there would not be much conteſt about him, nor oppoſition unto him. The Mahumetans do all acknowledge it, and the Jews would not long deny it; for their hatred againſt him was, and is ſolely becauſe he profeſſed himſelf to be God, and as ſuch was believed on in the world. And at this day, partly through the inſinuation of the Socinians, and partly from the efficacy of their own blindneſs and unbelief, multitudes are willing to grant him to be a prophet ſent of God, who do not, who will not, who cannot believe the myſtery of this *condeſcenſion* in the ſuſception of our nature, nor ſee the glory of it. But take this away, and all our religion is taken away with it. Farewel Chriſtianity as unto the myſtery, the glory, the truth, the efficacy of it; let a refined Heatheniſm be eſtabliſhed in its room. But this is the *rock* on which the church is built, againſt which the gates of hell ſhall not prevail.

4. This *condeſcenſion* of Chriſt was not by a *phantaſm* or in appearance only. One of the firſt hereſies that peſtered the church immediately after the days of the apoſtles, was this, that all that was done or ſuffered by Chriſt as a man, were not the acts, doings, or ſufferings of one that was truly and really a man, but an outward repreſentation of things, like the *appearance of angels* in the *ſhape of men*, eating and drinking under the Old Teſtament; and ſuitably hereunto

ſome in our days have ſpoken; namely, that there was only an appearance of Chriſt in the man *Jeſus* at Jeruſalem, in whom he ſuffered no more than in other believers. But the ancient Chriſtians told thoſe men the truth; namely, that *as they had feigned unto themſelves an imaginary Chriſt, ſo they ſhould have an imaginary ſalvation only.*

But the true nature of this divine condeſcenſion doth conſiſt in theſe three things.

1. That the *eternal perſon of the Son of God, or the divine nature in the perſon of the Son of God, did by an ineffable act of his divine power and love, aſſume our nature into an individual ſubſiſtence, in or with himſelf; that is, to be his own, even as the divine nature is his.* This is the infallible foundation of faith even to them who can comprehend very little of theſe divine myſteries. They can and do believe that the Son of God did take our nature to be his *own*, ſo as that whatever was done therein, was done by him, as it is with every other man. Every man hath human nature appropriated unto himſelf by an *individual ſubſiſtence*; whereby he becomes to be *that man which he is, and not another*; or that nature which is common unto all, becomes in him to be peculiarly his *own*, as if there were none partaker of it but himſelf. Adam in his firſt creation, when all human nature was in him alone, was no more that individual man which he was, than every man is now the man that he is, by his *individual ſubſiſtence.* So the Lord Chriſt taking that nature which is common unto all, into a peculiar ſubſiſtence in his own perſon, it becometh his, and he *the man Chriſt Jeſus.* This was the *mind that was in him.*

2. By reaſon of this *aſſumption of our nature*, with his doing and ſuffering therein, whereby he was *found in faſhion as a man*, the glory of his divine perſon was vailed, and he *made himſelf of no reputation.* This alſo belongs unto his *condeſcenſion*, as the firſt general effect and fruit of it. But we have ſpoken of it before.

3. It is alſo to be obſerved, that in the *aſſumption of our nature to be his own*, he did not change it into a thing divine and ſpiritual; but preſerved it entire in all its eſſential properties and actings. Hence it really did and ſuffered, was tried, tempted and forſaken, as the ſame nature in any other man might do and be. That nature as it was peculiarly his, and therefore he or his perſon therein, was ex-

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poſed unto all the temporary evils which the ſame nature is ſubject unto in any other perſon.

This is a ſhort general view of this *incomprehenſible condeſcenſion* of the Son of God, as it is deſcribed by the apoſtle, Phil. ii. 5.—8. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men: and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* And this is that wherein in an eſpecial manner we are to *behold the glory of Chriſt by faith* whilſt we are in this world.

But had we the tongue of men and angels, we were not able in juſt meaſure to expreſs the glory of this condeſcenſion. For it is the moſt ineffable effect of the *divine wiſdom* of the Father, and of the *love of the Son*, the higheſt evidence of the *care of God* towards mankind. What can be equal unto it? what can be like it? It is the glory of Chriſtian religion, and the *animating ſoul* of all evangelical truth. This carrieth the *myſtery of the wiſdom of God*, above the reaſon or underſtanding of men and angels, to be the object of faith and admiration only. A myſtery it is that becomes the greatneſs of God, with his infinite diſtance from the whole creation; which renders it unbecoming him that all his ways and works ſhould be comprehenſible by any of his creatures, Job xi. 4. 5. *For thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes. But, O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee.* ver. 9. *The meaſure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the ſea.* Rom. xi. 34. 35. 36. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller? Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

He who was eternally in the form of God, that is, was eſſentially ſo, God by nature, equally participant of the ſame *divine nature* with God the Father; *God over all, bleſſed for ever*; who humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in heayen and earth: he takes on him the *nature of man*, takes it to be his own; whereby he was no leſs truly a *man* in *time*, than he was truly *God* from *eternity*: and to

increaſe the wonder of this myſtery, becauſe it was neceſſary unto the end he deſigned, he ſo *humbled himſelf* in this aſſumption of our nature, as to make himſelf of *no reputation* in this world; yea, unto that degree, that he ſaid of himſelf, that he was a *worm and no man*, in compariſon of them who were of any eſteem.

We *ſpeak* of theſe things in a poor, low, broken manner. We *teach* them as they are revealed in the ſcripture. We labour by faith to adhere unto them as revealed. But when we come into a ſteady, direct view and conſideration of the *thing itſelf*, our minds fail, our hearts tremble, and we can find no reſt, but in an holy admiration of what we cannot comprehend. Here we are at a loſs, and know that we ſhall be ſo whilſt we are in this world: but all the ineffable fruits and benefits of this truth are communicated unto them that do believe.

It is with reference hereunto, that that great promiſe concerning him is given unto the church, Iſa. viii. 14. *He ſhall be for a ſanctuary*, (namely, unto all that believe, as it is expounded, 1 Pet. ii. 8.); *but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them that ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed.*

He is herein a *ſanctuary*, an aſſured refuge unto all that betake themſelves unto him. What is it that any man in diſtreſs, who flies thereunto, may look for in a *ſanctuary*? A ſupply of all his wants, a deliverance from all his fears, a defence againſt all his dangers, is propoſed unto him therein. Such is the Lord Chriſt herein unto ſin-diſtreſſed ſouls; he is a refuge unto us in all ſpiritual diſtreſſes and diſconſolations, Heb. vi. 18. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us.* See the expoſition of the place. Are we or any of us burdened with a ſenſe of ſin? are we perplexed with temptations? are we bowed down under the oppreſſion of any ſpiritual adverſary? do we on any of theſe accounts walk in darkneſs and have no light? One view of the glory of Chriſt herein is able to ſupport us and relieve us.

Unto whom we betake ourſelves for relief in any caſe, we have regard to nothing but their *will* and their *power*. If they have both, we are ſure of relief. And what ſhall

we

we fear in the *will* of Chriſt as unto this end? what will he not do for us? He who thus *emptied* and *humbled* himſelf, who ſo infinitely condeſcended from the prerogative of his glory in his being and ſelf-ſufficiency, in the ſuſception of our nature for the diſcharge of the office of a Mediator on our behalf; will he not relieve us in all our diſtreſſes? *will* he not do all for us we ſtand in need of, that we may be eternally ſaved? *will* he not be a *ſanctuary* unto us?

Nor have we hereon any ground to fear his *power*: for by this infinite condeſcenſion to be a ſuffering man, he loſt nothing of his power as *God omnipotent*; nothing of his infinite wiſdom or glorious grace. He could ſtill do, all that he could do as God from eternity. If there be any thing therefore in a coaleſcency of *infinite power*, with *infinite condeſcenſion*, to conſtitute a *ſanctuary* for diſtreſſed ſinners, it is all in Chriſt Jeſus. And if we ſee him not glorious herein, it is becauſe there is no *light of faith* in us.

This then *is the reſt wherewith we may cauſe the weary to reſt, and this is the refreſhment. Herein is he an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as a ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land.* Hereon he ſays, *I have ſatiated the weary ſoul, and have refreſhed every ſorrowful ſoul.* Under this conſideration it is, that in all evangelical promiſes and invitations for coming to him, he is propoſed unto diſtreſſed ſinners as their only *ſanctuary*.

Herein is he a *ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence*, unto the unbelieving and diſobedient who *ſtumble at the word.* They cannot, they will not ſee the glory of this *condeſcenſion*, they neither deſire nor labour ſo to do; yea, they hate it and deſpiſe it. Chriſt in it is a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a *rock of offence* unto them. Wherefore they chuſe rather utterly to deny his divine perſon, than allow that he did thus abaſe himſelf for our ſakes. Rather than they will own this glory, they will allow him no glory. A man they ſay he was, and no more, and this was his glory. This is that principle of darkneſs and unbelief, which works effectually at this day in the minds of many. They think it an abſurd thing, as the Jews did of old, that he being a man ſhould be God alſo; or on the other hand, that the Son of God ſhould thus condeſcend to take our nature on him. This

they

they can ſee no glory in, no relief, no refuge, no refreſhment unto their ſouls in any of their diſtreſſes: therefore do they deny his divine perſon. Here faith triumphs againſt them, it finds that to be a *glorious ſanctuary*, which they cannot at all diſcern.

But it is not ſo much the declaration or vindication of this glory of Chriſt which I am at preſent engaged in, as an exhortation unto the *practical contemplation* of it in a way of believing. And I know that among many this is too much neglected; yea, of all the evils which I have ſeen in the days of my pilgrimage now drawing to their cloſe, there is none ſo grievous as the public contempt of the principal myſteries of the goſpel among them that are called Chriſtians. Religion in the profeſſion of ſome men is withered in its vital principles, weakened in its nerves and ſinews, but thought to be put off with outward gaiety and bravery.

But my exhortation is unto diligence in the contemplation of this *glory of Chriſt*, and the exerciſe of our thoughts about it. Unleſs we are diligent herein, it is impoſſible we ſhould be *ſteady* in the principal *acts of faith*, or *ready* unto the principal *duties of obedience*. The principal act of faith reſpects the *divine perſon* of Chriſt, as all Chriſtians muſt acknowledge. This we can never ſecure, (as hath been declared), if we ſee not his glory in his *condeſcenſion*; and whoever reduceth his notions unto experience, will find that herein his faith ſtands or falls. And the principal duty of our obedience, is *ſelf-denial*, with *readineſs for the croſs*. Hereunto the conſideration of this condeſcenſion of Chriſt is the principal evangelical motive, and that whereinto our obedience in it is to be reſolved, as the apoſtle declares, Phil. ii. 5. 6. 7. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men.* And no man doth *deny himſelf* in a due manner, who doth it not on the conſideration of the *ſelf-denial* of the Son of God. But a prevalent motive this is thereunto. For what are the things wherein we are to deny ourſelves, or forego what we pretend to have a right unto? It is in our goods, our liberties, our relations, our lives. And what are they, any, or all of them, in themſelves, or unto us, conſidering our condition, and the end for which we were made?

made? Periſhing things, which whether we will or no, within a few days death will give us an everlaſting ſeparation from them, under the power of a *fever* or an *aſthma*, &c. as unto our intereſt in them. But how incomparable with reſpect hereunto is that *condeſcenſion* of Chriſt, whereof we have given an account? If therefore we find an unwillingneſs in us, a tergiverſation in our minds, about theſe things when called unto them in a way of duty, one view by faith of the glory of Chriſt in this condeſcenſion, and what he parted from therein, when he made himſelf of no reputation, will be an effectual cure of that ſinful diſtemper.

Herein then, I ſay, we may by *faith* behold the glory of Chriſt, as we ſhall do it by *ſight* hereafter. If we *ſee no glory in it*, if we diſcern not that which is matter of eternal admiration, we walk in darkneſs. It is the moſt ineffable effect of divine wiſdom and grace. Where are our hearts and minds, if we can ſee no glory in it? I know in the contemplation of it, it will quickly overwhelm our *reaſon*, and bring our underſtanding into a loſs: but unto this *loſs* do I deſire to be brought every day; for when faith can no more act itſelf in *comprehenſion*, when it finds the object it is fixed on, too great and glorious to be brought into our minds and capacities, it will iſſue (as we ſaid before) in holy *admiration*, humble *adoration*, and joyful *thankſgiving*. In and by its actings in them, doth it fill the ſoul with *joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*.

CHAP. V.

The glory of Chriſt in his love.

IN the ſuſception and diſcharge of the *mediatory office* by the Son of God, the ſcripture doth moſt eminently repreſent his *love*, as the ſole impelling and leading cauſe thereof, Gal. ii. 20. *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* 1 John iii. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us.* Rev. i. 5. *Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood*, &c.

Herein is he *glorious*, in a way and manner incomprehenſible: for in the glory of *divine love*, the chief *brightneſs of*

glory

glory doth conſiſt. There is nothing of dread or terror accompanying it, nothing but what is *amiable* and infinitely refreſhing. Now, that we may take a view of the glory of Chriſt herein by faith, the *nature* of it muſt be inquired into.

1. The *eternal diſpoſing cauſe* of the whole work wherein the Lord Chriſt was engaged by the ſuſception of this office, for the redemption and ſalvation of the church, is the *love of the Father*. Hereunto it is conſtantly aſcribed in the ſcripture. And this *love of the Father* acted itſelf in his eternal decrees, before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love;* and afterwards in the ſending of his Son to render it effectual, John iii. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Originally,* it is his eternal election of a portion of mankind to be brought unto the enjoyment of himſelf, through the myſtery of the blood of Chriſt, and the ſanctification of the Spirit, 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. *God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* ver. 16. *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,* &c. Eph. i. 4. to 9. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wiſdom and prudence, having made known unto us the myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf.* 1 Pet. i. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through ſanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt: grace unto you and peace be multiplied.*

This *eternal act* of the will of God the Father, doth not *contain* in it an actual approbation of, and complacency in the ſtate and condition of thoſe that are elected; but only *de-*

ſigneth

ſigneth that for them, on the account whereof, they ſhall be accepted and approved. And it is called his *love* on ſundry accounts.

1. Becauſe it is an act ſuited unto that glorious excellency of his nature, wherein he is love; for *God is love*, 1 John iv. 8. 9. And the firſt egreſs of the divine properties muſt therefore be in an act of communicative love. And whereas this election being an eternal act of the will of God, can have no *moving cauſe* but what is in himſelf, if we could look into all the treaſures of the divine excellencies, we ſhould find none whereunto it could be ſo properly aſcribed, as unto *love*. Wherefore,

2. It is ſtiled *love*, becauſe it was *free* and undeſerved, as unto any thing on our part. For whatever good is done unto any altogether undeſerved, if it be with a deſign of their profit and advantage, it is in an *act of love*, and can have no other cauſe. So is it with us in reſpect of eternal election. There was nothing in us, nothing foreſeen, as that which *from ourſelves* would be in us, that ſhould any way move the will of God unto this election: for whatever is good in the beſt of men is an effect of it, Eph. i. 4. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love.* Whereas therefore it tends unto our eternal good, the ſpring of it muſt be *love*. And,

3. The *fruits* or *effects* of it are inconceivable acts of love. It is by multiplied acts of love, that it is made effectual, John iii. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Jer. xxxi. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving-kindneſs have I drawn thee.* Eph. i. 3. 4. 5. 6. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt: according as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* 1 John iv. 8. 9. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifeſted the love of God*

towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. ver. 16. *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

This is the eternal ſpring which is derived unto the church, through the mediation of Chriſt. Wherefore, that which put all the deſign of this eternal love of the Father into execution, and wrought out the accompliſhment of it, was *the love of the Son*, which we inquire after; and light may be given unto it in the enſuing obſervations.

1. The whole number or ſociety of the elect, were creatures made in the image of God, and thereby in a ſtate of *love* with him. All that they were, had, or hoped for, were effects of divine goodneſs and love. And the life of their ſouls was *love unto God.* And a bleſſed ſtate it was, preparatory for the eternal *life of love* in heaven.

2. From this ſtate they *fell by ſin*, into a ſtate of *enmity* with God; which is comprehenſive of all miſeries, temporal and eternal.

3. Notwithſtanding this woful *cataſtrophe* of our firſt ſtate, yet our nature on many accounts was recoverable unto the enjoyment of God, as I have at large elſewhere declared.

4. In this condition, the firſt *act of love* in Chriſt towards us, was in *pity* and *compaſſion.* A creature made in the image of God, and fallen into miſery, yet capable of recovery, is the proper object of *divine compaſſion.* That which is ſo celebrated in the ſcripture, as the *bowels*, the *pity*, the *compaſſion of God*, is the acting of divine love towards us, on the conſideration of our diſtreſs and miſery. But all compaſſion ceaſeth towards them whoſe condition is irrecoverable. Wherefore the Lord Chriſt pitied *not the angels* that fell, becauſe their nature was not to be relieved. Of this *compaſſion* in Chriſt, ſee Heb. ii. 14. 15. 16. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame: that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* Iſ. lxiii. 9. *In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his preſence ſaved them: in his love and in*

in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

5. As then we lay under the eye of Chriſt in our *miſery*, we were the objects of his *pity* and *compaſſion*: but as he looketh on us as *recoverable* out of that ſtate, his *love* worketh in and by *delight*. It was an inconceivable *delight* unto him, to take a proſpect of the deliverance of mankind unto the glory of God, which is alſo an act of love. This is divinely expreſſed, Prov. viii. 30. 31. *Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men.* As it hath been elſewhere explained.

6. If it be inquired, whence this *compaſſion* and *delight* in him ſhould ariſe, what ſhould be the cauſe of them; that he who was eternally bleſſed in his own ſelf-ſufficiency, ſhould ſo deeply concern himſelf in our loſt forlorn condition? I ſay it did ſo, merely from the *infinite love* and goodneſs of his own nature, without the leaſt procuring inducement from us, or any thing in us, Tit. iii. 5. *Not by works of righteouſneſs, which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.*

7. In this his readineſs, willingneſs, and delight, ſpringing from love and compaſſion, the *counſel* of God concerning the way of our recovery, is as it were propoſed unto him. Now this was a *way* of great difficulties and perplexities unto himſelf; that is, unto his perſon as it was to be conſtituted. Unto the divine nature nothing is grievous, nothing is difficult: but he was to have *another* nature, wherein he was to undergo the difficulties of this way and work. It was required of him, that he ſhould *pity us*, until he had none left to pity himſelf when he ſtood in need of it; that he ſhould purſue his *delight* to ſave us, until his own *ſoul was heavy* and ſorrowful unto death; that he ſhould relieve us in our ſufferings, by *ſuffering* the ſame things that we ſhould have done. But he was not in the leaſt hereby deterred from undertaking this work of love and mercy for us; yea his love role on this propoſal, like the waters of a mighty ſtream againſt oppoſition. For hereon he ſays, "*Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*, it is my *delight* to do it, Heb. x. 5. 6. 7. Iſ. l. 6. 7. *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not*

rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.

8. Being thus inclined, diſpoſed, and ready in the eternal love of his divine perſon, to undertake the office of mediation, and the work of our redemption; a body was *prepared* for him. In this body or human nature made his *own*, he was to make this love effectual in all its inclinations and actings. It was provided for him unto this end, and filled with all grace in a way *unmeaſurable*, eſpecially with *fervent love* unto mankind. And hereby it became a meet inſtrument, to actuate his eternal love in all the fruits of it.

9. It is hence evident, that this *glorious love of Chriſt* doth not conſiſt alone in the *eternal actings of his divine perſon*, or the divine nature in his perſon: ſuch indeed is the *love of the Father*, namely, his eternal purpoſe for the communication of grace and glory, with his acquieſcency therein: but there is more in the love of Chriſt; for when he exerciſed this love, he was man alſo, and not God only. And in none of thoſe eternal acts of love could the human nature of Chriſt have any intereſt or concern; yet is the love of the man Chriſt Jeſus, celebrated in the ſcripture.

10. Wherefore this love of Chriſt which we inquire after, is the *love of his perſon*, that is, which he in his own perſon acts in and by his diſtinct natures, according unto their diſtinct eſſential properties. And the acts of love in theſe diſtinct natures, are infinite, diſtinct, and different; yet are they all acts of *one* and the *ſame perſon*. So then, whether that act of love in Chriſt, which we would at any time conſider, be an eternal act of the *divine* nature in the perſon of the Son of God; or whether it be an act of the *human*, performed in time by the gracious faculties and powers of that nature, it is ſtill the *love of one and the ſelf-ſame perſon, Chriſt Jeſus*.

It was an act of inexpreſſible love in him, that he *aſſumed our nature*, Heb. ii. 14. 17. But it was an act in and of his divine nature only; for it was antecedent unto the exiſtence of his human nature, which could not therefore concur therein. His *laying down his life* for us, was an act of inconceivable love, 1 John iii. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us.* Yet was it only an act of the human *nature*, wherein he offered himſelf and died.

died. But both the one and the other were acts of his *divine perſon*; whence it is ſaid, that God laid down his life for us, and purchaſed the church with his own blood.

This is that love of Chriſt wherein he is glorious, and wherein we are by faith to behold his glory. A great part of the bleſſedneſs of the ſaints in heaven, and their triumph therein, conſiſts in their *beholding of this glory* of Chriſt, in their thankful contemplation of the fruits of it, Rev. v. 9. 10. *And they ſung a new ſong, ſaying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and haſt made us unto our God kings and prieſts: and we ſhall reign on the earth,* &c.

The illuſtrious *brightneſs* wherewith this glory ſhines in heaven, the all-ſatisfying *ſweetneſs* which the view of it gives unto the ſouls of the ſaints there poſſeſſed of glory, are not by us conceivable nor to be expreſſed. Here this love *paſſeth knowledge*, there we ſhall comprehend the dimenſions of it. Yet even here, if we are not ſlothful and carnal, we may have a refreſhing proſpect of it; and where comprehenſion fails, let admiration take place.

My preſent buſineſs is to exhort others unto the contemplation of it, though it be but a little, a very little, a ſmall portion of it that I can conceive; and leſs than that very little, that I can expreſs. Yet may it be my duty to excite not only myſelf, but others alſo unto due inquiries after it; unto which end I offer the things enſuing.

1. *Labour that your minds may continually be fitted and prepared for ſuch heavenly contemplations.* If they are carnal and ſenſual, or filled with earthly things, a due ſenſe of this *love of Chriſt* and its glory, will not abide in them. Virtue and vice in their higheſt degrees, are not more *diametrically* oppoſite and inconſiſtent in the ſame mind, than are an habitual courſe of ſenſual worldly thoughts, and a due contemplation of the glory of the love of Chriſt: yea, an *earneſtneſs of ſpirit*, pregnant with a multitude of thoughts about the lawful occaſions of life, is obſtructive of all due communion with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt herein.

Few there are whoſe minds are *prepared* in a due manner for this duty. The actions and communications of the moſt, evidence what is the inward frame of their ſouls. They rove

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up and down in their thoughts, which are continually led by their affections into the corners of the earth. It is in vain to call ſuch perſons unto contemplations of the glory of Chriſt in his love. An holy compoſure of mind by virtue of ſpiritual principles, an inclination to ſeek after refreſhment in heavenly things, and to bathe the ſoul in the fountain of them, with conſtant apprehenſions of the excellency of this divine glory, are required hereunto.

2. Be not ſatisfied with *general notions* concerning the love of Chriſt, which repreſent no glory unto the mind; wherewith many deceive themſelves. All who believe his divine perſon, profeſs a valuation of his love, and think them *not Chriſtians* who are otherwiſe minded: but they have only *general notions*, and not any diſtinct conceptions of it, and really know not what it is. To deliver us from this ſnare, peculiar meditations on its principal concerns are required of us. As,

(1.) *Whoſe love it is;* namely, of the divine perſon of the Son of God. He is expreſsly called *God*, with reſpect unto the exerciſe of this love; that we may always conſider whoſe it is, 1 John iii. 16. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us.*

(2.) By what *ways* and *means* this wonderful *love* of the Son of God doth act itſelf; namely, in the divine nature, by eternal acts of wiſdom, goodneſs, and grace proper thereunto; and in the human, by temporary acts of pity or compaſſion, with all the fruits of them in doing and ſuffering for us, Eph. iii. 19. *And to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* Heb. ii. 14. 15. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame: that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage.* Rev. i. 5. *Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood,* &c.

(3.) What is the *freedom* of it, as unto any deſert on our part, 1 John iv. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins.* It was hatred, not love, that we in ourſelves deſerved, which is a conſideration ſuited to fill the ſoul with ſelf-

ſelf-abaſement, the beſt of frames in the contemplation of the glory of Chriſt.

(4.) What is the *efficacy* of it in its fruits and effects, with ſundry other conſiderations of the like nature. By a diſtinct proſpect and admiration of theſe things, the ſoul may walk in this paradiſe of God, and gather here and there an heavenly flower, conveying unto it a ſweet-ſavour of this love of Chriſt, Cant. ii. 2. 3. 4. *As the lily among thorns, ſo is my love among the daughters. As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons. I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte. He brought me to the banqueting-houſe, and his banner over me was love.*

Moreover, be not contented to have *right notions* of the love of Chriſt in your minds, unleſs you can attain a gracious *taſte* of it in your hearts; no more than you would be to ſee a feaſt or banquet richly prepared, and partake of nothing of it unto your refreſhment. It is of that nature that we may have a *ſpiritual ſenſation* of it in our minds; whence it is compared by the ſpouſe to *apples, and flagons of wine.* We may *taſte* that the Lord is gracious: and if we find not a reliſh of it in our hearts, we ſhall not long retain the notion of it in our minds. Chriſt is the meat, the bread, the food of our ſouls. Nothing is in him of an higher ſpiritual nouriſhment than his love, which we ſhould always deſire.

In this love is he *glorious;* for it is ſuch as no creatures, angels or men, could have the leaſt conceptions of, before its manifeſtation by its effects: and after its manifeſtation, it is in this world abſolutely incomprehenſible.

CHAP. VI.

The glory of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his mediatory office.

AS the Lord Chriſt was *glorious* in the *ſuſception* of his office; ſo was he alſo in its *diſcharge.* An unſeen glory accompanied him in all that he did, in all that he ſuffered. *Unſeen* it was unto the eyes of the world, but not in his who alone can judge of it. Had men ſeen it, they would not have *crucified the Lord of glory.* Yet to ſome of

of them it was made manifeſt. Hence they teſtified that in the diſcharge of his office, they *beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, John i. 14. and that when others could ſee neither *form nor comelineſs in him that he ſhould be deſired*, Iſ. liii. 2. And ſo it is at this day. I ſhall only make ſome few obſervations; firſt, on what he did in a *way* of *obedience*, and then on what he *ſuffered* in the diſcharge of his office ſo undertaken by him.

1. *What he did*, what obedience he yielded unto the law of God in the diſcharge of his office, (with reſpect whereunto he ſaid, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, yea, thy law is in my heart*), it was all *on his own free choice* or election, and was reſolved thereinto alone. It is our duty to endeavour after *freedom, willingneſs*, and chearfulneſs in all our obedience. Obedience hath its formal nature from our *wills*. So much as there is of our *wills*, in what we do towards God, ſo much there is of obedience, and no more. Howbeit, we are *antecedently* unto all acts of our own wills, obliged unto all that is called obedience. From the very conſtitution of our natures, we are neceſſarily ſubject unto the law of God. All that is left unto us, is a voluntary *compliance* with unavoidable commands; with him it was not ſo. An act of his own will and choice *preceded* all obligation as unto obedience. He *obeyed becauſe he would*, before *becauſe he ought*. He ſaid, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*, before he was obliged to do that will. By his own choice, and that in an act of infinite condeſcenſion and love, as we have ſhewed, he was *made of a woman*, and thereby *made under the law*. In his divine perſon he was Lord of the law, above it, no more obnoxious unto its commands, than its curſe. Neither was he afterwards in himſelf on his own account unobnoxious unto its curſe, merely becauſe he was *innocent*, but alſo becauſe he was every way above the law itſelf, and all its force.

This was the original glory of his obedience. The wiſdom, the grace, the love, the condeſcenſion that was in this *choice*, animated every act, every duty of his obedience, rendering it amiable in the ſight of God, and uſeful unto us. So when he went unto John to be baptized, he who knew he had no need of it on his own account, would have declined the duty of adminiſtering that ordinance unto him; but he replied, *Suffer it to be ſo now: for thus it becometh*

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us *to fulfil all righteousness*, Matth. iii. 15. This I have undertaken *willingly* of my own accord, without any need of it for myself, and therefore will discharge it. For him who was *Lord* of all universally, thus to submit himself to universal obedience, carrieth along with it an evidence of glorious grace.

2. This obedience as unto the *use and end* of it, was not for himself, but *for us*. We were obliged unto it, and could not perform it; he was not obliged unto it any otherwise but by a free act of his own will, and did perform it. God gave him this honour, that he should obey for the whole church, that by *his obedience we should be made righteous*, Rom. v. 19. Herein, I say, did God give him honour and glory, that his obedience should stand in the stead of the perfect obedience of the church as unto justification.

3. His obedience being absolutely *universal*, and absolutely *perfect*, was the great representative of the holiness of God in the law. It was represented glorious when the *ten words* were written by the finger of God in tables of stone: it appears yet more eminently in the spiritual transcription of it in the hearts of believers: but absolutely and perfectly it is exemplified only in the holiness and obedience of Christ, which answered it unto the utmost. And this is no small part of his glory in obedience, that the holiness of God in the law was therein, and therein alone in that one instance, as unto human nature, fully represented.

4. He wrought out this obedience against all *difficulties and oppressions*. For although he was absolutely free from that disorder which in us hath invaded our whole natures, which internally renders all obedience difficult unto us, and perfect obedience impossible; yet as unto opposition from without, in *temptations*, *sufferings*, *reproaches*, contradictions, he met with more than we all. Hence is that glorious word, *Although he were a Son, yet he learned obedience, by the things which he suffered*, Heb. v. 8. See our exposition of this place. But,

5. The glory of this obedience ariseth principally from the consideration of the *person*, who thus yielded it unto God. This was no other but the Son of God made man; God and man in one person. He who was in heaven, above all, Lord of all, at the same time lived in the world in a condition of no reputation, and a course of the strictest obedience

unto the whole law of God. He unto whom prayer was made, prayed himſelf night and day. He whom all the angels of heaven, and all creatures worſhipped, was continually converſant in all the duties of the worſhip of God. He who was over the houſe, diligently obſerved the meaneſt office of the houſe. He that made all men, in whoſe hand they are all as clay in the hand of the potter, obſerved amongſt them the ſtricteſt rules of *juſtice*, in giving unto every one his due, and of *charity*, in giving good things that were not ſo due. This is that which renders the obedience of Chriſt in the diſcharge of his office, both myſterious and glorious.

2*dly*, Again, the glory of Chriſt is propoſed unto us in what he *ſuffered* in the diſcharge of the office which he had undertaken. There belonged indeed unto his office, victory, ſucceſs, and triumph with great glory, Iſ. lxiii. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength? I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have troden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood ſhall be ſprinkled upon my garments, and I will ſtain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought ſalvation unto me, and my fury, it upheld me.* But there were *ſufferings* alſo required of him antecedently thereunto. *Ought not Chriſt to ſuffer, and to enter into his glory?*

But ſuch were theſe *ſufferings of Chriſt*, as that in our thoughts about them, our minds quickly recoil in a ſenſe of their inſufficieney to conceive a-right of them: never any one launched into this ocean with his meditations, but he quickly found himſelf unable to fathom the depths of it: nor ſhall I here undertake an inquiry into them. I ſhall only point at this ſpring of glory, and leave it under a vail.

We might here look on him as under the *weight* of the wrath of God, and the curſe of the law; taking on himſelf, and on his whole ſoul, the utmoſt of evil that God had ever

threatened

threatened to sin or sinners: we might look on him in his *agony* and bloody sweat, in his strong cries and supplications, when he was sorrowful unto the death, and *began to be amazed*, in apprehensions of the things that were coming on him; of that dreadful *trial* which he was entering into: we might look upon him, conflicting with all the *powers of darkness*, the rage and madness of men; suffering in his soul, his body, his name, his reputation, his goods, his life; some of these sufferings being immediate from God above, others from devils and wicked men, acting according to the determinate counsel of God: we might look on him *praying*, *weeping*, *crying out*, bleeding, dying, in all things making his soul an offering for sin. So was he taken from prison and judgement, and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off from the land of the living; *for the transgression* (saith God) *of my people was he smitten*, Is. liii. 8. But these things I shall not insist on in particular, but leave them under such a vail as may give us a prospect into them, so far as to fill our souls with holy admiration.

LORD, what is man that thou art thus mindful of him! and the son of man that thou visitest him! Who hath known thy mind, or who hath been thy counseller? O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out! What shall we say unto these things? that God spared not his only Son, but gave him up unto death, and all the evils included therein, for such poor lost sinners as we are; that for our sakes the eternal Son of God should submit himself unto all the evils that our natures are obnoxious unto, and that our sins had deserved, that we might be delivered?

How *glorious* is the Lord Christ on this account in the eyes of believers! When Adam had sinned, and thereby eternally, according unto the sanction of the law, ruined himself and all his posterity, he stood ashamed, afraid, trembling as one ready to perish for ever under the displeasure of God. *Death* was that which he had deserved, and *immediate death* was that which he looked for. In this state the Lord Christ in the promise comes unto him, and says, *Poor creature!* how woful is thy condition! how *deformed* is thy appearance! what is become of the beauty, of the glory of that *image* of God wherein thou wast created? how hast thou

taken on thee the monſtrous ſhape and image of Satan? And yet thy preſent miſery, thy entrance into duſt and darkneſs, is no way to be compared with what is to enſue; eternal *diſtreſs* lies at the door. But yet look up once more, and *behold me*, that thou mayſt have ſome glimpſe of what is in the deſigns of infinite wiſdom, love, and grace; come forth from thy vain *ſhelter*, thy hiding-place; I will put myſelf into thy condition; I will undergo and bear that burden of guilt and puniſhment, which would ſink thee eternally into the bottom of hell. I will *pay that which I never took*; and be made *temporally* a curſe for thee, that thou mayſt attain unto *eternal* bleſſedneſs. To the ſame purpoſe he ſpeaks unto convinced ſinners, in the invitation he gives them to come unto him.

Thus is the Lord Chriſt ſet forth in the *goſpel*, *evidently crucified before our eyes*, Gal. iii. 1. namely, in the repreſentation that is made of his glory, in the *ſuffering* he underwent for the diſcharge of the office he had undertaken. Let us then behold him as poor, deſpiſed, perſecuted, reproached, reviled, *hanged on a tree*; in all, labouring under a ſenſe of the *wrath of God* due unto our ſins. Unto this end are they recorded in the goſpel, read, preached, and repreſented unto us. But what can we ſee herein? what glory is in theſe things? Are not theſe the things which all the world of Jews and Gentiles ſtumbled and took offence at? thoſe wherein he was appointed to be a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and a *rock of offence*? Was it not eſteemed *a fooliſh thing* to look for help and deliverance by the miſeries of another? to look for life by his death? The apoſtle declares at large that ſuch it was eſteemed, 1 Cor. i. So was it in the wiſdom of the world. But even on the account of theſe things is he honourable, glorious, and precious in the ſight of them that do believe, 1 Pet. ii. 6. 7. For even herein he was the *wiſdom of God, and the power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. And the apoſtle declares at large, the grounds and reaſons of the different thoughts and apprehenſions of men, concerning the croſs and ſufferings of Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4. *But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The glory of Chriſt in his exaltation, after the accompliſhment of the work of mediation in this world.

WE may in the next place behold the glory of Chriſt with reſpect unto his office, in the actings of God towards him, which enſued on his diſcharge of it in this world, in his *own exaltation.*

Theſe are the two heads, whereunto all the propheſies and predictions concerning Jeſus Chriſt under the Old Teſtament are referred, namely, his *ſufferings*, and the *glory* that enſued thereon, 1 Pet. i. 11. *All the prophets teſtified beforehand of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow.* So when he himſelf *opened the ſcriptures* unto his diſciples, he gave them this as the ſum of the doctrine contained in them; *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory?* Luke xxiv. 26. The ſame is frequently expreſſed elſewhere, Rom. xiv. 9. Phil. ii. 5. 6. 7. 8.

So much as we know of Chriſt, his ſufferings and his glory; ſo much do we underſtand of the ſcripture, and no more.

Theſe are the two heads of the mediation of Chriſt and his kingdom; and this is their order which they communicate unto the church; firſt *ſufferings*, and then *glory: If we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with him*, 2 Tim. ii. 12. They do but deceive themſelves, who deſign any other *method* of theſe things. Some would *reign* here in this world; and we may ſay with the apoſtle, *Would you did reign, that we might reign with you.* But the members of the myſtical body muſt be *conformed* unto the Head. In him ſufferings went before glory, and ſo they muſt in them. The order in the kingdom of Satan and the world, is contrary hereunto. Firſt, the *good things* of this life, and then *eternal miſery*, is the method of that kingdom, Luke xvi. 25. *But Abraham ſaid, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receiveſt thy good things, and likewiſe Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

Theſe are the two ſprings of the ſalvation of the church; the

the two *anointed ones* that ſtand before the Lord of the whole earth; from which all the *golden oil* whereby the church is dedicated unto God, and ſanctified, doth flow. This glory of Chriſt in his *exaltation* which followed on his ſufferings, is that which we now inquire into. And we ſhall ſtate our apprehenſions of it in the enſuing obſervations.

1. This is peculiarly *that glory* which the Lord Chriſt prays that his diſciples may be where he is, to behold it. It is not ſolely ſo, as it is conſidered abſolutely; but it is that, wherein all the other parts of his glory are made manifeſt. It is the evidence, the pledge, the means of the manifeſtation of them all. As unto all the inſtances of his glory before inſiſted on, there was a vail drawn over them whilſt he was in this world. Hence the moſt ſaw *nothing* of it, and the beſt ſaw it but *obſcurely*. But in this glory that vail is taken off, whereby the whole glory of his perſon in itſelf, and in the work of mediation is moſt illuſtriouſly manifeſted. When we ſhall immediately behold this glory, we ſhall ſee him as he is. This is that glory whereof the Father *made grant* unto him before the foundation of the world, and wherewith he was actually inveſted upon his aſcenſion.

2. By this glory of Chriſt, I do not underſtand the *eſſential glory* of his divine nature; or his being abſolutely in his own perſon over all *God bleſſed for ever*; but the manifeſtation of this glory in particular, after it had been *vailed* in this world under the *form of a ſervant*, belongs hereunto. The divine glory of Chriſt in his perſon belongs not unto his exaltation; but the manifeſtation of it doth ſo. It was not given him by *free donation*; but the declaration of it unto the church of angels and men after his humiliation was ſo. He left it not whilſt he was in this world; but the direct evidence and declaration of it he *laid aſide*, until he was *declared to be the Son of God with power*, by the reſurrection from the dead.

When the ſun is under a total eclipſe, he loſeth nothing of his native beauty, light, and glory: he is ſtill the ſame that he was from the beginning; a *great light to rule the day*. To us he appears as a dark uſeleſs *meteor*; but when he comes by his courſe to free himſelf from the *lunar interpoſition* unto his proper aſpect towards us, he manifeſts again his native light and glory. So was it with the divine nature of Chriſt, as we have before declared. He *vailed* the *glory* of

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it by the interpoſition of the fleſh, or the aſſumption of our nature to be his *own*, with this addition, that therein he took on him the *form of a ſervant*, of a perſon of mean and low degree. But this temporary *eclipſe* being paſt and over, it now ſhines forth in its infinite luſtre and beauty, which belongs unto the preſent *exaltation* of his perſon. And when thoſe who beheld him here as a poor, ſorrowful, perſecuted man, dying on the croſs, came to ſee him in all the infinite increated glories of the divine nature, manifeſting themſelves in his perſon, it could not but fill their ſouls with tranſcendent joy and admiration. And this is one reaſon of his *prayer* for them whilſt he was on the earth, that they *might be where he is to behold his glory*. For he knew what ineffable ſatisfaction it would be unto them for evermore.

3. I do not underſtand abſolutely the *glorification of the human nature of Chriſt*, that very ſoul and body wherein he lived and died, ſuffered and roſe again, though that alſo be included herein. This alſo were a ſubject meet for our contemplation, eſpecially as it is the *exemplar* of that glory which he will bring all thoſe unto, who believe in him. But becauſe at preſent we look ſomewhat further, I ſhall obſerve only one or two things concerning it.

(1.) *That very nature itſelf* which he took on him in this world, is exalted into glory. Some under a pretence of great ſubtilty and accuracy, do deny that he hath either fleſh or blood in heaven, that is, as to the ſubſtance of them; however you may ſuppoſe that they are changed, purified, glorified. The great foundation of the church, and all goſpel faith is, that he was *made fleſh*, that he did partake of fleſh and blood, even as did the children. That he hath forſaken that *fleſh and blood* which he was *made* in the womb of the bleſſed virgin, wherein he lived and died, which he offered unto God in ſacrifice, and wherein he roſe from the dead, is a Socinian fiction. What is the true nature of the glorification of the *humanity* of Chriſt, neither thoſe who thus ſurmiſe, nor we can perfectly comprehend. It doth not yet appear what we ourſelves ſhall be, much leſs is it evident unto us what he is, whom we ſhall be like. But that he is ſtill in the ſame *human nature*, wherein he was on the earth, that he hath the ſame rational ſoul, and the ſame body, is a fundamental article of the Chriſtian faith.

(2.) This nature of the man Chriſt Jeſus, is *filled with all the*

the divine graces and perfections whereof a limited created nature is capable. It is not *deified*, it is not made a God; it doth not in heaven coaleſce into one nature with the divine by a compoſition of them; it hath not any eſſential property of the Deity communicated unto it, ſo as ſubjectively to reſide in it; it is not made *omniſcient*, *omnipreſent*, *omnipotent*: but it is exalted in a fulneſs of all divine perfection ineffably above the glory of angels and men. It is incomprehenſibly nearer God than they all; hath communications from God, in glorious light, love, and power, ineffably above them all. But it is ſtill a creature.

For the *ſubſtance* of this glory of the human nature of Chriſt, believers ſhall be made partakers of it; for when we *ſee him as he is*, we ſhall *be like him*; but as unto the degrees and meaſures of it, his glory is above all that we can be made partakers of: *There is one glory of the ſun, another of the moon and ſtars, and one ſtar differeth from another in glory*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Cor. xv. 41. And if there be a difference in glory among the *ſtars* themſelves, as to ſome degrees of the ſame glory; how much more is there between the glory of the *ſun*, and that of any *ſtar* whatever? Such is the difference that is and will be unto eternity between the human nature of Chriſt, and what glorified believers do attain unto. But yet this is not that properly wherein the glory of Chriſt in his *exaltation* after his humiliation and death, doth conſiſt. The things that belong unto it may be reduced unto the enſuing heads.

1. It conſiſteth in the *exaltation* of the human nature, as ſubſiſting in the divine perſon, above the whole creation of God, in power, dignity, authority, and rule, with all things that the wiſdom of God hath appointed to render the glory of it illuſtrious. I have ſo largely inſiſted on the explication and confirmation of this part of the preſent glory of Chriſt, in the expoſition of Heb. i. 2. 3. that I have nothing more to add thereunto.

2. It doth ſo in the *evidence given* of the infinite *love of God the Father unto him*, and his delight in him, with the eternal approbation of his diſcharge of the office committed unto him. Hence he is ſaid *to ſit at the right hand of God*, or at the *right hand of the Majeſty on high*. That the glory and dignity of Chriſt in his exaltation is *ſingular*, the higheſt that can be given to a creature, incomprehenſible; that he

he is with reſpect unto the diſcharge of his office, under the eternal approbation of God; that as ſo glorioufly exalted, he is proclaimed unto the whole creation, are all contained in this expreſſion.

3. Hereunto is added the full *manifeſtation* of his own divine wiſdom, love, and grace in the work of mediation and redemption of the church. This glory is abſolutely ſingular and peculiar unto him. Neither *angels* or *men* have the leaſt intereſt in it. Here we ſee it darkly in a glaſs; above, it ſhines forth in its brightneſs, to the eternal joy of them who behold him.

This is that glory which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in an eſpecial manner *prayed* that his diſciples might behold. This is that whereof we ought to endeavour a proſpect by *faith*. By *faith*, I ſay, and not by *imagination*. Vain and fooliſh men having general notions of this *glory of Chriſt*, knowing nothing of the real nature of it, have endeavoured to repreſent it in *pictures* and *images*, with all that luſtre and beauty which the art of painting, the ornaments of gold and jewels, can give them. This is that repreſentation of the preſent glory of Chriſt, which being made and propoſed unto the imagination and carnal affections of ſuperſtitious perſons, carrieth ſuch a ſhew of devotion and veneration in the Papal church. But they err not knowing the ſcripture, nor the eternal glory of the Son of God.

This is the ſole foundation of all our meditations herein. The glory that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is in the real actual poſſeſſion of in heaven, can be no otherwiſe ſeen or apprehended in this world, but in the *light of faith*, fixing itſelf on divine revelation. To behold this glory of Chriſt is not an act of *fancy* or imagination. It doth not conſiſt in *framing* unto ourſelves the ſhape of a glorious perſon in heaven. But the ſteady exerciſe of faith on the *revelation* and *deſcription* made of this glory of Chriſt in the ſcripture, is the ground, rule and meaſure of all divine meditations thereon.

Hereon our duty it is, *to call ourſelves to an account*, as unto our endeavour after a gracious view of this glory of Chriſt: when did we ſtedfaſtly behold it? when had we ſuch a view of it as wherein our ſouls have been ſatisfied and refreſhed? It is declared and repreſented unto us as one of the chief props of our faith, as an help of our joy, as an object of our hope, as a ground of our conſolation, as our

greateſt encouragement unto obedience and ſuffering. Are our minds every day converſant with thoughts hereof? or do we think ourſelves not much concerned herein? do we look upon it, as that which is without us and above us, as that which we ſhall have time enough to conſider when we come to heaven? So is it with many. They care neither *where* Chriſt is, nor *what* he is, ſo that one way or other they may be ſaved by him. They hope, as they pretend, that they ſhall ſee him and his glory in heaven, and that they ſuppoſe to be time enough. But in vain do they pretend a deſire thereof; in vain are their expectations of any ſuch thing. They who endeavour not to behold the glory of Chriſt in this world, as hath been often ſaid, ſhall never behold him in glory hereafter unto their ſatisfaction; nor do they deſire ſo to do; only they ſuppoſe it a part of that *relief* which they would have when they are gone out of this world. For what ſhould beget ſuch a deſire in them? Nothing can do it, but ſome view of it here by faith, which they deſpiſe, or totally neglect. Every pretence of a *deſire of heaven*, and of the preſence of Chriſt therein, that doth not ariſe from, that is not reſolved into that proſpect which we have of the glory of Chriſt in this world by faith, is mere *fancy* and imagination.

Our conſtant exerciſe in *meditation* on this glory of Chriſt will fill us with *joy* on his account, which is an effectual motive unto the duty itſelf. We are for the moſt part *ſelfiſh*, and look no farther than our own concernments. So we may be pardoned and ſaved by him, we care not much how it is with himſelf, but only preſume it is well enough. We find not any concernment of our own therein. But this frame is directly oppoſite unto the *genius* of divine faith and love. For their principal actings conſiſt in preferring Chriſt above ourſelves; and our concerns in him above all our own. Let this then ſtir us up unto the contemplation of this glory. Who is it that is thus exalted over all? who is thus encompaſſed with glory, majeſty, and power? who is it that ſits down at the right hand of the Majeſty on high, all his enemies being made his footſtool? Is it not he, who in this world was poor, deſpiſed, perſecuted and ſlain, all for our ſakes? is it not the ſame *Jeſus* who loved us, and gave himſelf for us, and waſhed us in his own blood? So the apoſtle told the Jews, that the *ſame Jeſus*, *whom they ſlew and hanged*

hanged on a tree, God had exalted with his right hand to be a Saviour, to give repentance unto Iſrael, and the forgiveneſs of ſins, Acts v. 30. 31. If we have any valuation of his love, if we have any concernment in what he hath done and ſuffered for the church, we cannot but rejoice in his preſent ſtate and glory.

Let the world rage whilſt it pleaſeth; let it ſet itſelf with all its power and craft againſt every thing of Chriſt that is in it; which, whatever is by ſome otherwiſe pretended, proceeds from an hatred unto his perſon; let men make themſelves drunk with the blood of his ſaints, we have this to oppoſe unto all their attempts, unto our ſupportment, namely, what he ſays of himſelf; *Fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt, he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death*, Rev. i. 17. 18.

Bleſſed Jeſus! we can add nothing to thee, nothing to thy glory; but it is *a joy of heart unto us, that thou art what thou art*; that thou art ſo glorioufly exalted at the right hand of God; and do long more fully and clearly to behold that glory, according to thy prayer and promiſe.

CHAP. VIII.

Repreſentations of the glory of Chriſt under the Old Teſtament.

IT is ſaid of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *That beginning at Moſes, and all the prophets, he declared unto his diſciples in all the ſcriptures the things concerning himſelf*, Luke xxiv. 27. It is therefore manifeſt, that Moſes and the prophets, and all the ſcriptures, do give teſtimony unto him, and his glory. This is the line of life and light, which runs through the whole Old Teſtament; without the conduct whereof we can underſtand nothing aright therein: and the neglect hereof, is that which makes many as blind in reading the books of it, as are the Jews, the ſame vail being upon their minds. It is *faith* alone, diſcovering the glory of Chriſt, that can remove that *vail* of darkneſs which covers the minds of men in reading the *Old Teſtament*, as the apoſtle declares, 2 Cor. iii. 14. 15. 16. *But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the ſame vail untaken away, in the reading of*

the Old Teſtament; which vail is done away in Chriſt. But even unto this day, when Moſes is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheleſs, when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the vail ſhall be taken away. I ſhall therefore conſider briefly ſome of thoſe ways and means whereby the glory of Chriſt was repreſented unto believers under the Old Teſtament.

1. It was ſo in the inſtitution of the *beautiful worſhip* of *the law*, with all the means of it. Herein have they the advantage above all the ſplendid *ceremonies* that men can invent, in the outward worſhip of God; they were deſigned and framed in divine wiſdom to repreſent the glory of Chriſt in his perſon and his office. This nothing of human invention can do, or once pretend unto. Men cannot create *myſteries*, nor give unto any thing natural in itſelf, a *myſtical* ſignification. But ſo it was in the old divine inſtitutions. What were the tabernacle and temple? what was the *holy place*, with the utenſils of it? what was the oracle, the ark, the cherubims, the mercy-ſeat placed therein? what was the high prieſt in all his veſtments and adminiſtrations? what were the ſacrifices and annual ſprinkling of blood in the moſt holy place? what was the moſt whole *ſyſtem* of their religious worſhip? were they any thing but repreſentations of Chriſt in the glory of his perſon and his office? they were a *ſhadow*, and the body repreſented by that ſhadow, was Chriſt. If any would ſee how the Lord Chriſt was in particular foreſignified and repreſented in them, he may peruſe our *expoſition on the ninth chapter of the epiſtle unto the Hebrews*, where it is handled ſo at large, as that I ſhall not here again inſiſt upon it. The ſum is, *Moſes was faithful in all the houſe of God, for a teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken afterwards*, Heb. iii. 5. All that Moſes did in the erection of the tabernacle, and the inſtitution of all its ſervices, was but to give an *antecedent teſtimony*, by way of repreſentation, unto the things of Chriſt that were *afterwards* to be revealed And that alſo was the ſubſtance of the miniſtry of the *prophets*, 1 Pet. i. 11. 12. *Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the goſpel unto you, with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from*

from heaven; which things the angels deſire to look into. The dark apprehenſions of the glory of Chriſt which by theſe means they obtained, were the life of the church of old.

2. It was repreſented in the *myſtical account* which is given us of his communion with his church in love and grace. As this is intimated in many places of ſcripture; ſo there is one *entire book* deſigned unto its declaration. This is the *divine Song of Solomon*, who was a type of Chriſt, and a penman of the Holy Ghoſt therein. A gracious record it is of the divine communications of Chriſt in love and grace unto his church, with their returns of love unto him, and delight in him. And then may a man judge himſelf to have ſomewhat profited in the experience of the myſtery of a bleſſed intercourſe and communion with Chriſt, when the expreſſions of them in that holy *dialogue*, do give light and life unto his mind, and efficaciouſly communicate unto him an experience of their power. But becauſe theſe things are little underſtood by many, the *book* itſelf is much neglected, if not deſpiſed. Yea to ſuch impudence have ſome arrived, in foaming out their own ſhame, as that they have ridiculed the expreſſions of it; but we are foretold of ſuch *mockers* in the laſt days, that ſhould *walk* after *their own ungodly luſts*; they are not of our preſent conſideration.

The former inſtance of the repreſentations of the glory of Chriſt in their inſtitutions of *outward worſhip*, with this record of the *inward communion* they had with Chriſt in grace, faith, and love, gives us the ſubſtance of that view which they had of his glory. What holy ſtrains of delight and admiration, what raptures of joy, what ſolemn and divine complacency, what ardency of affection, and diligence in attendance unto the means of enjoying communion with him, this diſcovery of the glory of Chriſt wrought in the ſouls of them that did believe, is *emphatically* expreſſed in that diſcourſe. A few days, a few hours ſpent in the frame characteriſed in it, is a bleſſedneſs excelling all the treaſures of the earth; and if we, whoſe revelations of the ſame glory do far exceed theirs, ſhould be found to come ſhort of them in ardency of affection unto Chriſt, and continual holy admiration of his excellencies, we ſhall one day be judged unworthy to have received them.

3. It was ſo repreſented and made known under the Old Teſtament,

Teſtament, in his *perſonal appearances* on various occaſions unto ſeveral eminent perſons, leaders of the church in their generations. This he did as a *præludium* to his incarnation. He was as yet God only; but appeared in the aſſumed ſhape of a *man*, to ſignify what he would be. He did not *create an human nature*, and unite it unto himſelf for ſuch a ſeaſon; only by his divine power he acted the ſhape of a man, compoſed of what *ætherial ſubſtance* he pleaſed, immediately to be diſſolved. So he appeared to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moſes, to Joſhua, and others, as I have at large elſewhere proved and confirmed. And hereon alſo, becauſe he was the divine perſon who dwelt in, and dealt with the church under the Old Teſtament from firſt to laſt, in ſo doing, he conſtantly aſſumes unto himſelf *human affections*, to intimate that a ſeaſon would come, when he would immediately act in that nature. And indeed after the fall, there is nothing ſpoken of God in the Old Teſtament, nothing of his inſtitutions, nothing of the way and manner of dealing with the church, but what hath reſpect unto the *future incarnation of Chriſt*. And it had been abſurd to bring in God under perpetual *anthropopathis*, as grieving, repenting, being angry, well pleaſed, and the like, were it not but that the divine perſon intended, was to take on him the nature wherein ſuch affections do dwell.

4. It was repreſented in *prophetical viſions*. So the apoſtle affirms that the viſion which Iſaiah had of him was, when *he ſaw his glory*, John xii. 41. And it was a bleſſed repreſentation thereof; for his divine perſon being exalted on a *throne of glory*, his *train* filled the temple. The *whole train* of his glorious grace filled the temple of his body. This is the *true tabernacle* which God pitched, and not man; the *temple* which was deſtroyed, and which he raiſed again in three days, wherein dwelt the fulneſs of the Godhead, Col. i. 19. This glory was now preſented unto the view of Iſaiah, chap. vi. 1. 5. which filled him with dread and aſtoniſhment. But from thence he was relieved, by an act of the miniſtry of that *glorious* One, taking away his iniquity by *a coal from the altar*, which typified the purifying efficacy of his ſacrifice. This was food for the ſouls of believers; in theſe and on the like occaſions, did the whole church lift up their voice in that holy cry, *Make haſte, our beloved, and be thou*

thou like to a roe, or to a young hart on the mountains of ſpices.

Of the ſame nature was his glorious appearance on mount Sinai, at the giving of the law, Exod. xix.; for the deſcription thereof by the pſalmiſt, Pſal. lxviii. 17. 18. is applied by the apoſtle unto the *aſcenſion of Chriſt* after his reſurrection, Eph. iv. 8. *Wherefore he ſaith, When he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* Only as it was then full of outward terror, becauſe of the giving of the *fiery law*, it was referred unto by the pſalmiſt, as full of mercy, with reſpect unto his accompliſhment of the ſame law. His *giving* of it was as death unto them concerned, becauſe of its holineſs, and the ſeverity of the curſe wherewith it was attended; his *fulfilling* of it was *life*, by the pardon and righteouſneſs which iſſued from thence.

5. The doctrine of his *incarnation*, whereby he became the ſubject of all that glory which we inquire after, was revealed, although not ſo clearly as by the goſpel, after the actual accompliſhment of the thing itſelf. In how many places this is done in the Old Teſtament, I have elſewhere declared; at leaſt I have explained and vindicated many of them, (for no man can preſume to know them all), *Vindic. Evangel.* One inſtance therefore ſhall here ſuffice, and this is that of the ſame prophet Iſaiah, chap. ix. 6. 7. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder: and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſeller, The mighty God, The everlaſting Father, The Prince of peace. Of the increaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgement and with juſtice, from henceforth even for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hoſts will perform this.* This one teſtimony is ſufficient to confound all Jews, Socinians, and other enemies of the glory of Chriſt. I do acknowledge, that notwithſtanding this declaration of the glory of Chriſt, in his future incarnation and rule, there remained much darkneſs in the minds of them unto whom it was then made. For although they might and did acquieſce in the truth of the revelation, yet they could frame to themſelves no notions of the way or manner of its accompliſhment. But now when every word of it is explained, declared, and its myſtical ſenſe viſibly laid open unto us in the goſpel, and by the accompliſhment exactly

actly anſwering every expreſſion in it, it is judicial blindneſs not to receive it. Nothing but the *Satanical pride* of the hearts of men, which will admit of no effects of infinite wiſdom, but what they ſuppoſe they can comprehend, can ſhut their eyes againſt the light of this truth.

6. *Promiſes, prophecies, predictions*, concerning his perſon, his coming, his office, his kingdom, and his glory in them all, with the wiſdom, grace, and love of God to the church in him, are the line of life, as was ſaid, which runs through all the writings of the Old Teſtament, and take up a great portion of them. Thoſe were the things which he expounded unto his diſciples out of *Moſes and all the prophets*. Concerning theſe things he appealed to the *ſcriptures* againſt all his adverſaries; '*Search the ſcriptures, for they are they that teſtify of me.* And if we find them not, if we diſcern them not therein, it is becauſe a vail of blindneſs is over our minds. Nor can we read, ſtudy, or meditate on the writings of the Old Teſtament unto any advantage, unleſs we deſign to find out and behold the glory of Chriſt declared and repreſented in them. For want hereof, they are a *ſealed book* to many unto this day.

7. It is uſual in the Old Teſtament, to ſet out the glory of Chriſt under *metaphorical expreſſions*; yea it aboundeth therein. For ſuch *alluſions* are exceedingly ſuited to let in a ſenſe into our minds of thoſe things which we cannot diſtinctly comprehend. And there is an infinite condeſcenſion of divine wiſdom in their way of inſtruction, repreſenting unto us the power of things ſpiritual, in what we naturally diſcern. Inſtances of this kind, in calling the Lord Chriſt by the names of thoſe creatures, which unto our ſenſes repreſent that excellency which is ſpiritually in him, are innumerable. So he is called the *Roſe*, for the ſweet ſavour of his love, grace, and obedience; the *Lily*, for his gracious beauty and amiableneſs; the *Pearl* of price, for his worth, for to them that believe he is precious; the *Vine*, for his fruitfulneſs; the *Lion*, for his power; the *Lamb*, for his meekneſs and fitneſs for ſacrifice, with other things of the like kind almoſt innumerable.

Theſe things have I mentioned, not with any deſign to ſearch into the depth of this treaſury of thoſe divine truths concerning the glory of Chriſt; but only to give a little light unto the words of the evangeliſt, that he *opened unto his diſciples,*

ciples, out of Moſes, and all the prophets, the things which concerned himſelf; and to ſtir up our own ſouls unto a contemplation of them as contained therein.

CHAP. IX.

The glory of Chriſt in his intimate conjunction with the church.

WHAT concerns the glory of Chriſt in the *miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt* unto the church, with all the divine truths that are branched from it, I have at large declared in my diſcourſe concerning the *whole diſpenſation of the Holy Spirit*. Here therefore it muſt have no place amongſt thoſe many other things which offer themſelves unto our contemplation, as part of this glory, or intimately belonging thereunto. I ſhall inſiſt briefly on *three* only, which cannot be reduced directly unto the former heads.

And the firſt of theſe is, *that intimate conjunction that is between Chriſt and the church;* whence it is juſt and equal in the ſight of God, according unto the rules of his eternal righteouſneſs, that what he did and ſuffered in the diſcharge of his office, ſhould be eſteemed, reckoned, and imputed unto us, as unto all the fruits and benefits of it, as if we had done and ſuffered the ſame things ourſelves. For this *conjunction* of his with us, was an act of his own mind and will, wherein he is ineffably glorious.

The *enemies* of the glory of Chriſt and of his croſs, do take this for granted, that there ought to be ſuch a *conjunction* between the *guilty perſon* and him that *ſuffers* for him, as that in him the guilty perſon may be ſaid in ſome ſenſe to undergo the puniſhment himſelf. But then they affirm on the other hand, that there was *no ſuch conjunction* between Chriſt and ſinners, none at all; but that he was a *man*, as they were men; and otherwiſe, that he was at the greateſt diſtance from them all, as it is poſſible for one man to be from another, *Socin. de ſervat. lib.* 3. *cap.* 3. The falſeneſs of this latter aſſertion, and the groſs ignorance of the ſcripture under a pretence of *ſubtilty*, in them that make it, will evidently appear in our enſuing diſcourſe.

The apoſtle tells us, 1 Pet. ii. 24. that *in his own ſelf he bare*

bare our ſins in his own body on the tree; and chap. iii. 18. that *he ſuffered for ſin, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us unto God.* But this ſeems ſomewhat ſtrange unto reaſon; where is the juſtice, where is the equity, that the juſt ſhould ſuffer for the unjuſt? where is divine righteouſneſs herein? For it was an act of God, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all,* If. liii. 6. The equity hereof, with the grounds of it, muſt be here a little inquired into.

Firſt of all, it is certain that all the elect, the whole church of God, fell in Adam, under the curſe due to the tranſgreſſion of the law. It is ſo alſo, that in this curſe, *death* both *temporal* and *eternal* was contained. This curſe none could undergo and be ſaved. Nor was it conſiſtent with the righteouſneſs, or holineſs, or truth of God, that ſin ſhould go unpuniſhed. Wherefore there was a neceſſity, upon a ſuppoſition of God's decree to ſave his church, of a *tranſlation of puniſhment;* namely, from them who had *deſerved* it, and could not bear it, unto one who had *not* deſerved it, but *could bear* it.

A ſuppoſition of this *tranſlation of puniſhment* by divine diſpenſation, is the foundation of Chriſtian religion, yea of all ſupernatural revelation contained in the ſcripture. This was firſt intimated in the *firſt promiſe;* and afterwards explained and confirmed in all the inſtitutions of the Old Teſtament. For although in the ſacrifices of the law, there was a revival of the greateſt and moſt fundamental principle of the law of nature, namely, that *God is to be worſhipped with our beſt,* yet the principal end and uſe of them was, to repreſent this *tranſlation of puniſhment* from the offender, unto another who was to be a ſacrifice in his ſtead.

The reaſons of the equity hereof, and the unſpeakable glory of Chriſt herein, is what we now inquire into. And I ſhall reduce what ought to be ſpoken hereunto, to the enſuing heads.

1. It is not *contrary* unto the nature of divine juſtice; it doth not interfere with the principles of natural light in man, that in ſundry caſes *ſome perſons ſhould ſuffer puniſhment for the ſins and offences of others.*

I ſhall at preſent give this aſſertion no other confirmation, but only that God hath often done ſo, who will, who can do no iniquity.

So he affirms that he will do, Exod. xx. 5. *Viſiting the ſins of*

of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. It is no exception of weight, that they alſo are ſinners, continuing in their fathers ſins; for the worſt of ſinners muſt not be dealt unjuſtly withal; but they muſt be ſo, if they are puniſhed for their fathers ſins, and it be abſolutely unlawful that any one ſhould be puniſhed for the ſin of another.

So the church affirms; *Our fathers have ſinned and are not, and we have borne their iniquities*, Lam. v. 7. And ſo it was: for in the Babyloniſh captivity God puniſhed the ſins of their forefathers, eſpecially thoſe committed in the days of Manaſſeh, 2 Kings xxiii. 26. 27. *Notwithſtanding, the Lord turned not from the fierceneſs of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled againſt Judah, becauſe of all the provocations that Manaſſeh had provoked him withal. And the Lord ſaid, I will remove Judah alſo out of my ſight, as I have removed Iſrael, and will caſt off this city Jeruſalem, which I have choſen, and the houſe of which I ſaid, My name ſhall be there.* As afterwards in the final deſtruction of that church and nation, God puniſhed in them the guilt of all *bloody perſecutions* from the beginning of the world, Luke xi. 50. 51. *That the blood of all the prophets, which was ſhed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which periſhed between the altar and the temple: verily I ſay unto you, it ſhall be required of this generation.*

So Canaan was curſed for the ſin of his father, Gen. ix. 25. *And he ſaid, Curſed be Canaan, a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren.* Saul's ſeven ſons were put to death for their father's bloody cruelty, 2 Sam. xxi. 9. 14. For the ſin of David, ſeventy thouſand of the people were deſtroyed by an angel, concerning whom he ſaid, *It is I that have ſinned, and done evil; theſe ſheep, what have they done?* 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. 17. Likewiſe, 1 Kings xxi. 29. *Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf before me? becauſe he humbleth himſelf before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his ſons days will I bring the evil upon his houſe.* So was it with all the children or infants that periſhed in the flood, or in the conflagration of Sodom and Gomorrah. And other inſtances of the like nature may be aſſigned.

It is therefore evident, that there is *no inconſiſtency with the nature of divine juſtice*, nor the rules of reaſon among men,

that in ſundry caſes the ſins of ſome may be puniſhed on others.

2. It is to be obſerved, that this adminiſtration of juſtice is not promiſcuous, that any whatever may be puniſhed for the ſins of any others. There is always a ſpecial cauſe and reaſon of it; and this is a *peculiar conjunction* between them who ſin, and thoſe who are puniſhed for their ſins. And two things belong unto this conjunction. (1.) Eſpecial *relation*. (2.) Eſpecial *mutual intereſt*.

(1.) There is an eſpecial *relation* required unto this *tranſlation of puniſhment*; ſuch as that between parents and children, as in moſt of the inſtances before given; or between a king and ſubjects, as in the caſe of David. Hereby the perſons ſinning, and thoſe ſuffering, are conſtituted *one body*, wherein if one member offend, another may juſtly ſuffer: the back may anſwer for what the hands take away.

(2.) It conſiſts in *mutual intereſt*. Thoſe whoſe ſins are puniſhed in others, have ſuch an *intereſt* in them, as that their being ſo, is a puniſhment unto themſelves. Therefore are ſuch ſinners threatened with the puniſhment and evils that ſhall befal their poſterity or children for their ſakes, which is highly penal unto themſelves, Numb. xiv. 33. *Your children ſhall wander in the wilderneſs forty years, and bear your whoredoms*. The puniſhment due to their ſins is in part transferred unto their children; and therein did the ſting of their own puniſhment alſo conſiſt.

3. There is a greater, a more *intimate conjunction*, a nearer relation, an higher mutual intereſt *between Chriſt and the church*, than ever was or can be between any other perſons or relations in the world, whereon it became juſt and equal in the ſight of God, that he ſhould ſuffer for us, and that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto us, which is farther to be cleared.

There neither is nor can be any more than a threefold conjunction between diverſe, diſtinct perſons. The firſt is *natural*, the ſecond is *moral*, whereunto I refer that which is *ſpiritual* or *myſtical*; and the third *federal*, by virtue of mutual compact. In all theſe ways is Chriſt in *conjunction* with his church, and in every one of them, in a way *ſingular* and peculiar.

1ſt, The firſt conjunction of diſtinct perſons is *natural*. God hath made all mankind *of one blood*, Acts xvii. 26. whereby

whereby there is a cognation and alliance between them all. Hence every man, is every man's brother or neighbour, unto whom loving-kindneſs is to be ſhewed, Luke x. 36. *Which now of theſe three, thinkeſt thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?* And this conjunction was between Chriſt and the church; as the apoſtle declares, Heb. ii. 14. 15. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame: that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage.* Hence *both he that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified, are all of one*, ver. 11. His infinite condeſcenſion in coming into this communion and conjunction of nature with us, was before declared: but it is not common, like that between all other men partakers of the ſame nature. There are *two things* wherein it was peculiar and eminent.

(1.) This *conjunction* between him and the church, did not ariſe from a *neceſſity of nature*, but from a *voluntary* act of his will. The conjunction that is between all others is neceſſary. Every man is every man's brother whether he will or no, by being a man. Natural generation communicating to every one his ſubſiſtence in the ſame nature, prevents all acts of their own will and choice. With the Lord Chriſt it was otherwiſe, as the text affirms: for ſuch reaſons as are there expreſſed, he did by an act of his own will *partake of fleſh and blood*, or came into this conjunction with us. He did it of his own choice, *becauſe the children did partake of the ſame.* He *would* be what the children were. Wherefore the *conjunction* of Chriſt in human nature with the church, is *ineffably* diſtinct from that common conjunction which is amongſt all others in the ſame nature. And therefore, although it ſhould not be meet amongſt mere men, that one ſhould act and ſuffer in the ſtead of others, becauſe they are all thus related to one another as it were whether they will or no; yet this could not reach the Lord Chriſt, who in a ſtrange and wonderful manner came into this conjunction by a mere act of his own.

(2.) He came into it on this deſign, and for this only end, namely, that *in our nature taken to be his own*, he might do and ſuffer what was to be done and ſuffered for the church: for it is added in the text; *that by death he might deſtroy him*

who

who had the power of death; and deliver them who for fear of death were ſubject to bondage. This was the only end of his conjunction in nature with the church: and this puts the caſe between him and it, at a vaſt diſtance from what is or may be between other men.

It is a fooliſh thing to argue, that becauſe a *mere participation of the ſame nature* among men, is not ſufficient to warrant the righteouſneſs of puniſhing one for another; that therefore the conjunction in the ſame nature betwixt Chriſt and the church, is not a ſufficient and juſt foundation of his ſuffering for us, and in our ſtead: for by *an act of his own will and choice* he did partake of our nature, and that for this very end, that therein he might ſuffer for us, as the Holy Ghoſt expreſsly declares. Amongſt *others* there neither is nor can be any thing of this nature; and ſo no objection from what is equal or inequal amongſt them, can ariſe againſt what is equal between Chriſt and the church. And herein is he glorious and precious unto them that believe, as we ſhall ſee immediately.

2dly, There is a *myſtical conjunction* between Chriſt and the church, which anſwers all the moſt ſtrict *real* or *moral unions* or *conjunctions* between other perſons or things. Such is the conjunction between the head of a body and its members, or the tree of the vine and its branches, which are *real*; or between an huſband and wife, which is *moral* and real alſo. That there is ſuch a conjunction between Chriſt and his church, the ſcripture plentifully declares, as alſo that it is the foundation of the equity of his ſuffering in its ſtead. So ſpeaks the apoſtle, Eph. v. 25.—32. *Huſbands, love your wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the church,* (that is, his wife, the bride the Lamb's wife), *and gave himſelf for it,* &c. Being the Head and Huſband of the church, which was to be ſanctified and ſaved, and could be ſo no otherwiſe but by his blood and ſufferings, he was both meet ſo to ſuffer, and it was righteous alſo that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto them for whom he both did it, and ſuffered. Let the adverſaries of the glory of Chriſt aſſign any one inſtance of *ſuch a conjunction*, union and relation between any amongſt mankind, as is between Chriſt and the church, and they may give ſome countenance unto their cavils againſt his obedience and ſufferings in our ſtead, with the imputation of what he did and ſuffered unto us. But the glory of

Chriſt

Chriſt is *ſingular* herein, and as ſuch it appears unto them by whom the myſtery of it is in any meaſure ſpiritually apprehended.

But yet it will be ſaid, that this *myſtical conjunction* of Chriſt with his church is *conſequential* unto what he did and ſuffered for it; for it enſues on the converſion of men unto him. For it is by faith that we are implanted into him. Until that be actually wrought in us, we have no *myſtical conjunction* with him. He is not an *Head* or an *Huſband* unto unregenerate, unſanctified unbelievers, whilſt they continue ſo to be: and ſuch was the ſtate of the whole church when Chriſt ſuffered for us, Rom. v. 8. *But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* Eph. ii 5. *Even when we were dead in ſins hath quickened us together with Chriſt.* There was therefore no ſuch *myſtical conjunction* between him and the church, as to render it meet and equal that he ſhould ſuffer in its ſtead. Wherefore, the church is the *effect of the work of redemption*, that which roſe out of it, which was made and conſtituted by it; and cannot be ſo the *object* of it, as that which was to be redeemed by virtue of an antecedent conjunction with it. I anſwer,

(1.) Although this *myſtical conjunction* is not actually conſummate without an actual participation of the Spirit of Chriſt, yet the church of the elect was deſigned antecedently unto all his ſufferings, to be his ſpouſe and wife, ſo as that he might love her and ſuffer for her; ſo it is ſaid, Hoſ. xii. 12. *Iſrael ſerved for a wife, and for a wife he kept ſheep.* Howbeit, ſhe was not his *married wife* until after he had ſerved for her, and thereby purchaſed her to be his wife; yet as he ſerved for her, ſhe is called his *wife*, becauſe of his *love* unto her, and becauſe ſhe was ſo deſigned to be upon his ſervice. So was the church deſigned to be the ſpouſe of Chriſt in the counſel of God, whereon he loved her, and gave himſelf for her.

Hence in the work of redemption, the church was the *object* of it as deſigned to be the ſpouſe of Chriſt, and the *effect* of it, inaſmuch as that thereby it was made meet for the full conſummation of that alliance; as the apoſtle expreſsly declares, Eph. v. 25. 26. 27. *Huſbands, love your wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the church, and gave himſelf for it: that he might ſanctify and cleanſe it with the waſhing of water*

ter by the word, that he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.

(2.) Antecedently unto all that the Lord Chriſt did and ſuffered for the church, there was a ſupreme act of the will of God the Father, *giving all the elect unto him*, intruſting them with him, to be redeemed, ſanctified, and ſaved; as himſelf declares, John xvii. 6. *I have manifeſted thy name unto the men which thou gaveſt me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me; and they have kept thy word.* ver. 9. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me, for they are thine.* Chap. x. 14. 15. 16. And on theſe grounds this myſtical conjunction between Chriſt and the church hath its virtue and efficacy before it be actually conſummate.

3*dly*, There is a *federal conjunction* between diſtinct perſons: and as this is various according unto the variety of the intereſts and ends of them that enter into it; ſo that is moſt eminent, where one by the common conſent of all that are concerned, undertakes to be a *ſponſor* or *ſurety* for others, to do and anſwer what on their part is required of them for attaining the ends of the covenant. So did the Lord Chriſt undertake to be *Surety* of the new covenant in behalf of the church, Heb. vii. 22. *By ſo much was Jeſus made a ſurety of a better teſtament;* and thereon tendered himſelf unto God to do and ſuffer for them, in their ſtead, and on their behalf, whatever was required, that they might be ſanctified and ſaved. Theſe things I have treated of at large elſewhere, as containing a great part of the myſtery of the wiſdom of God in the ſalvation of the church. Here therefore I do only obſerve, that this is that whereby the *myſtical conjunction* that was between Chriſt and the church, whereon it was *meet*, *juſt*, and *equal* in the ſight of God, that what he did and ſuffered ſhould be imputed unto us, is completed.

Theſe are ſome of the foundations of that *myſtery of tranſmitting the ſins of the church*, as unto the guilt and puniſhment of them, from the ſinners themſelves, unto another every way innocent, pure and righteous in himſelf, which is the life, ſoul and centre of all ſcripture-revelations. And herein is he exceedingly *glorious*, and precious unto them that believe. No heart can conceive, no tongue can expreſs the glory of Chriſt herein. Now becauſe his infinite condeſcenſion

ſenſion and love herein have been ſpoken to before, I ſhall here only inſtance its greatneſs in ſome of its effects.

First, It ſhines forth in the *exaltation of the righteouſneſs of God in the forgiveneſs of ſins.* There is no more adequate conception of the divine nature, than that of *juſtice* in rule and government. Hereunto it belongs to puniſh ſin according unto its deſert: and herein conſiſted the firſt actings of God as the governor of the rational creation; they did ſo in the eternal puniſhment of the *angels* that ſinned, and the caſting of Adam out of *paradiſe*, an emblem alſo of everlaſting ruin. Now all the church, all the elect of God are ſinners; they were ſo in Adam; they have been and are ſo in themſelves. What doth become the juſtice of God to do thereon? ſhall it diſmiſs them all unpuniſhed? where then is that juſtice which *ſpared not the angels* who ſinned, nor Adam at the firſt? would this procedure have any conſonancy thereunto, be reconcilable unto it? Wherefore the eſtabliſhment of the righteouſneſs of God on the one hand, and the forgiveneſs of ſin on the other, ſeem ſo contradictory, as that many ſtumble and fall at it eternally, Rom. x. 3. 4. *For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God. For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.*

But in this interpoſition of Chriſt, in this *tranſlation* of puniſhment from the church unto him, by virtue of his conjunction therewith, there is a bleſſed harmony between the righteouſneſs of God and the forgiveneſs of ſins; the exemplification whereof, is his eternal glory. *O bleſſed change! O ſweet permutation!* as Juſtine Martyr ſpeaks.

By virture of his union with the church, which of his own accord he entered into, and his undertaking therein to anſwer for it in the ſight of God, it was a righteous thing with God, to lay the *puniſhment of all our ſins upon him*, ſo as that he might freely and graciouſly pardon them all, to the honour and exaltation of his juſtice, as well as of his grace and mercy, Rom iii. 24. 25. 26. *Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt: whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I ſay, at this time*

his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.

Herein is he *glorious* in the ſight of God, angels and men. In him there is at the ſame time, in the ſame divine actings, a glorious reſplendency of *juſtice* and *mercy*; of the one in puniſhing; of the other in pardoning. The appearing inconſiſtency between the righteouſneſs of God and the ſalvation of ſinners, wherewith the conſciences of convinced perſons are exerciſed and terrified, and which is the rock at which moſt of them ſplit themſelves into eternal ruin, is herein removed and taken away. In his croſs were divine holineſs and vindictive juſtice exerciſed and manifeſted; and through his triumph, grace and mercy are exerted to the utmoſt. This is that glory which raviſheth the hearts, and ſatiates the ſouls of them that believe. For what can they deſire more, what is further needful unto the reſt and compoſure of their ſouls, than at one view to behold God eternally well pleaſed in the declaration of his righteouſneſs, and the exerciſe of his mercy, in order unto their ſalvation? In due apprehenſions hereof, let my ſoul live; in the faith hereof let me die, and let preſent admiration of this glory make way for the eternal enjoyment of it in its beauty and fulneſs.

He is *glorious*, in that the *law of God* in its *preceptive part*, or as unto the obedience which it required, was perfectly fulfilled and accompliſhed. That it ſhould be ſo, was abſolutely neceſſary from the wiſdom, holineſs and righteouſneſs of him, by whom it was given: for what could be more remote from thoſe divine perfections, than to give a law, which never was to be fulfilled in them unto whom it was given, and who were to have the advantages of it? This could not be done by us; but through the obedience of Chriſt, by virtue of this his *myſtical conjunction* with the church, the law was ſo fulfilled in us by being fulfilled for us, as that the glory of God in the giving of it, and annexing eternal rewards unto it, is exceedingly exalted, Rom. viii. 3. 4. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, God ſending his own Son, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the fleſh: that the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.*

This is that glory of Chriſt whereof one view by faith, will

will ſcatter all the fears, anſwer all the objections, and give relief againſt all the deſpondencies of poor tempted, doubting ſouls; and an *anchor* it will be unto all believers, which they may caſt within the vail, to hold them firm and ſtedfaſt in all trials, ſtorms and temptations, in life and death.

CHAP. X.

The glory of Chriſt in the communication of himſelf unto believers.

ANother inſtance of the glory of Chriſt which we are to behold here by faith, and hope that we ſhall do ſo by ſight hereafter, conſiſts in the *myſterious communication of himſelf, and all the benefits of his mediation, unto the ſouls of them that do believe, to their preſent happineſs and future eternal bleſſedneſs.*

Hereby he becomes theirs as they are his; which is the life, the glory and conſolation of the church, Cant. vi. 3. *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.* Chap. ii. 16. iii. 10. He, and all that he is, being appropriated unto them by virtue of their myſtical union; there is, there muſt be ſome ground, formal reaſon and cauſe of this relation between Chriſt and the church, whereby *he is theirs*, and *they are his*; he is in them, and they in him; ſo as it is not between him and other men in the world.

The apoſtle ſpeaking of this *communication* of Chriſt unto the church, and the union between them which doth enſue thereon, affirms that it is a *great myſtery*; for *I ſpeak*, ſaith he, *concerning Chriſt and the church*, Eph. v. 32.

I ſhall very briefly inquire into the cauſes, ways and means of this *myſtical communication*, whereby he is made to be ours, to be in us, to dwell with us, and all the benefits of his mediation to belong unto us: for, as was ſaid, it is evident that he doth not thus communicate himſelf unto all by a *natural neceſſity*, as the ſun gives light equally unto the whole world; nor is he *preſent with all*, by an *ubiquity of his human nature*; nor as ſome dream, by a *diffuſion of his rational ſoul* into all; nor doth he become ours by a *carnal eating* of him in the ſacra-

ment; but this *myſtery* proceeds from, and depends on other reaſons and cauſes, as we ſhall briefly declare.

But yet before I proceed to declare the way and manner whereby Chriſt communicateth himſelf unto the church, I muſt premiſe ſomething of *divine communications* in general, and their glory. And I ſhall do this by touching a little on the harmony and correſpondency that is between the old creation and the new.

1. All *being*, *power*, *goodneſs*, and *wiſdom*, were originally, eſſentially, infinitely in God: and in them, with the other perfections of his nature, conſiſted his eſſential glory.

2. The old creation was a *communication* of being and goodneſs by almighty power, directed by infinite wiſdom, unto all things that were created for the manifeſtation of that glory. This was the firſt *communication* of God unto any thing without himſelf, and it was exceeding glorious, Pſal. xix. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work.* Rom. i. 20. *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; ſo that they are without excuſe.* And it was a *curious machine*, framed in the ſubordination and dependency of one thing on another, without which they could not ſubſiſt, nor have a continuance of their beings. All creatures below live on the earth, and the products of it; the earth for its whole *production* depends on the ſun and other heavenly bodies, as God declares, Hoſ. ii. 21. 22. *I will hear, ſaith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they ſhall hear Jezreel.* God hath given a ſubordination of things, in a concatenation of cauſes, whereon their ſubſiſtence doth depend. But,

3. In this mutual dependency on, and ſupplies unto one another, they all depend on, and are influenced from God himſelf, the eternal fountain of being, power, and goodneſs. He *hears the heavens*; and in the continuation of this order by conſtant divine communication of being, goodneſs, and power unto all things, God is no leſs glorified than in the firſt creation of them, Acts xiv. 17. *Nevertheleſs, he left not himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* Chap. xvii. 24. *God that made the world and*

and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.

4. This glory of God is *visible* in the matter of it, and is obvious unto the reason of mankind; for from his works of creation and providence, they may learn his eternal power and Godhead, wherein he is essentially glorious.

5. But by this divine communication, God did not intend only to glorify himself in the essential properties of his nature, but his *existence* also in *three persons, of Father, Son, and Spirit.* For although the whole creation in its first framing, and in its perfection, was and is by an emanation of power and goodness, from the divine nature, in the person of the Father, as he is the fountain of the Trinity, whence he is said peculiarly to be the Creator of all things; yet the immediate *operation* in the creation was from the *Son*, the power and wisdom of the Father, John i. 1. 2. 3. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 3. And as upon the first production of the mass of the creation, it was under the special care of the *Spirit of God* to preserve and cherish it, unto the production of all distinct sorts of creatures, Gen. i. 2. *And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters:* so in the continuance of the whole, there is an especial *operation of the same Spirit* in all things. Nothing can subsist one moment, by virtue of the dependence which all things have on one another, without a continual emanation of power from him, Psal. civ. 29. 30. *Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.*

By these divine *communications* in the production and preservation of the creature, doth God manifest his glory, and by them alone in the way of nature he doth so; and without them, although he would have been for ever essentially glorious, yet was it impossible that his glory should be known unto any but himself. Wherefore on these divine *communications* doth depend the whole manifestation of the glory of God. But this is far more eminent, though not in the outward

ward effects of it ſo viſible, in the new creation, as we ſhall ſee.

1. All *goodneſs*, *grace*, *life*, *light*, *mercy*, and *power*, which are the ſprings and cauſes of the new creation, are all originally in God, in the divine nature, and that infinitely and eſſentially. In them is God eternally or eſſentially glorious, and the whole deſign of the *new creation* was to manifeſt his glory in them, by external communications of them and from them.

2. The firſt communication of and from theſe things, is made unto Chriſt as the *head of the church*. For in the firſt place, it *pleaſed God, that in him ſhould all the fulneſs of theſe things dwell*, ſo as that the whole *new creation* might *conſiſt* in him, Col. i. 17. 18. 19. And this was the firſt egreſs of divine wiſdom, for the manifeſtation of the glory of God in theſe holy properties of his nature. For,

3. This communication was made unto him, as a *repoſitory* and treaſury of all that goodneſs, grace, life, light, power, and mercy, which were neceſſary for the conſtitution and preſervation of the new creation. They were to be laid up in him, to be hid in him, to dwell in him; and from him to be communicated unto the whole myſtical body deſigned unto him, that is, the church. And this is the firſt *emanation* of divine power and wiſdom, for the manifeſtation of his glory in the new creation. This conſtitution of Chriſt as the *head* of it, and the treaſuring up in him all that was neceſſary for its production and preſervation, wherein the church is choſen and preordained in him unto grace and glory, is the ſpring and fountain of divine glory, in the communications that enſue thereon.

4. This *communication* unto Chriſt is, (1.) Unto his perſon: and then, (2.) With reſpect unto this office. It is in the perſon of Chriſt that *all fulneſs* doth originally dwell. On the aſſumption of human nature into perſonal union with the Son of God, all fulneſs dwells in him bodily, Col. ii. 9. And thereon receiving the Spirit in all fulneſs, and not by meaſure, all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge were *hid* in him, Col. ii. 3. and he was filled with the unſearchable *riches* of divine grace, Eph. iii. 8. And the *office* of Chriſt is nothing but the way appointed in the wiſdom of God, for the communication of the treaſures of grace, which were communicated unto his perſon. This is the end of the

whole

whole *office* of Chriſt in all the parts of it, as he is a *prieſt*, a *prophet*, and a *king*. They are, I ſay, nothing but the ways appointed by infinite wiſdom for the communication of the grace laid up in his perſon unto the church. The tranſcendent glory hereof, we have in ſome weak meaſure inquired into.

5. The decree of *election* prepared, if I may ſo ſay, the *maſs of the new creation*. In the old creation, God firſt prepared and created the *maſs* or matter of the whole, which afterwards by the power of the Holy Spirit, was formed into all the diſtinct beings whereof the whole creation was to conſiſt; and animated according to their diſtinct kinds.

And in order unto the production and perfecting of the work of the new creation, God did from eternity, in the holy purpoſe of his will, *prepare*, and in deſign *ſet apart* unto himſelf, that portion of mankind whereof it was to conſiſt. Hereby they were only the *peculiar matter* that was to be wrought upon by the Holy Ghoſt, and the glorious fabric of the church erected out of it. What was ſaid, it may be, of the natural body, by the pſalmiſt, is true of the myſtical body of Chriſt, which is principally intended, Pſal. cxxxix. 15. 16. *My ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret; and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth. Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.* The ſubſtance of the church whereof it was to be formed, was under the eye of God, as propoſed in the *decree of election*; yet was it as ſuch imperfect. It was not formed or ſhaped into members of the myſtical body. But they were all written in the *book of life*. And in purſuance of the purpoſe of God, there they are by the Holy Spirit, in the whole courſe and continuance of time in their ſeveral generations, faſhioned into the ſhape deſigned for them.

6. This therefore is herein, the glorious order of divine communications. From the infinite eternal ſpring of wiſdom, grace, goodneſs, and love in the *Father*, all the effects whereof unto this end were treaſured up in the perſon and mediation of the *Son*; the Holy Spirit, unto whom the actual *application* of them is committed, communicates *life*, *light*, *power*, *grace*, and *mercy* unto all that are deſigned parts of the *new creation*. Hereon doth God glorify both the eſſen-

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tial properties of his nature, his infinite *wiſdom*, *power*, *goodneſs*, and *grace*, as the only eternal ſpring of all theſe things; and alſo his ineffable glorious *exiſtence* in three perſons, by the order of the communication of theſe things unto the church, which are originally from his nature. And herein is the glorious truth of the *bleſſed Trinity*, which by ſome is oppoſed, by ſome neglected, by moſt looked on as that which is ſo much above them, as that it doth not belong unto them, made precious unto them that believe, and becomes the foundation of their faith and hope. In a view of the glorious order of thoſe divine communications, we are in a ſteady contemplation of the ineffable glory of the exiſtence of the nature of God in the three diſtinct perſons of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.

7. According unto this *divine order*, the elect in all ages are, by the Holy Spirit moving and acting on that *maſs of the new creation*, formed and animated with ſpiritual life, light, grace, and power, unto the glory of God. They are not called accidentally according unto the external occaſions and cauſes of their converſion unto God; but in every age, at his own time and ſeaſon, the Holy Spirit communicates theſe things unto them, in the order declared, unto the glory of God.

8. And in the ſame manner is the whole *new creation* preſerved every day; every *moment* there is vital power and ſtrength, mercy and grace communicated in this divine order to all believers in the world. There is a continual influence from the *fountain*, from the head, into all the members, whereby they all *conſiſt* in him, are acted by him, who worketh in us *both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure*: and the apoſtle declares, that the whole conſtitution of *church-order* is ſuited as an external inſtrument to promote theſe divine communications, unto all the members of the church itſelf, Eph. iv. 13.—16. *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt: that we henceforth be no more children, toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſlight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but 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, and compacted by that*

which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.

This in general is the *order of divine communications*, which is for the substance of it continued in heaven, and shall be so unto eternity; for God is, and ever will be *all and in all.* But at present, it is invisible unto the eyes of flesh, yea the reason of men. Hence it is by the most despised, they see no glory in it: but let us consider the prayer of the apostle, that it may be otherwise with us, Eph. i. 16. to 23. *(I) cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power; which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 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: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.* For the revelation made of the glory of God in the old creation, is exceeding inferior to that which he makes of himself in the new.

Having premised these things in general concerning the glory *of divine communications*, I shall proceed to declare in particular, the grounds and way whereby the Lord Christ *communicates himself*, and therewithal all the benefits of his mediation, unto them that do believe, as it was before proposed.

We on our part are said herein to *receive him*, and that by faith, John i. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* Now where he is received by us, he must be tendered, given, granted, or communicated unto us. And this he is by some divine acts of the Father, and some of his own.

The foundation of the whole is laid in a sovereign act of the

the will, the pleaſure, the grace of the *Father*. And this is the order and method of all divine operations in the way and work of grace. They originally proceed all from him; and having effected their ends, do return, reſt, and centre in him again, Eph. i. 4. 5. 6. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* Wherefore, that Chriſt is made ours, that he is communicated unto us, is originally from the free act, grant, and donation of the Father, 1 Cor. i. 30. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.* Rom. v. 5. 16. 17. And hereunto ſundry things do concur. As, (1.) His *eternal purpoſe* which he purpoſed in himſelf to glorify his grace in all his elect, by this communication of Chriſt, and the benefits of his mediation unto them, which the apoſtle declares at large, Eph. i. (2.) His *granting all the elect unto Chriſt* to be his own, ſo to do and ſuffer for them what was antecedaneouſly neceſſary unto the actual communication of himſelf unto them. *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them to me,* John xvii. 6. (3.) The giving of the *promiſe*, or the conſtitution of the rule and law of the goſpel, whereby a participation of Chriſt, an intereſt in him, and all that he is, is made over and aſſured unto believers, John i. 12. 1 John i. 1. 2. 3. 4. (4.) An act of *almighty power*, working and creating faith in the ſouls of the elect, enabling them to receive Chriſt ſo exhibited and communicated unto them by the goſpel, Eph. i. 19. 20. *And what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power; which he wrought in Chriſt, when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.* Chap. ii. 5. 6. 7. 8.

These things which I have but named, have an influence into the glory of Chriſt herein: for this *communication* of him unto the church, is an effect of the eternal counſel, wiſdom, grace, and power of the Father.

But they are the *acts of Chriſt himſelf* herein, which principally we inquire into, as thoſe which manifeſt the glory of his wiſdom, love, and condeſcenſion.

And,

And, 1. He gives and communicates unto them his *Holy Spirit*; the Holy Spirit as peculiarly his, as granted unto him of the Father, as inhabiting in him in all fulness. The Spirit abiding *originally* as to his person, and *immeasurably* as unto his effects and operations in himself, he gives unto all believers to *inhabit and abide* in them also, John xiv. 14. *If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.* ver. 20. *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* 1 Cor. vi. 17. *But he that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit.* Hence follows an *ineffable union* between him and them. For as in his incarnation he took our *nature* into personal union with his own; so herein he takes our *persons* into a *mystical union* with himself. Hereby he becomes ours, and we are his.

And herein is he *unspeakably glorious*. For this mystery of the *inhabitation* of the same Spirit in him as the Head, and the church as his body, animating the whole, is a transcendent effect of divine wisdom. There is nothing of this nature in the whole creation besides; no such union, no such mutual communication. The strictest unions and relations in nature are but shadows of it, Eph. v. 25.—32. Herein also is the Lord Christ *precious* unto them that do believe, but a *stone of stumbling*, and a rock of offence unto the disobedient. This glorious ineffable effect of his wisdom and grace, this rare, peculiar, singular way of the communication of himself unto the church, is by many despised. They know, it may be, some of them, what it is to be joined *unto an harlot*, so as to become one flesh; but what it is to be joined *unto the Lord*, so as to become one spirit, they know not. But this principle and spring of the spiritual life of the church, and of all vital spiritual motions towards God, and things heavenly, wherein, and whereby our *life is hid with Christ in God*, is the glory, the exaltation, the honour, the security of the church, unto the praise of the grace of God. The understanding of it in its causes, effects, operations, and privileges wherewith it is accompanied, is to be preferred above all the wisdom in, and of the world.

2. He thus communicates himself unto us, by the *formation of a new nature*, his own nature in us; so as that the very same spiritual nature is in him, and in the church. Only it is with this difference, that in him it is in the absolute perfection of all those glorious graces wherein it doth consist;

in the church it is in various *meaſures* and *degrees*, according as he is pleaſed to communicate it. But the *ſame divine nature* it is that is in him and us; for through the precious promiſes of the goſpel, we are made *partakers of his divine nature*. It is not enough for us, that he hath taken our nature to be his, unleſs he gives us alſo his nature to be ours; that is, implants in our ſouls all thoſe gracious qualifications, as unto the eſſence and ſubſtance of them, wherewith he himſelf in his human nature is endued. This is that *new man*, that *new creature*, that *divine nature*, that *ſpirit* which is born of the Spirit, that *transformation* into the image of Chriſt, that *putting* of him *on*, that *workmanſhip* of God, whereunto in him we are created, that the ſcripture ſo fully teſtifieth unto, John iii. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is ſpirit.* Rom. vi. 3.—8. *Know ye not, that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death: that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his reſurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin. For he that is dead, is freed from ſin. Now if we be dead with Chriſt, we believe that we ſhall alſo live with him.* 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Chap. v. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new.* Eph. iv. 20. *But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt.* ver. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.* 2 Pet. i. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes; that by theſe you might be partakers of the divine nature, having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt.*

And that new *heavenly nature* which is thus formed in believers, as the firſt vital act of that union which is between Chriſt and them, by the inhabitation of the ſame Spirit, is peculiarly *his* nature. For both is it ſo as it is in *him*, the *idea* and the exemplar of it in us, inaſmuch as we are predeſtinated

deſtinated to be conformed unto his image; and as it is wrought or produced in our ſouls by an emanation of power, virtue, and efficiency from him.

This is a moſt heavenly way of the communication of himſelf unto us, wherein of *God he is made unto us wiſdom and ſanctification.* Hereon he ſays of his church, *This now is bone of my bone, and fleſh of my fleſh;* I ſee myſelf, my own nature in them, whence they are comely and deſirable. Hereby he makes way to *preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but holy and without blemiſh.* On this communication of Chriſt unto us, by the forming *of his own nature* in us, depends all the purity, the beauty, the holineſs, the inward glory of the church. Hereby is it really, ſubſtantially, internally ſeparated from the world, and diſtinguiſhed from all others, who in the outward forms of things, in the profeſſion and duties of religion ſeem to be the ſame with them. Hereby it becomes the *firſt-fruits of the creation unto God,* bearing forth the renovation of his image in the world: herein the Lord Chriſt is, and will be *glorious* unto all eternity. I only mention theſe things, which deſerve to be far more largely inſiſted on.

3. He doth the ſame by that *actual inſtition or implantation into himſelf,* which he gives us by faith; which is of his own operation. For hereon two things do enſue; one by the grace or power, the other by the law or conſtitution of the goſpel, which have a great influence into this *myſtical communication* of Chriſt unto the church.

And the firſt of theſe is, that thereby there is communicated unto us, and we do derive *ſupplies of ſpiritual life,* ſuſtentation, motion, ſtrength in grace, and perſeverance from him continually. This is that which himſelf ſo divinely teacheth in the *parable of the vine* and its branches, John xv. 1. 2. *I am the true vine, and my Father is the huſbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.* Hereby is there a continual communication from his *all-fulneſs of grace* unto the whole church, and all the members of it, unto all the ends and duties of ſpiritual life. *They live, nevertheleſs not they, but Chriſt liveth in them; and the life which they lead in the fleſh, is by the faith of the Son of God.* And the other, by virtue

virtue of the *law* and *conſtitution* of the goſpel, is, that hereon his *righteouſneſs*, and all the fruits of his mediation, are imputed unto us; the glory of which myſtery the apoſtle unfolds, Rom. iv. 4. 5. *Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.*

I might add hereunto the *mutual inbeing* that is between him and believers by *love*; for the way of the communication of his love unto them, being by the *ſhedding of it abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghoſt*, and their returns of love unto him being wrought in them by an *almighty efficiency of the ſame Spirit*, there is that which is deeply myſterious and glorious in it. I might mention alſo the *continuation of his diſcharge* of all his offices towards us, whereon all our receptions from him, or all the benefits of his mediation, whereof we are made partakers, do depend. But the few inſtances that have been given of the glory of Chriſt in this *myſterious communication of himſelf unto his church*, may ſuffice to give us ſuch a view of it, as to fill our hearts with holy admiration and thankſgiving.

CHAP. XI.

The glory of Chriſt in the recapitulation of all things in him.

IN the laſt place, the Lord Chriſt is peculiarly and eminently glorious in the *recapitulation of all things in him*, after they had been ſcattered and diſordered by ſin. This the apoſtle propoſeth as the moſt ſignal effect of divine wiſdom, and the ſovereign pleaſure of God.

He hath abounded toward us in all wiſdom and prudence, having made known unto us the myſtery of his will, according unto his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf: that in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one all things in Chriſt, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him, Eph. i. 8. 9. 10.

For the diſcovery of the mind of the Holy Ghoſt in theſe words, ſo far as I am at preſent concerned, namely, as unto the *repreſentation of the glory of Chriſt in them*, ſundry brief

brief obſervations muſt be premiſed; and in them it will be neceſſary, that we briefly declare the original of all theſe things in heaven and earth, their primitive order, the confuſion that enſued thereon, with their reſtitution in Chriſt, and his glory thereby.

1. God alone hath all being in him. Hence he gives himſelf that name, I AM, Exod. iii. 14. He was eternally *All*; when all things elſe that ever were, or now are, or ſhall be, were nothing. And when they are, they are no otherwiſe, but as *they are of him, and from him, and to him*, Rom. xi. 36. Moreover, his *being* and *goodneſs* are the ſame. The *goodneſs* of God is the meetneſs of the *divine Being* to be communicative of itſelf in its effects. Hence this is the firſt notion of the *divine nature, Infinite being and goodneſs in a nature intelligent and ſelf-ſubſiſtent*. So the apoſtle declares it, *He that cometh unto God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder*, Heb. xi. 6.

2. In this ſtate of *infinite, eternal being and goodneſs*, antecedent unto an act of wiſdom or power without himſelf, to give exiſtence unto other things, God was, and is eternally in himſelf all that he will be, all that he can be, unto eternity. For where there is infinite being and infinite goodneſs, there is infinite bleſſedneſs and happineſs, whereunto nothing can be added: God is always the ſame. That is his name, Pſal. cii. 27. *Thou art he*, always the ſame. All things that are, make no addition unto God, no change in his ſtate. His bleſſedneſs, happineſs, ſelf-ſatisfaction, as well as all other his infinite perfections, were abſolutely the ſame before the creation of any thing, whilſt there was nothing but himſelf, as they are ſince he hath made all things: for the bleſſedneſs of God conſiſts in the *ineffable mutual inbeing* of the three holy perſons in the ſame nature, with the immanent reciprocal actings of the Father and the Son in the eternal love and complacency of the Spirit. Hereunto nothing can be added, herein no change can be made by any external work or effect of power. Herein doth God act in the perfect knowledge, and perfect love of his own perfections, unto an infinite acquieſcency therein, which is the divine bleſſedneſs. This gives us the true notion of the divine nature, antecedent unto the manifeſtation of it made by any outward effects. Infinite being and goodneſs, eternally bleſſed in the knowledge and enjoyment of itſelf, by inconceivable,

ceivable, ineffable, internal actings anſwering the manner of its ſubſiſtence, which is in three diſtinct perſons.

3. This *being and goodneſs* of God by his own will and pleaſure, acting themſelves in infinite wiſdom and power, produced the creation of all things. Herein he communicated a finite, limited, dependent being and goodneſs unto other things without himſelf. For all being and goodneſs being, as was ſaid, in him alone, it was neceſſary that the firſt outward work and effect of the divine nature, muſt be the communication of being and goodneſs into other things. Wherefore as when he had given unto every thing its *being* out of nothing, by the word of his power, ſaying, *Let them be, and they were;* ſo it is ſaid, that he looked on all that he had made, and behold, *they were exceeding good*, Gen. i. *ult.* Being and goodneſs muſt be the firſt outward effects of the divine nature, which being wrought by infinite power and wiſdom, do repreſent unto us the glory of God in the creation of all things. Infinite being in ſelf-ſubſiſtence, which is neceſſary in the firſt cauſe and ſpring of all things; infinite goodneſs to communicate the effect of this being unto that which was not, and infinite wiſdom and power in that communication, are glorioufly manifeſted therein.

4. In this ſtate, all things that were made, depended *immediately* on God himſelf, without the interpoſition of any other head of influence or rule. They had the continuance of their being and its preſervation, from the immediate actings of theſe properties of the divine nature whereby they were made; and their dependence on God was by virtue of that law, which was implanted on the principles and powers of their ſeveral natures by God himſelf.

5. Thus *in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* He provided himſelf of *two diſtinct rational families*, that ſhould depend on him according to a law of moral obedience, and thereby give glory to him; with two diſtinct habitations for them cognate unto their nature and uſe; heaven above, and the earth beneath. The earth he appointed for the habitation of man, which was every way ſuited unto the conſtitution of his nature, the preſervation of his being, and the end of his creation in giving glory to God. Heaven he prepared for the habitation of the angels, which was ſuited unto the conſtitution of their nature, the preſervation of their being, and the end of their creation in giving glory

to

to God. Wherefore as *man* had power and dominion over all things here below, and was to uſe them all unto the glory of God, by which means God received glory from them alſo, though in themſelves brute and inanimate; ſo the *angels* had the like dominion over the cœleſtial and ætherial bodies, wherewith God had fitted the place of their habitation, that through the contemplation and uſe of them, God might have a revenue of glory and praiſe from them alſo. To ſuppoſe any other race of *intellectual creatures*, beſides angels in heaven, and men on earth, is not only without all countenance from any divine teſtimony, but it diſturbs and diſorders the whole repreſentation of the glory of God made unto us in the ſcripture, and the whole deſign of his wiſdom and grace as declared therein. *Intellectual creatures* not comprehended in that government of God, and myſtery of his wiſdom in Chriſt, which the ſcripture reveals, are a *chimera* framed in the imginations of ſome men, ſcarce duly ſenſible of what it is to be *wiſe unto ſobriety*.

6. This order of things was *beautiful* and comely. Hence were they all ſaid to be *exceeding good*. For each of theſe families had their *own immediate, diſtinct dependence* on God. He was the immediate head of them. There was no other common head interpoſed between God and them. They were not an head unto one another. There were no communications unto them, but what were immediate from God himſelf. And their union among themſelves was in this alone, that all their obedience did meet and centre in God. So God made the heavens and the earth, and two diſtinct families in them for himſelf.

7. This beautiful order in itſelf, this union between the two families of God, was diſturbed, broken, diſſolved by the entrance of ſin: for hereby part of the family above, and the whole family below, fell off from their dependence on God, and ceaſing to centre in him as their head, they fell into variance and enmity among themſelves. For the centre of this union and order being removed and loſt, nothing but enmity and confuſion remained among them. Hereon, to ſhew that its goodneſs was loſt, God curſed the earth and all that was in it; for it was put in ſubjection unto man, who was now fallen from him: howbeit he curſed not the heavens which were in ſubjection unto the angels, becauſe ſome of them only left their habitation; and the habitation of the reſidue

was not to be curſed for their ſakes. But mankind was wholly gone off from God.

8. The angels that ſinned, God utterly rejected for ever, as an example of his ſeverity; the whole race of mankind he would not utterly caſt off, but determined to recover and ſave a remnant according to the election of grace; which how he did it in a way of condecency unto all his divine perfections, I have elſewhere declared.

9. Howbeit he would not reſtore them into their former ſtate, ſo as to have again two diſtinct families, each in an immediate dependence on himſelf, though he left them in different and diſtinct habitations, Eph. iii. 15.; but he would gather them both into one, and that under a new head, in whom the one part ſhould be preſerved from ſinning, and the other delivered from ſin committed.

10. This then is that which the apoſtle declares in theſe words, *To gather together in one all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him.* And ſo he again expreſſeth it, Col. i. 20. *To reconcile all things unto himſelf in him, whether they are things in heaven, or things in earth.* All things were fallen into diſorder and confuſion by ſin; they were fallen off from God into variance among themſelves. God would not reſtore them into their firſt order, in an immediate dependence on his divine perfections. He would no longer keep them in two diſtinct families; but he would in his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs gather them up into *one common head*, on whom they ſhould have their immediate dependence, and be reconciled again among themſelves.

11. This *new head*, wherein God hath gathered up all things in heaven and earth into one, one body, one family, on whom is all their dependence, in whom they all now conſiſt, is *Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God incarnate*, 1 Cor. xi. 3. Eph. i. 22. 23. *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all.* This glory was reſerved for him; none other could be meet for it, or worthy of it, Col. i. 17. 18. 19. *And he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firſt-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.*

12. To anſwer all the ends of this *new Head* of God's *re-*

collected

collected family, all power in heaven and earth, all fulneſs of grace and glory, is committed unto him. There is no communication from God, no act of rule towards this family, no ſupply of virtue, power, grace, or goodneſs unto angels or men, but what is immediately from this *new Head*, whereinto they are gathered. In him they all conſiſt, on him do they depend, unto him are they ſubject; in their relation unto him doth their peace, union, and agreement among themſelves conſiſt. This is the *recapitulation of all things* intended by the apoſtle.

13. It is true, that he acts diſtinctly and variouſly towards the two parts of the *recollected family* of angels and men, according as their different ſtates and conditions do require. For, (1.) We had need of a reparation by redemption and grace, which the angels had not. (2.) Angels were capable of immediate confirmation in glory, which we are not, until we come to heaven. Therefore, (1.) He aſſumed our nature that it might be repaired; which he did not the nature of the angels. (2.) He gives us union unto himſelf by his Spirit, which exalts us into a dignity and honour, meet for fellowſhip with them in the ſame family.

This is a brief account of the myſterious work of divine wiſdom, in the *recapitulation* of all things in Jeſus Chriſt; and herein is he tranſcendently glorious; for his glory herein is far above our comprehenſion: yet ſome few things may be obſerved, to direct us in the view and contemplation of it. As,

1. He alone was a *meet and capable ſubject of it*. He only could bear the weight of this glory. No mere creature in heaven or earth was meet to be thus made the head of the whole new creation of God. In none of them could all things conſiſt. None of them was meet to be thus in the place of God, to have all things depend upon him, and be put in ſubjection unto him, ſo as that there ſhould be no communication between God and the creation, but by and through him alone. Wherefore when the Holy Ghoſt aſſigns this glory unto him, he ſo deſcribes him, as that we may diſcern his ſingular meetneſs for it; as that he is *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, upholding all things by the word of his power*, Heb. i. 3.; that he is *the image of the inviſible God, the firſt-born of every creature; by whom all things were created that are in heaven,*

and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist, Col. i. 15. 16. 17. Such an one alone and no other, was meet to bear and uphold this glory. And the glory of his person is such, as that it is the blessedness of all creatures to centre in this glory of his office.

2. This is that glory which God designed unto his only Son incarnate; and it gives us a little view into the glory of that mystery, the wonderful eternal design of God to glorify himself in the incarnation of Christ. God would have his eternal, his only begotten Son to be incarnate, to take our nature on him, to be made man. What is his design in this incomprehensible work of his wisdom, love, and power? Indeed in the first place, it was for the *redemption of the church*, by the sacrifice of himself and other acts of his mediation. But there is that which is more general and comprehensive, and wherein all the concerns of the glory of God do centre; and this was, that he might *gather all things into one* in him, that the whole creation, especially that which was to be eternally blessed, should have a new head given unto it for its sustentation, preservation, order, honour, and safety. All springs are in him, and all streams are unto him, and in and by him unto God. Who can express the divine beauty, order, and harmony of all things, that are in this their *recapitulation* in Christ? The union and communion between angels and men, the order of the whole family in heaven and earth, the communication of life, grace, power, mercy, and consolation to the church, the rule and disposal of all things unto the glory of God, do all depend hereon. This glory God designed unto his Son incarnate, and it was the greatest, the highest that could be communicated unto him. For as the apostle observes, *All things are put in subjection unto him, he only excepted who doth so make them subject, that is, God the Father*, 1 Cor. xv. 27.

There is no contemplation of the glory of Christ, that ought more to affect the hearts of them that do believe with delight and joy, than this of the *recapitulation* of all things in him. One view by faith of him in the place of God, as the supreme Head of the whole creation, moving, acting, guiding,

guiding, and diſpoſing of it, will bring in ſpiritual refreſhment unto a believing ſoul.

And it will do ſo the more, in that it gives a glorious repreſentation of his divine nature alſo. For that any mere creature ſhould thus be an head of life, motion, and power, as alſo of ſovereign rule, and diſpoſal of the whole new creation, with all things reduced into order thereby, is not only an impious, but a fooliſh imagination.

Did we live more in the contemplation of this glory of Chriſt, and of the wiſdom of God in this *recapitulation* of all things in him, there is not any thing of our *duty* which it would not mind us of, nor any thing of *privilege* which it would not give us a ſenſe of, as might eaſily be demonſtrated.

3. In particular, the Lord Chriſt is glorious herein, in that the whole breach made on the glory of God in the creation by the entrance of ſin, is hereby repaired and made up. The beauty and order of the whole creation conſiſted in its dependence on God by the obedience of the rational part of it, angels and men. Thereby were the being, the goodneſs, the wiſdom and power of God made manifeſt. But the beauty of this order was defaced, and the manifeſtation of the divine perfections unto the glory of God eclipſed by the entrance of ſin. But all is reſtored, repaired and made up in this *recapitulation* of all things in one *new head* Chriſt Jeſus; yea, the whole curious frame of the divine creation is rendered more beautiful than it was before. Hence the whole of it groaneth for the intereſt of each part in this reſtoration of all things. Whatever there is of order, of beauty, of glory in heaven above, or in earth beneath, it all ariſeth from this new relation of the creation unto the Son of God. Whatever is not gathered into one, even in him, in its place and according to its meaſure, is under darkneſs, diſorder, and the curſe. Hence the Jews have a ſaying, that *in the days of the Meſſiah all things ſhall be healed but the ſerpent*, that is, the devil, and wicked men which are as his ſeed.

4. He is glorious herein, in that he is appointed as the only means of exerting, and expreſſing all the treaſures of the infinite wiſdom of God towards his creatures. The wiſdom of God is abſolutely, always and in all things infinite. God doth not, God cannot act with more wiſdom

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in one thing than in another; as in the creation of man, than in that of any inanimate creatures. In the firſt creation, infinite wiſdom was the inſeparable companion of infinite power. *How marvellous are thy works, O Lord! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all.* But when the effects of this divine wiſdom in their principal beauty and glory were defaced, greater treaſures of wiſdom were required unto their reparation. And in this *recollection* of all things in Chriſt did God lay them forth unto the utmoſt of whatever he will do in dealing with his creatures; ſo the apoſtle expreſſeth it, Eph. iii. 10. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God.* By the *recapitulation* of all things into this one head, the manifold, various, unſearchable wiſdom of God, was made known unto the angels themſelves. They knew not before of the deſign and work of God after the entrance of ſin. Theſe could not comprehend the wiſdom that might repair that loſs. They knew not that divine wiſdom had another way to take herein, at leaſt they knew not what way that ſhould be. But hereby the manifold wiſdom of God, his infinite wiſdom in the treaſures of it, able by various ways to attain the ends of his glory, was made known unto them. Herein, namely, in the *recollection* of all things in Chriſt, divine wiſdom hath made known and repreſented itſelf in all its ſtores and treaſures unto angels and men. *In him are hid*, and by him are diſplayed, *all the treaſures of wiſdom*, Col. ii. 3. Herein is he glorious, and will be ſo unto eternity.

5. He is glorious herein, in that hereby *firmneſs and ſecurity is communicated unto the whole new creation* The firſt creation in its order was a curious and glorious fabric. But every thing depending immediately on God, by virtue of the principles of its own nature, and the law of its obedience, all was brought unto a loſs by the ſin of angels and men. But now every thing that belongs unto this new creation, even every believer in the world, as well as the angels in heaven, being gathered together into this one head, the whole and all, and every part and member of it, even every particular believer, are ſecured from ruin, ſuch as befel all things before. In this *new head* they have an indiſſoluble conſiſtency.

But *manum de tabula*. I ſhall inſiſt on no more inſtances of

of this nature, which plentifully offer themſelves in the ſcripture unto us. For who can declare this glory of Chriſt? who can ſpeak of theſe things as he ought? I am ſo far from deſigning to ſet forth the whole of it, that I am deeply ſenſible how little a portion I can comprehend of the leaſt part of it. Nor can I attain unto any ſatisfaction in theſe meditations, but what iſſue in an humble admiration.

CHAP. XII.

Differences between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, and by ſight in heaven. The firſt of them explained.

WE walk here by faith, and not by ſight, 2 Cor. v. 7. That is, in the life of God, in our walking before him, in the whole of our obedience therein, we are under the conduct and influence of *faith*, and not of *ſight*. Theſe are the two ſpiritual powers of our ſouls; by the one whereof we are made partakers of grace, holineſs, and obedience in this life, and by the other of eternal bleſſedneſs and glory. Both theſe, namely, *faith* and *ſight*, the one in this life, the other in that which is to come, have the ſame immediate object: for they are the abilities of the ſoul to go forth unto, and to embrace their object. Now this object of them both is *the glory of Chriſt*, as hath been declared, as alſo what that glory is, and wherein it doth conſiſt; wherefore my preſent deſign is to inquire into the *difference that is between our beholding of the glory of Chriſt in this world by faith, and the viſion which we ſhall have of the ſame glory hereafter.*

The *latter of theſe* is peculiarly intended in that prayer of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt for his diſciples, John xvii. 24. *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.* But I ſhall not diſtinctly inſiſt upon it, my deſign being another way, reſpecting principally the *work of God in this life*, and the privileges which we enjoy thereby: yet I ſhall now take a ſhort proſpect of that alſo; not abſolutely, but in the differences that are between *faith* and *ſight*, or the view which we have of the glory of Chriſt in this world

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by *faith*, and that which they enjoy by *viſion* who are above; the object of them both being adequately the ſame.

But herein alſo, I ſhall have reſpect only unto *ſome of thoſe things* which concern our practice, or the preſent immediate exerciſe of faith. For I have elſewhere handled at large the *ſtate of the church above*, or that of preſent glory; giving an account of the adminiſtration of the *office of Chriſt in heaven*, his preſence among the glorified ſouls, and the adoration of God under his conduct: I have alſo declared the advantage which they have by being with him, and the proſpect they have of his glory. Therefore theſe things muſt here be only touched on.

Theſe differences may be referred unto two heads. (1.) Thoſe which ariſe from the *different natures* and actings of thoſe *means* and *inſtruments* whereby we apprehend this glory of Chriſt, namely, *faith* and *viſion*. And, (2.) Thoſe that ariſe from the different *effects* produced by them. Inſtances in each kind ſhall be given.

Firſt, The *view* which we have of the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, is *obſcure*, *dark*, *inevident*, *reflexive*. So the apoſtle declares, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *Now we ſee through a glaſs, darkly: through* or *by a glaſs in a riddle*, a parable, a dark ſaying. There is a double *figurative* limitation put upon our view of the glory of Chriſt, taken from the two ways of our perception of what we apprehend, namely, the *ſight* of things, and the *hearing* of words.

The firſt is, that we have this view not *directly*, but *reflexively*, and by way of a repreſentation, as in a *glaſs*. For I take the glaſs here, not to be *optical*, or a proſpective which helps the ſight, but a *ſpeculum*, or a glaſs which reflects an image of what we do behold. It is a ſight like that which we have of a man in a glaſs, when we ſee not his perſon or ſubſtance, but an image or repreſentation of them only, which is imperfect.

The ſhadow or *image* of this glory of Chriſt is drawn in the goſpel, and therein we behold it as the likeneſs of a man repreſented unto us in a glaſs; and although it be *obſcure* and imperfect in compariſon of his own real, ſubſtantial glory, which is the object of viſion in heaven; yet is it the only *image* and *repreſentation* of himſelf, which he hath left, and given unto us in this world. That woful curſed invention of *framing images* of him out of ſtocks and ſtones how-

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ever adorned, or repreſentations of him by the *art of painting*, are ſo far from preſenting unto the minds of men any thing of his real glory, that nothing can be more effectual to divert their thoughts and apprehenſions from it. But by this figurative expreſſion of *ſeeing in a glaſs*, the apoſtle declares the *comparative imperfection* of our preſent view of the glory of Chriſt.

But the *alluſion* may be taken from an *optic glaſs* or *tube* alſo, whereby the ſight of the eye is helped in beholding things at a great diſtance. By the aid of ſuch *glaſſes* men will diſcover ſtars or heavenly lights, which by reaſon of their diſtance from us, the eye of itſelf is no way able to diſcern. And thoſe which we do ſee, are more *fully* repreſented, though remote enough from being ſo, *perfectly*. Such a *glaſs* is the goſpel, without which we can make no diſcovery of Chriſt at all; but in the uſe of it, we are far enough from beholding him in the *juſt dimenſions* of his glory.

And he adds another intimation of this imperfection, in an alluſion unto the way whereby things are propoſed and conveyed unto the minds and apprehenſions of men. Now this is by *words*. And theſe are either plain, proper and direct, or dark, *figurative* and *parabolical*: and this latter way makes the conception of things to be difficult and imperfect; and by reaſon of the imperfection of our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, the apoſtle ſaith, it is in a *riddle*. Theſe the pſalmiſt calls *dark ſayings*, Pſal. lxxviii. 2.

But here it muſt be obſerved, that the deſcription and repreſentation of the Lord Chriſt and his glory in the goſpel, is not abſolutely, or in itſelf either dark or obſcure: yea, it is *perſpicuous*, plain and direct; Chriſt is therein *evidently ſet forth crucified*, exalted, glorified. But the apoſtle doth not here diſcourſe concerning the way or means of the revelation of it unto us, but of the means or *inſtrument* whereby we comprehend that revelation. This is our faith, which as it is in us, being weak and imperfect, we comprehend the *repreſentation* that is made unto us of the glory of Chriſt, as men do the ſenſe of a *dark ſaying*, *a riddle*, *a parable*, that is, imperfectly, and with difficulty.

On the account hereof we may ſay at preſent, *How little a portion is it that we know of him?* as Job ſpeaks of God, Chap. xxvi. 14. How imperfect are our conceptions of him?

how weak are our minds in their management? There is no part of his glory that we can fully comprehend. And what we do comprehend, (as there is a *comprehenſion* in faith, Eph. iii. 18.), we cannot abide in the ſteady contemplation of. For ever bleſſed be that ſovereign grace, whence it is that he who *commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of his own glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, and therein of the glory of Chriſt himſelf; that he hath ſo revealed him unto us, as that we may love him, admire him, and obey him: but conſtantly, ſteadily, and clearly to behold his glory in this life we are not able, for we *walk by faith, and not by ſight*.

Hence our ſight of him here, is as it were by *glances*, liable to be clouded by many interpoſitions. *Behold, he ſtandeth behind the wall, he looketh forth at the windows, ſhewing* (flouriſhing) *himſelf through the latteſs*, Cant. ii. 9. There is a great interpoſition between him and us, as a *wall;* and the means of the diſcovery of himſelf unto us, as through a *window* and *latteſs*, include a great inſtability and imperfection in our view and apprehenſion of him. There is a *wall* between him and us, which yet he ſtandeth behind. Our *preſent mortal ſtate* is this *wall*, which muſt be demoliſhed before we can ſee him as he is. In the mean time he looketh through the *windows* of the ordinances of the goſpel. He gives us ſometimes, when he is pleaſed to ſtand in theſe *windows*, a view of himſelf; but it is *imperfect*, as is our ſight of a man through a *window*. The appearances of him at theſe *windows* are full of refreſhment unto the ſouls of them that do believe. But our view of them is imperfect, tranſient, and doth not abide: we are for the moſt part quickly left to bemoan what we have loſt. And then our beſt is but to cry; *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God: my ſoul thriſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before thee?* when wilt thou again give me to ſee thee, though but as through the *windows?* Alas! what diſtreſs do we oftentimes fit down in, after theſe views of Chriſt and his glory! But he proceeds further yet; *and flouriſhes himſelf through the latteſſes*. This diſplaying of the glory of *Chriſt*, called the *flouriſhing of himſelf*, is by the *promiſes of the goſpel*, as they are explained in the miniſtry of the word. In them are repreſented

ſented unto us the deſirable beauties and glories of Chriſt; how precious, how amiable is he as repreſented in them? how are the ſouls of believers raviſhed with the views of them? Yet is this diſcovery of him alſo but as through a *latteſs*. We ſee him but by parts, unſteadily and unevenly.

Such I ſay is the ſight of the glory of Chriſt which we have in this world by faith. It is *dark*, it is but *in part*. It is but *weak*, *tranſient*, *imperfect*, *partial*. It is but *little* that we can at any time diſcover of it; it is but a *little while*, that we can abide in the contemplation of what we do diſcover, *rara hora*, *brevis mora*. Sometimes it is unto us as the ſun when it is under a cloud, we cannot perceive it. When he hideth his face, who then can behold him? As Job ſpeaks, ſo may we, *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him*, Chap. xxiii. 8 9. Which way ſoever we turn ourſelves, and what duties ſoever we apply ourſelves unto, we can obtain no diſtinct view of his glory. Yet on the other hand, it is ſometimes as the ſun when it *ſhines in its brightneſs*, and we cannot bear the rays of it. In infinite condeſcenſion he ſays unto his church, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me*, Cant. vi. 5. As if he could not bear that overcoming affectionate love, which looks through the eyes of the church in its acting of faith on him. Ah! how much more do we find our ſouls overcome with his love, when at any time he is pleaſed to make any clear diſcoveries of his glory unto us!

Let us now on the other hand, take a little conſideration of that *viſion* which we ſhall have of the ſame glory in heaven, that we may compare them together.

Viſion, or the ſight which we ſhall have of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, is *immediate*, *direct*, *intuitive*, and therefore *ſteady*, even and conſtant. And it is ſo on a double account; (1.) Of the *object* which ſhall be propoſed unto us; (2.) Of the *viſive power* or faculty wherewith we ſhall be endued; from the imperfection of both which in this world, ariſeth the imperfection of our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, as hath been declared.

1. The *object* of it will be *real and ſubſtantial*. Chriſt himſelf in his own perſon with all his glory, ſhall be con-

tinually with us, before us, propoſed unto us. We ſhall no longer have an *image*, a repreſentation of him, ſuch as is the delineation of his glory in the goſpel. We *ſhall ſee him*, ſaith the apoſtle, *face to face*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. which he oppoſeth unto our ſeeing him *darkly as in a glaſs*, which is the utmoſt that faith can attain to. We ſhall *ſee him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. not as now in an imperfect deſcription of him. As a man ſees his neighbour when they ſtand and converſe together face to face; ſo ſhall we ſee the Lord Chriſt in his glory, and not as Moſes who had only a tranſient ſight of ſome parts of the glory of God, when he cauſed it to paſs by him.

There will be uſe herein, of our bodily *eyes*, as ſhall be declared. For as Job ſays, *In our fleſh ſhall we ſee our Redeemer, and our eyes ſhall behold him*, chap. xix. 25. 26. 27. That corporeal ſenſe ſhall be reſtored unto us, and that glorified above what we can conceive, but for this great uſe of the eternal beholding of Chriſt and his glory. Unto whom it is matter of rejoicing, that with the *ſame eyes* wherewith they ſee the tokens and ſigns of him in the ſacrament of the ſupper, they ſhall behold himſelf immediately, in his own perſon. But principally, as we ſhall ſee immediately, this viſion is *intellectual*. It is not therefore the mere *human nature* of Chriſt, that is the object of it, but his *divine perſon* as that nature ſubſiſteth therein. What is that perfection which we ſhall have (for *that which is perfect muſt come and do away that which is in part*) in the comprehenſion of the *hypoſtatical union*, I underſtand not; but this I know, that in the immediate beholding of the perſon of Chriſt, we ſhall ſee a glory in it a thouſand times above what here we can conceive. The excellencies of infinite wiſdom, love, and power therein, will be continually before us. And all the glories of the perſon of Chriſt, which we have before weakly and faintly inquired into, will be in our ſight for evermore.

Hence the ground and cauſe of our bleſſedneſs is, that *we ſhall be ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. as himſelf prays, *that we may be with him where he is, to behold his glory*. Here we have ſome dark views of it, we cannot perfectly behold it, until *we are with him* where he is. Thereon our ſight of him will be direct, intuitive, and conſtant.

There is a glory, there will be ſo ſubjectively in us in the beholding

beholding of this glory of Chriſt, which is at preſent incomprehenſible: for *it doth not yet appear what we ourſelves ſhall be*, 1 John iii. 2. Who can declare what a glory it will be in us to behold this glory of Chriſt? and how excellent then is that glory of Chriſt itſelf?

This immediate ſight of Chriſt, is that which all the ſaints of God in this life do breathe and pant after. Hence are they willing to be diſſolved, or deſire to *depart*, *that they may be with Chriſt*, *which is beſt for them*, Phil. i. 23. They chuſe to be *abſent from the body*, *and preſent with the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 8. or that they may enjoy the inexpreſſibly longed for ſight of Chriſt in his glory. Thoſe who do not ſo long for it, whoſe ſouls and minds are not frequently viſited with earneſt deſires after it, unto whom the thoughts of it are not their relief in trouble, and their chiefeſt joy, are carnal, blind, and *cannot ſee afar off*. He that is truly ſpiritual, entertains and refreſheth himſelf with thoughts hereof continually.

2. It will be ſo from that *viſive power* or faculty of beholding the glory of Chriſt, which we ſhall then receive. Without this we cannot ſee him as he is. When he was transfigured *in the mount*, and had on his human nature ſome reflections of his divine glory, his diſciples that were with him, were rather amazed than refreſhed by it, Matth. xvii. 6. *And when the diſciples heard it*, *they fell on their faces*, *and were ſore afraid.* They ſaw his glory, but ſpake thereon *they knew not what*, Luke ix. 30. 33.; and the reaſon hereof was, becauſe no man in this life can have a *viſive power*, either ſpiritual or corporeal, directly and immediately to behold the real glory of Chriſt.

Should the Lord Jeſus appear now to any of us in his majeſty and glory, it would not be unto our edification nor conſolation. For we are not *meet* nor able, by the power of any light or grace that we have received, or can receive, to bear the immediate appearance and repreſentation of him. His beloved apoſtle John had *leaned on his boſom* probably many a time in this life, in the intimate familiarities of love; but when he afterwards appeared unto him in his glory, he fell at *his feet as dead*, Rev. i. 17. And when he appeared unto Paul, all the account he could give thereof was, *that he ſaw a light from heaven*, *above the brightneſs of the ſun*, whereon he

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and all that were with him, *fell to the ground*, Acts xxvi. 13. 14.

And this was one reaſon why in the days of his miniſtry here on earth, his glory was vailed with the infirmities of the fleſh, and all ſorts of ſufferings, as we have before related. The church in this life is no way meet, by the grace which it can be made partaker of, to converſe with him in the immediate manifeſtations of his glory.

And therefore thoſe who dream of his *perſonal reign* on the earth before the day of judgement, unleſs they ſuppoſe that all the ſaints ſhall be *perfectly glorified* alſo, (which is only to bring down heaven to the earth for a while, to no purpoſe), provide not at all for the edification or conſolation of the church: for no *preſent grace* advanced unto the higheſt degree whereof in this world it is capable, can make us meet for an immediate converſe with Chriſt in his unvailed glory.

How much more abominable is the folly of men, who would repreſent the Lord Chriſt in his preſent glory by *pictures and images* of him? When they have done their utmoſt with their burniſhed glaſs and gildings, an eye of fleſh can not only behold it, but if it be guided by reaſon, ſee it contemptible and fooliſh. But the true glory of Chriſt neither inward nor outward ſight can bear the rays of in this life.

The diſpenſation which we are meet for, is only that of his *preſence with us by his Spirit*. *We know him now no more after the fleſh*, 2 Cor. v. 16. We are advanced above that way and means of the knowledge of him by the *fleſhly carnal ordinances* of the Old Teſtament. And we know him not according unto that *bodily preſence* of his, which his diſciples enjoyed in the days of his fleſh. We have attained ſomewhat above that alſo: for ſuch was the nature of his miniſtry here on earth, that there could not be the promiſed diſpenſation of the Spirit until that was finiſhed. Therefore he tells his diſciples, that *it was expedient for them that he ſhould go away and ſend the Spirit to them*, John xvi. 7. Hereon they had a clearer view of the glory of Chriſt, than they could have by beholding him in the fleſh. This is our ſpiritual poſture and condition. We are paſt the knowledge of him according to the fleſh; we cannot attain nor receive the *ſight* of him

in glory; but *the life which we now lead, is by the faith of the Son of God.*

I ſhall not here inquire into the nature of this *viſion*, or the power and ability which we ſhall have in heaven to behold the glory of Chriſt. Some few things may be mentioned, as it relates unto our *minds* and our *bodies* alſo after the reſurrection.

1. For the mind, it ſhall be perfectly freed from all that darkneſs, unſteadineſs, and other incapacities, which here it is accompanied with, and whereby it is weakened, hindered, and obſtructed in the exerciſe of faith. And they are of two ſorts.

(1.) Such as are the remainders of that depravation of our natures, which came upon us by ſin. Hereby our minds became wholly vain, dark, and corrupt, as the ſcripture teſtifieth, utterly unable to diſcern ſpiritual things in a due manner. This is ſo far cured and removed in this life by grace, as that thoſe *who were in darkneſs, do become light in the Lord*, or are enabled to live unto God, under the conduct of a new ſpiritual light communicated unto them. But it is ſo cured and removed in *part* only, it is not perfectly aboliſhed. Hence are all our remaining weakneſſes and incapacities in diſcerning things ſpiritual and eternal, which we yet groan under, and long for deliverance from. No footſteps, no ſcares or marks that ever had place in our minds, ſhall abide in glory, Eph. v. 27. Nothing ſhall weaken, diſturb, or incapacitate our ſouls, in acting all their powers unimpeded by vanity, diverſions, weakneſs, inability, upon their proper objects. The excellency hereof in univerſal liberty and power, we cannot here comprehend: nor can we yet conceive the glory and beauty of thoſe immixed ſpiritual actings of our minds, which ſhall have no *clog* upon them, no encumbrance in them, no alloy of droſs accompanying of them. One pure act of ſpiritual ſight in diſcerning the glory of Chriſt, one pure act of love in cleaving unto God, will bring in more bleſſedneſs and ſatisfaction into our minds, than in this world we are capable of.

(2.) There is an *incapacity* in our minds, as unto their actings on things ſpiritual and eternal, that is merely natural, from the poſture wherein they are, and the *figure* which they are to make in this life. For they are here *clothed with fleſh*, and that debaſed and corrupted. Now in this ſtate, though

though the mind act its conceptions by the body as its *organ* and inſtrument; yet is it variouſly ſtraitened, encumbered, and impeded in the exerciſe of its native powers, eſpecially towards things heavenly, by this priſon of the fleſh, wherein it is immured. There is an *angelical* excellency in the pure actings of the ſoul, when delivered from all material inſtruments of them; or when they are glorified and made ſuitable helps in its utmoſt ſpiritual activity. How and by what degrees our minds ſhall be freed from theſe obſtructions in their beholding the glory of Chriſt, ſhall be afterwards declared.

2. Again, a *new light*, the *light of glory*, ſhall be implanted in them. There is a light in nature, which is the power of a man to diſcern the things of man; an ability to know, perceive, and judge of things natural. It is that *ſpirit of a man which is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly*, Prov. xx. 27.

But by the light hereof no man can diſcern ſpiritual things in a due manner, as the apoſtle declares, 1 Cor. ii. 11.—15. *For what man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man which is in him? Even ſo the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things alſo we ſpeak, not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth; comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. But he that is ſpiritual, judgeth all things, yet he himſelf is judged of no man.* Wherefore God gives a ſuperior, a ſupernatural light, the light of faith and grace, unto them whom he effectually calls unto the knowledge of himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt. *He ſhines into their hearts, to give them the knowledge of his glory in the face of his dear Son.* Howbeit this new light doth not aboliſh, blot out, or render uſeleſs the other light of nature, as the ſun when it riſeth extinguiſheth the light of the ſtars; but it directs it, and rectifies it, as unto its principal object and end. Yet is it in itſelf, a light quite of another nature. But he who hath only the former light, can underſtand nothing of it, becauſe he hath no taſte or experience of its power and operations.

tions. He may talk of it, and make inquiries about it, but he knows it not.

Now we have received this *light of faith* and grace, whereby we diſcern ſpiritual things, and behold the glory of Chriſt in the imperfect manner before deſcribed. But in heaven there ſhall be a ſuperadded *light of glory*, which ſhall make the mind itſelf *ſhine as the firmament*, Dan. xii. 3. I ſhall only ſay three things of it. (1.) That as the *light of grace* doth not deſtroy or aboliſh the *light of nature*, but rectify and improve it; ſo the *light of glory* ſhall not aboliſh or deſtroy the *light of faith and grace*, but by incorporating with it, render it abſolutely perfect. (2.) That as by the *light of nature* we cannot clearly comprehend the true nature and efficacy of the *light of grace*, becauſe it is of another kind, and is ſeen only in its own light; ſo by the *light of grace* we cannot comprehend this *light of glory*, being of a peculiar kind and nature, ſeen perfectly only by its own light. *It doth not appear what we ſhall be.* (3.) That this is the beſt notion we can have of this *light of glory*, that in the firſt inſtance of its operation, it *perfectly transforms the ſoul into the image and likeneſs of Chriſt.*

This is the *progreſs of our nature* unto its reſt and bleſſedneſs. The principles remaining in it concerning *good and evil*, with its practical convictions, are not deſtroyed, but improved by grace; as its blindneſs, darkneſs, and enmity to God are in part taken away. Being renewed by grace, what it receives here of ſpiritual life and light, ſhall never be deſtroyed but be perfected in glory. Grace renews nature, glory perfects grace; and ſo the whole ſoul is brought unto its reſt in God. We have an image of it in the *blind man* whom our Saviour cured, Mark viii. 22. 23. 24. He was abſolutely blind, born ſo, no doubt. Upon the firſt touch his eyes were opened, and he ſaw but very obſcurely; he *ſaw men walking like trees.* But on the ſecond he ſaw all things clearly. Our minds in themſelves are abſolutely blind: the firſt viſitation of them by grace, gives them a ſight of things ſpiritual, heavenly, and eternal, but it is obſcure and unſteady. The *ſight of glory* makes all things clear and evident.

2*dly*, The body as glorified, with its ſenſes, ſhall have its uſe and place herein. After we are clothed again with our fleſh, we ſhall *ſee our Redeemer with our eyes.*

We know not here what power and ſpirituality there will be in the acts of our glorified bodies. Such they will be, as ſhall bear a part in eternal bleſſedneſs. Holy Stephen the firſt martyr, took up ſomewhat of glory by *anticipation* before he died. For when he was brought to his trial before the *council*, all that ſat therein *looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaw his face as the face of an angel*, Acts vi. 15. He had his *tranſiguration*, according unto his meaſure, anſwerable unto that of our bleſſed Saviour on the mount. And by this initial beam of glory, he received ſuch a piercing vivacity and edge on his *bodily eyes*, that through all thoſe inconceivable diſtances between the earth and the reſidence of the bleſſed, he looked ſtedfaſtly into heaven, and *ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God*, Acts vii. 55. 56. Who then can declare what will be the power and acting of this ſenſe of *ſight* when perfectly glorified; or what ſweetneſs and refreſhment may be admitted into our ſouls thereby?

It was a privilege (who would not have longed to partake of it?) to have ſeen him with our bodily eyes in the days of his fleſh, as did the apoſtles and other his diſciples. Howbeit he was not *then glorified* himſelf in the manifeſtation of his glory; nor they who ſaw him, in the change or tranſformation of their nature. How great this privilege was, himſelf declares unto thoſe that ſo ſaw him, Matth. xiii. 17. *Verily I ſay unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee;* whereunto we ſhall ſpeak immediately. And if this were ſo excellent a privilege, as that we cannot but congratulate them by whom it was enjoyed, how excellent, how glorious will it be, when with theſe eyes of ours, glorioufly purified and ſtrengthened beyond thoſe of Stephen, we ſhall behold Chriſt himſelf immediately in the fulneſs of his glory! He alone perfectly underſtands the greatneſs and excellency hereof, who prayed his Father, that thoſe who *believe in him, may be where he is, ſo to behold his glory.*

Theſe are ſome of the grounds of this firſt *difference* between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by *faith* here, and by *immediate viſion* hereafter. Hence the one is weak, imperfect, obſcure, reflexive; the other direct, immediate, even and conſtant: and we may ſtay a little in the contemplation of theſe things.

This.

This view of the *glory of Chriſt* which we have now ſpoken unto, is that which we are breathing and *panting* after; that which the Lord Chriſt prays that we may arrive unto; that which the apoſtle teſtifies to be *our beſt;* the beſt thing, or ſtate, which our nature is capable of; that which brings eternal reſt and ſatisfaction unto our ſouls.

Here our ſouls are burdened with innumerable infirmities, and our faith is clogged in its operations by ignorance and darkneſs. This makes our beſt eſtate and higheſt attainments to be accompanied with *groans* for deliverance. *We which have received the firſt-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of the body,* Rom. viii. 23. Yea, whilſt we are in this tabernacle, we *groan earneſtly,* as being burdened, becauſe we are not *abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord,* 2 Cor. v. 2. 4. 8. The more we grow in faith, and ſpiritual light, the more ſenſible are we of our preſent burdens, and the more vehemently do we *groan* for deliverance into the *perfect liberty of the ſons of God.* This is the poſture of their minds who have received the *firſt-fruits of the Spirit,* in the moſt eminent degree. The nearer any one is to heaven, the more earneſtly he deſires to be there, becauſe Chriſt is there: for the more frequent and ſteady are our views of him by faith, the more do we long and groan for the removal of all obſtructions and interpoſitions in our ſo doing. Now groaning is a vehement deſire mixed with ſorrow, for the preſent want of what is deſired. The deſire hath ſorrow, and that ſorrow hath joy and refreſhment in it; like a ſhower that falls on a man in a garden in the ſpring; it wets him, but withal refreſheth him with the ſavour it cauſeth in the flowers and herbs of the garden where he is. And this *groaning,* which, when it is conſtant and habitual, is one of the choiceſt effects of faith in this life, reſpects what we would be *delivered from,* and what we would *attain unto.* The *firſt* is expreſſed, Rom. vii. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* The *other* in the places now mentioned. And this frame, with an intermixture of ſome ſighs from wearineſs by the troubles, ſorrows, pains, ſickneſſes of this life, is the beſt we can here attain unto.

Alas! we cannot here *think of Chriſt,* but we are quickly aſhamed of, and troubled at our own thoughts; ſo confuſed

are they, ſo unſteady, ſo imperfect. Commonly they iſſue in a groan or a ſigh; *Oh! when ſhall we come unto him? when ſhall we be ever with him? when ſhall we ſee him as he is?* And if at any time he begins to give more than ordinary evidences and intimations of his glory and love unto our ſouls, we are not able to bear them, ſo as to give them any abiding reſidence in our minds. But ordinarily this trouble and groaning is amongſt our beſt attainments in this world; a trouble which I pray God I may never be delivered from, until deliverance do come at once from this ſtate of mortality. Yea, the good Lord increaſe this trouble more and more in all that believe.

The heart of a believer affected with the glory of Chriſt, is like the *needle* touched with the *loadſtone*. It can no longer be quiet, no longer be ſatisfied in a diſtance from him. It is put into a continual motion towards him. The motion indeed is *weak* and *tremulous*. Pantings, breathings, ſighings, groanings, in prayer, in meditations, in the ſecret receſſes of our minds, are the life of it. However, it is continually preſſing towards him. But it obtains not its *point*, it comes not to its centre and reſt in this world.

But now *above*, all things are clear and ſerene; all plain and evident in our beholding the glory of Chriſt; we ſhall be *ever with him*, and *ſee him as he is*. This is heaven, this is bleſſedneſs, this is eternal reſt.

The *perſon of Chriſt* in all his glory ſhall be continually before us; and the eyes of our underſtandings ſhall be ſo glorioufly illuminated, as that we ſhall be able ſteadily to behold and comprehend that glory.

But, alas! here at preſent our minds *recoil*, our meditations fail, our hearts are overcome, our thoughts confuſed, and our eyes turn aſide from the luſtre of this glory; nor can we abide in the contemplation of it. But there, an immediate, conſtant view of it, will bring in everlaſting refreſhment and joy unto our whole ſouls.

This *beholding of the glory of Chriſt given him by his Father*, is indeed ſubordinate unto the ultimate viſion of the eſſence of God. What that is we cannot well conceive; only we know that *the pure in heart ſhall ſee God*. But it hath ſuch an immediate connection with it, and ſubordination unto it, as that without it we can never behold the face of God, as the objective bleſſedneſs of our ſouls. For he is, and ſhall be

be to eternity, the only means of communication between God and the church.

And we may take ſome direction, in our looking into and longing after this *perfect view* of the glory of Chriſt, from the example of the ſaints under the Old Teſtament. The ſight which they had of the glory of Chriſt, (for *they* alſo *ſaw his glory* through the obſcurity of its revelation, and its being vailed with *types and ſhadows*), was weak and imperfect in the moſt illuminated believers, much inferior unto what we now have by faith, through the goſpel. Yet ſuch it was, as encouraged them to *inquire and ſearch diligently into what was revealed*, 1 Pet. i. 10. 11. Howbeit, their diſcoveries were but dark and confuſed, ſuch as men have of things at a great diſtance, or *in a land that is very far off*, as the prophet ſpeaks, Iſ. xxxiii. 17. And the continuance of this vail on the revelation of the glory of Chriſt, whilſt a vail of ignorance and blindneſs was upon their hearts and minds, proved the ruin of that church in its apoſtaſy, as the apoſtle declares, 2 Cor. iii. 7. *But if the miniſtration of death written and engraven in ſtones, was glorious, ſo that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly behold the face of Moſes, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away.* ver. 13. 14. *And not as Moſes, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Iſrael could not ſtedfaſtly look to the end of that which is aboliſhed. But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the ſame vail untaken away, in the reading of the Old Teſtament; which vail is done away in Chriſt.* This *double vail* (the *covering covered*, the *vail vailed*) God promiſed to take away, Iſ. xxv. 7. *And he will deſtroy in this mountain the face of the covering caſt over all people, and the vail that is ſpread over all nations.* And then ſhall they turn to the Lord, when they ſhall be able clearly to behold the glory of Chriſt, 2 Cor. iii. 16. *Nevertheleſs, when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the vail ſhall be taken away.*

But this cauſed them who were real believers among them, to deſire, long, and pray for the removal of theſe vails, the departure of thoſe ſhadows, which made it as night unto them in compariſon of what they knew would appear, when the *Sun of righteouſneſs ſhould ariſe with healing in his wings.* They thought it long ere *the day did break, and the ſhadows flee away*, Cant. ii. 17. chap: iv. 6. There was (as the apoſtle

ſtle ſpeaks, Rom. viii. 19.) a thruſting *forth of the head* with deſire and expectation of the exhibition of the Son of God in the fleſh, and the accompliſhment of all divine promiſes therein. Hence he was called *the Lord whom they ſought and delighted in*, Mal. iii. 1.

And great was the ſpiritual wiſdom of believers in thoſe days. They rejoiced and gloried in the ordinances of divine worſhip which they did enjoy. They looked on them as their chiefeſt privilege, and attended unto them with diligence, as an effect of divine wiſdom and love, as alſo becauſe they had a *ſhadow of good things to come*. But yet at the ſame time they longed and deſired that the *time of reformation were come*, wherein they ſhould all be removed; that ſo they might behold and enjoy the good things ſignified by them. And thoſe who did not ſo, but reſted in, and truſted unto their preſent inſtitutions, were not accepted with God. Thoſe who were really illuminated did not ſo, but lived in conſtant deſires after the revelation of the whole myſtery of the wiſdom of God in Chriſt, as did the angels themſelves, 1 Pet. i. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead.* Eph. iii. 9. 10. *And to make all men ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wiſdom of God.*

In this frame of heart and ſuitable actings of their ſouls, there was more of the *power* of true faith and love, than is found among the moſt at this day. They ſaw the promiſes afar off, and were *perſuaded of them, and embraced them*, Heb. xi. 13. They reached out the arms of their moſt intent affections, to embrace the things that were promiſed. We have an inſtance of this frame in old Simeon, who ſo ſoon as he had taken the child Jeſus in his arms, cried out, *Now, Lord, let me depart*, now let me die, this is that which my ſoul hath longed for, Luke ii. 28. 29.

Our preſent darkneſs and weakneſs in beholding the glory of Chriſt, is not like theirs. It is not occaſioned by *a vail of types and ſhadows* caſt on it by the repreſentative inſtitutions of it; it doth not ariſe from the want of a clear *doctrinal revelation*

revelation of the perſon and office of Chriſt; but, as was before declared, it proceedeth from two other cauſes. *Firſt*, from the *nature of faith* itſelf, in compariſon of viſion. It is not able to look directly into this *excellent glory*, nor fully to comprehend it. *Secondly*, from the *way of its propoſal*, which is not *ſubſtantial* of the thing itſelf, but only of an image of it, as in a glaſs. But the ſight, the view of the glory of Chriſt, which we ſhall have in heaven, is much more above that which we now enjoy by the goſpel, than what we do, or may ſo enjoy, is above what they have attained under their types and ſhadows. There is a far greater diſtance between the viſion of heaven, and the ſight which we have now by faith, than is between the ſight which we now have, and what they had under the Old Teſtament. Heaven doth more excel the goſpel-ſtate, than that ſtate doth the law. Wherefore, if they did ſo pray, ſo long for, ſo deſire the removal of their ſhadows and vails, that they might ſee what we now ſee, that they might ſo behold the glory of Chriſt, as we may behold it in the light of the goſpel; how much more ſhould we, if we have the ſame faith with them, the ſame love, (which neither will nor can be ſatisfied without perfect fruition), long and pray for the removal of all weakneſs, of all darkneſs and interpoſition, that we may come unto that immediate beholding of his glory, which he ſo earneſtly prayed that we might be brought unto?

To ſum up briefly what hath been ſpoken: There are three things to be conſidered concerning the glory of Chriſt, three degrees in its manifeſtation; the *ſhadow*, the *perfect image*, and the *ſubſtance* itſelf. Thoſe under the law had only the *ſhadow* of it, and of the things that belong unto it, they had not the *perfect image* of them, Heb. x. 1. Under the goſpel we have the *perfect image*, which they had not; or a clear complete revelation and declaration of it, preſenting it unto us as in a *glaſs*. But the enjoyment of theſe things in their *ſubſtance* is referred for heaven; we muſt be *where he is*, that we may behold his glory. Now there is a greater difference and diſtance between the real ſubſtance of any thing, and the moſt perfect image of it, than there is between the moſt perfect image, and the loweſt ſhadow of the ſame thing. If then they longed to be freed from their ſtate of types and ſhadows, to enjoy the repreſentation of the glory of Chriſt, in that image of it which is given us in the goſpel;

goſpel; much more ought we to breathe and pant after our deliverance from beholding it in the *image* of it, that we may enjoy the *ſubſtance* itſelf. For whatever can be manifeſt of Chriſt on this ſide heaven, it is granted unto us for this end, that we may the more fervently deſire to be preſent with him.

And as it was their wiſdom and their grace to *rejoice* in the light they had, and in thoſe *typical adminiſtrations* of divine worſhip which ſhadowed out the glory of Chriſt unto them, yet did always pant after that more excellent light and full diſcovery of it which was to be made by the goſpel; ſo it will be ours alſo, thankfully to uſe and improve the *revelations* which we enjoy of it, and thoſe *inſtitutions of worſhip* wherein our faith is aſſiſted in the view thereof; yet ſo as continually to breathe after that perfect, that glorifying *ſight* of it, which is reſerved for heaven above.

And may we not a little examine ourſelves by theſe things? Do we eſteem this *preſſing towards the perfect view of the glory of Chriſt* to be our duty, and do we abide in the performance of it? If it be otherwiſe with any of us, it is a ſignal evidence that our profeſſion is *hypocritical*. If Chriſt be in us, he is the hope of glory in us; and where that hope is, it will be active in deſires of the things hoped for. Many love the world too well, and have their minds too much filled with the things of it, to entertain deſires of *ſpeeding through* it, unto a ſtate wherein they may behold the glory of Chriſt. They are at home, and are unwilling to be abſent from the body, though to be preſent with the Lord. They hope it may be that ſuch a ſeaſon will come at one time or another, and then it will be the beſt they can look for when they can be here no more. But they have but a little ſight of the glory of Chriſt in this world by faith, if any at all, who ſo little, ſo faintly deſire to have the *immediate ſight* of it above. I cannot underſtand how any man can walk with God as he ought, or hath that love for Jeſus Chriſt which true faith will produce, or doth place his refreſhments and joy in ſpiritual things, in things above, that doth not on all juſt occaſions, ſo meditate on the glory of Chriſt in heaven, as to *long for an admittance into the immediate ſight* of it.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt alone perfectly underſtood wherein the eternal bleſſedneſs of them that believe in him doth conſiſt. And this is the ſum of what he prays for with reſpect unto

that

that end; namely, *that we may be where he is, to behold his glory.* And is it not our duty to live in a continual *deſire of that* which he prayed ſo earneſtly that we might attain? If in ourſelves, we as yet apprehend but little of the glory, the excellency, the bleſſedneſs of it, yet ought we to repoſe that confidence in the wiſdom and love of Chriſt, that is our beſt, infinitely better than any thing we can enjoy here below.

Unto thoſe who are inured unto theſe *contemplations*, they are the ſalt of their lives, whereby every thing is condited and made ſavoury unto them, as we ſhall ſhew afterwards. And the want of ſpiritual diligence herein, is that which hath brought forth a negligent, careleſs, worldly profeſſion of religion, which contenting itſelf with ſome outward duties, hath loſt out of it the power of faith and love in their principal operations. Hereby many deceive their own ſouls. Goods, lands, poſſeſſions, relations, trades, with ſecular intereſts in them, are the things whoſe image is drawn on their minds, and whoſe *characters* are written on their foreheads, as the titles whereby they may be known. As believers beholding the glory of Chriſt in the bleſſed glaſs of the goſpel, are changed into the ſame image and likeneſs by the Spirit of the Lord; ſo theſe perſons beholding the beauty of the world, and the things that are in it, in the curſed glaſs of ſelf-love, they are in their minds changed into the ſame image. Hence perplexing fears, vain hopes, empty embraces of periſhing things, fruitleſs deſires, earthly, carnal deſigns, curſed ſelf-pleaſing imaginations, feeding on and being fed by the love of the world and ſelf, do abide and prevail in them. But we have not ſo learned Chriſt Jeſus.

CHAP. XIII.

The ſecond difference between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, and by ſight in heaven.

FAITH is the light wherein we behold the *glory of Chriſt in this world.* And this, in its own nature, as unto this great end, is weak and imperfect, like weak eyes, that cannot behold the ſun in its beauty. Hence our ſight

of it differs greatly from what we ſhall enjoy in glory, as hath been declared. But this is not all; it is frequently *hindered* and *interrupted* in its operations, or it loſeth the view of its object by one means or other. As he who ſees any thing at a great diſtance, ſees it imperfectly, and the leaſt interpoſition or motion takes it quite out of his ſight; ſo is it with our faith in this matter; whence ſometimes we can have little, ſometimes no ſight at all, of the glory of Chriſt by it. And this gives us, as we ſhall ſee, another *difference* between *faith* and *ſight*.

Now, although the conſideration hereof may ſeem a kind of *diverſion* from our preſent argument, yet I chuſe to inſiſt upon it, that I may evidence the reaſons whence it is that many have ſo little *experience* of the things whereof we have treated, that they find ſo little of *reality* or *power* in the exerciſe of this grace, or the performance of this duty. For it will appear in the iſſue, that the whole defect is in themſelves; the truth itſelf inſiſted on, is great and efficacious.

Firſt, Whilſt we are in this life, the Lord Chriſt is pleaſed in his *ſovereign wiſdom* ſometimes to withdraw, and as it were to hide himſelf from us. Then do our minds fall into clouds and darkneſs; faith is at a loſs, we cannot behold his glory; yea, we may ſeek him, but cannot find him. So Job complains, as we obſerved before: *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him*, chap. xxiii. 8. 9. Which way ſoever I turn myſelf, whatever are my endeavours, in what way or work of his own I ſeek him, I cannot find him, I cannot ſee him, I cannot behold his glory. So the church alſo complains; *Verily thou art a God that hideſt thyſelf, O God of Iſrael the Saviour*, Iſ. xlv. 15.; and the Pſalmiſt, *How long, Lord, wilt thou hide thyſelf for ever?* Pſal. lxxxix. 46. This hiding of the face of God, is the hiding of the ſhining of his glory in the face of Chriſt Jeſus, and therefore of the glory of Chriſt himſelf; for it is the glory of Chriſt to be the repreſentative of the glory of God. The *ſpouſe* in the Canticles is often at a loſs, and herein bemoans herſelf, that her beloved was withdrawn, that ſhe could neither find him nor ſee him, chap. iii. 1. 2. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now, and go about the city*

city in the ſtreets, and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. Chap. v. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone: my ſoul failed when he ſpake: I ſought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no anſwer.*

Men may retain their notions concerning Chriſt, his perſon, and his glory. Theſe cannot be blotted out of their minds, but by *hereſy* or *obdurate ſtupidity*. They may have the ſame *doctrinal knowledge* of him with others; but the ſight of his glory doth not conſiſt therein: they may abide in the outward performance of duties towards him as formerly; but yet all this while, as unto the eſpecial gracious communications of himſelf unto their ſouls, and as unto a cheerful refreſhing view of his glory, he may withdraw and hide himſelf from them.

As under the ſame outward diſpenſations of the word, he doth manifeſt himſelf unto ſome, and not unto others; (*How is it that thou wilt manifeſt thyſelf unto us, and not unto the world?* John xiv. 22.); whereon they to whom he doth ſo manifeſt himſelf, do ſee him to be beautiful, glorious, and lovely, (for *unto them that believe he is precious*), whilſt the others ſee nothing hereof, but wonder at them by whom he is admired, Cant. v. 9. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou faireſt among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?* ſo, in the ſame diſpenſation of the word, he ſometimes hides his face, turns away the light of his countenance, clouds the beams of his glory unto ſome, whilſt others are cheriſhed and warmed with them.

Two things we muſt here ſpeak unto.

1. *Why doth the Lord Chriſt at any time thus hide himſelf in his glory from the faith of believers, that they cannot behold him.*

2. *How we may perceive and know that he doth ſo withdraw himſelf from us, ſo that however we may pleaſe ourſelves, we do not indeed behold his glory.*

As unto the firſt of theſe, though what he doth is ſuppoſed an act of ſovereign *unaccountable wiſdom*, yet there are many holy ends of it, and conſequently reaſons for it. I ſhall mention one only. He doth it to *ſtir us up in an eminent manner unto a diligent ſearch and inquiry after him.*

Woful ſloth and negligence are apt to prevail in us, in our meditations on heavenly things. *Though our hearts wake* (as the ſpouſe ſpeaks, Cant. v. 2.) in a valuation of Chriſt, his love, and his grace, *yet we ſleep*, as unto the due exerciſe of faith and love towards him. Who is it that can juſtify himſelf herein? that can ſay, *My heart is pure, I am clean from this ſin?* Yea, it is ſo far otherwiſe with many of us, that he is for ever to be admired in his patience, that on the account of our unkindneſs and woful negligence herein, he hath not only withdrawn himſelf at ſeaſons, but that he hath not utterly departed from us. Now he knows that thoſe with whom he hath been graciouſly preſent, who have had views of his glory, although they have not valued the mercy and privilege of it as they ought, yet can they not bear a ſenſe of his abſence, and his hiding himſelf from them. By this therefore will he awake them unto a diligent inquiry after him. Upon the diſcovery of his abſence, and ſuch a diſtance of his glory from them as their faith cannot reach unto it, they become *like the doves of the valleys all of them mourning every one for his iniquity*, and do ſtir up themſelves to ſeek him early and with diligence, Hoſ. v. 15. *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and ſeek my face: in their affliction they will ſeek me early.* So where-ever the *ſpouſe* intimates this *withdrawing of Chriſt from her*, ſhe immediately gives an account of her reſtleſs diligence and endeavours in her inquiries after him, until ſhe have found him, Chap. iii. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now, and go about the city in the ſtreets, and in the broad ways I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city, found me: to whom I ſaid, Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth? It was but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's houſe, and into the chamber of her that conceived me. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleaſe.* Chap. v. 2.—8. And in theſe inquiries there is ſuch an exerciſe of faith and love, though it may be acting themſelves moſtly in ſighs and groans, as is acceptable and well-pleaſing to him.

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We are like him in the parable of the prophet that ſpake unto Ahab, who having one committed unto him to keep, affirms, that *whilſt he was buſy here and there, he was gone.* Chriſt commits himſelf unto us, and we ought carefully to keep his preſence; *I held him,* ſaith the church, and *would not let him go,* Cant. iii. 4. Bút whilſt we are buſy here and there, while our minds are over-filled with other things, he withdraws himſelf, we cannot find him. But even this rebuke is a ſanctified ordinance for our recovery, and his return unto us.

2. Our ſecond inquiry is, *How we may know when Chriſt doth ſo withdraw himſelf from us, that we do not, that we cannot behold his glory.*

I ſpeak herein unto them alone, who make the obſervation of the lively actings of faith and love, in and towards Jeſus Chriſt, their chiefeſt concern in all their retirements, yea in their whole walk before God. Concerning theſe, our inquiry is, How they may know when Chriſt doth in any degree or meaſure *withdraw* from them ſo, as that they cannot in a due manner behold his glory?

And the firſt diſcovery hereof is by the *conſequents* of ſuch withdrawings. And what are the *conſequents* of it, we can know no otherwiſe but by the effects of his preſence with us, and the manifeſtation of himſelf unto us, which as unto ſome degrees muſt neceſſarily ceaſe thereon.

Now the firſt of theſe is the *life, vigour, and effectual acting of all grace in us.* This is an inſeparable conſequent and effect of a view of his glory. Whilſt we enjoy it, *we live, neverthelefs not we, but Chriſt liveth in us,* exciting and acting all his graces in us.

This is that which the apoſtle inſtructeth us in; while we *behold his glory, as in a glaſs, we are transformed into the ſame image, from glory to glory,* 2 Cor. iii. 18. That is, whilſt by faith we contemplate on the glory of Chriſt as revealed in the goſpel, all grace will thrive and flouriſh in us towards a perfect conformity unto him. For whilſt we abide in this view and contemplation, our ſouls will be preſerved in holy frames, and in a continual exerciſe of love and delight, with all other ſpiritual affections towards him. It is impoſſible whilſt Chriſt is in the eye of our faith as propoſed in the goſpel, but that we ſhall labour to be like him, and greatly love him. Neither is there any way for us to attain

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unto either of theſe, which are the great concernments of our ſouls, namely, to be *like* unto Chriſt, and to *love* him, but by a conſtant view of him and his glory by faith, which powerfully and effectually works them in us. All the *doctrinal knowledge* which we have of him is uſeleſs; all the view we have of his glory is but fancy, imagination, or ſuperſtition, which are not accompanied with this *transforming power*. And that which is wrought by it, is the increaſe and vigour of all grace; for therein alone our conformity unto him doth conſiſt. Growth in grace, holineſs and obedience, is a *growing like unto Chriſt*, and nothing elſe is ſo.

I cannot refrain here from a neceſſary ſhort *digreſſion*. This *transforming efficacy* from a ſpiritual view of Chriſt as propoſed in the goſpel, being loſt as unto an experience of it in the minds of men carnal and ignorant of the myſtery of believing, (as it is at preſent by many derided, though it be the life of religion), *fancy* and *ſuperſtition* provided various ſupplies in the room of it. For they found out *crucifixes* and *images* with *paintings*, to repreſent him in his ſufferings and glory. By theſe things, their carnal affections being excited by their outward ſenſes, they ſuppoſe themſelves to be affected with him, and to be like unto him. Yea, ſome have proceeded ſo far, as either by *arts diabolical*, or by other means, to make an appearance of *wounds on their hands, and feet, and ſides*, therein pretending to be like him; yea, to be wholly tranſformed into his *image*. But that which is produced by an image, is but an image; an imaginary Chriſt will effect nothing in the minds of men, but imaginary grace.

Thus religion was loſt and died. When men could not obtain any *experience* in their minds of the ſpiritual myſteries of the goſpel, nor be ſenſible of any ſpiritual change or advantage by them, they ſubſtituted ſome outward duties and obſervances in their ſtead; as I ſhall ſhew (God willing) elſewhere more at large. Theſe produced ſome kind of effects in their minds and affections, but quite of another nature than thoſe which are the real effects of true *evangelical* grace. This is openly evident in this ſubſtitution of *images*, inſtead of the repreſentation of Chriſt and his glory made in the goſpel.

However, there is a general ſuppoſition granted on all hands; namely, that there muſt be a *view of Chriſt* and *his glory*,

glory, to cauſe us to love him, and thereby to make us conformable or like unto him. But here lies the difference; thoſe of the *church of Rome* ſay, that this muſt be done by the beholding of *crucifixes*, with other images and pictures of him; and that with our bodily eyes: we ſay, it is by our beholding his glory by faith, as revealed in the goſpel, and no otherwiſe. And to confeſs the truth, we have ſome, who as they reject the *uſe of images*, ſo they deſpiſe that ſpiritual view of the glory of Chriſt which we inquire after. Such perſons on the firſt occaſion will fall on the other ſide; for any thing is better than nothing.

But as we have a ſure word of prophecy to ſecure us from theſe abominations by an expreſs prohibition of ſuch images unto all ends whatever; ſo unto our ſtability in the profeſſion of the truth, and *experience* of the efficacy of this ſpiritual view of Chriſt, *transforming* our ſouls into his own likeneſs is abſolutely neceſſary. For if an *idolater* ſhould plead, as they do all, that in the beholding of the *image of Chriſt*, or of a *crucifix*, eſpecially if they are ſedulous and conſtant therein, they find their affections unto him greatly excited, increaſed, and enflamed, (as they will be, Iſ. lvii. 5. *Enflaming yourſelves with idols under every green tree, ſlaying the children in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks*), and that hereon he endeavours to be like unto him, what ſhall we have to oppoſe thereunto? for it is certain that ſuch *images* are apt to make impreſſions on the minds of men; partly from the readineſs of the ſenſes and imagination to give them admittance into their thoughts; and partly from their natural inclinations unto ſuperſtition, their averſation from things ſpiritual and inviſible, with an inclination unto things preſent and viſible. Hence among them who are ſatisfied that they ought not to be adored with any *religious veneration*, yet ſome are apt upon the ſight of them to entertain a *thoughtful reverence*, as they would do if they were to enter into a *Pagan temple* full of idols; and others are continually making approaches towards their uſe and veneration in *paintings and altars*, and ſuch outward poſtures of worſhip as are uſed in the religious ſervice of them. But that they do ſenſibly affect the minds of men carnal and ſuperſtitious, cannot be denied, and as they ſuppoſe, it is a love unto Chriſt himſelf. However, certain it is in general, and confeſſed on all hands, that the *beholding of Chriſt* is the moſt

moſt bleſſed means of exciting all our graces, ſpiritualizing all our affections, and transforming our minds into his likeneſs. And if we have not another, and that a more excellent way of *beholding him*, than they have who behold him, as they ſuppoſe, in images and crucifixes, they would ſeem to have the advantage of us. For their minds will really be affected with ſomewhat, ours with nothing at all. And by the pretence thereof, they inveigle the carnal affections of men ignorant of the power of the goſpel, to become their *proſelytes*. For having lived, it may be, a long time without any the leaſt experience of a ſenſible impreſſion on their minds, or a transforming power from the repreſentation of Chriſt in the goſpel, upon their very firſt religious, devout application unto theſe images, they find their thoughts exerciſed, their minds affected, and ſome preſent change made upon them.

But there was a difference between the *perſon of David*, and an *image with a bolſter of goats hair*, though the one were laid in the room and place of the other. And there is ſo between Chriſt and an image, though the one be put into the place of the other. Neither do theſe things ſerve unto any other end, but to divert the minds of men from faith and love to Chriſt; giving them ſome ſuch ſatisfactions in the room of them, as that their carnal affections do cleave unto their idols. And indeed it doth belong unto the wiſdom of faith, or we ſtand in need of ſpiritual light, to diſcern and judge between the working of natural affections towards ſpiritual objects, on undue motives, by undue means, with indirect ends, wherein all *papal devotion* conſiſts, and the ſpiritual exerciſe of grace in thoſe affections duly fixed on ſpiritual objects.

But as was ſaid, it is a real experience of the *efficacy* that there is in the ſpiritual *beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith* as propoſed in the goſpel, to ſtrengthen, increaſe, and excite all grace unto its proper exerciſe, ſo changing and transforming the ſoul gradually into his likeneſs, which muſt ſecure us againſt all thoſe pretences. And ſo I return from this *digreſſion*.

Hereby we may underſtand whether the Lord Chriſt doth ſo *withdraw himſelf*, as that we do not, as that we cannot behold his glory by faith in a due manner, which is the thing inquired after. For if we grow *weak in our graces*, unſpiritual

ſitual in our frames, cold in our affections, or negligent in the exerciſe of them by holy meditation, it is evident that he is at a great diſtance from us, ſo as that we do not *behold his glory* as we ought. If the weather grow cold, herbs and plants do wither, and the froſt begins to bind up the earth; all men grant that the *ſun* is withdrawn, and makes not its wonted approach unto us. And if it be ſo with our hearts, that they grow *cold*, *frozen*, *withering*, *lifeleſs* in and unto ſpiritual duties, it is certain that the Lord Chriſt is in ſome ſenſe withdrawn, and that we do not behold his glory. We retain *notions* of truth concerning his perſon, office, and grace; but faith is not in conſtant exerciſe, as to real views of him and his glory. For there is nothing more certain in Chriſtian experience than this is, that while we do really by faith behold the glory of Chriſt, as propoſed in the goſpel, the glory of his perſon and office as before deſcribed, and ſo abide in holy thoughts and meditations thereof, eſpecially in our private duties and retirements, *all grace* will live and thrive in us in ſome meaſure, eſpecially love unto his perſon, and therein unto all that belongs unto him. Let us but put it to the trial, and we ſhall infallibly find the promiſed event.

Do any of us find *decays in grace* prevailing in us, deadneſs, coldneſs, lukewarmneſs, a kind of ſpiritual ſtupidity and ſenſeleſſneſs coming upon us? do we find an unreadineſs unto the exerciſe of grace in its proper ſeaſon, and the vigorous actings of it in duties of communion with God? and would we have our ſouls recovered from theſe dangerous diſeaſes? let us aſſure ourſelves there is *no better* way for our healing and deliverance, yea *no other* way but this alone, namely, the *obtaining a freſh view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, and a ſteady abiding therein.* Conſtant contemplation of Chriſt and his glory, putting forth its tranſforming power unto the revival of all grace, is the only relief in this caſe, as ſhall further be ſhewed afterwards.

Some will ſay, that this muſt be effected by *freſh ſupplies and renewed communications of the Holy Spirit.* Unleſs he fall as dew and ſhowers on our dry and barren hearts, unleſs he cauſeth our graces to ſpring, thrive, and bring forth fruit, unleſs he revive and increaſe faith, love, and holineſs in our ſouls, our *backſlidings* will not be healed, nor our ſpiritual ſtate be recovered. Unto this end is he prayed for, and promiſed in the ſcripture, Cant. iv. 16. *Awake, O north-wind,*

and come, thou ſouth, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out. Iſ. xliv. 3. 4. *For I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine offspring: and they ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes.* Ezek. xi. 19. *And I will put a new ſpirit within you.* And chap. xxxvi. 26. *A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you, and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh.* Hoſ. xiv. 5. 6. *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael: he ſhall grow as the lily, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the olive-tree, and his ſmell as Lebanon.* And ſo it is. The immediate efficiency of the revival of our ſouls, is from and by the Holy Spirit. But the inquiry is, In *what way*, or by *what means* we may obtain the ſupplies and communications of him unto this end? This the apoſtle declares in the place inſiſted on; *We beholding the glory of Chriſt in a glaſs, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is in the exerciſe of faith on Chriſt, in the way before deſcribed, that the Holy Spirit puts forth his renewing, transforming power in and upon our ſouls. This therefore is that alone which will retrieve Chriſtians from their preſent decays and deadneſs.

Some *complain* greatly of their ſtate and condition; none ſo dead, ſo dull, and ſtupid as they; they know not whether they have any ſpark of heavenly life left in them: ſome make weak and faint endeavours for a recovery, which are like the attempts of a man in a dream, wherein he ſeems to uſe great endeavours without any ſucceſs: ſome put themſelves unto multiplied duties. Howbeit, the *generality of profeſſors* ſeem to be in a pining thriftleſs condition; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe they will not ſincerely and conſtantly make uſe of the only remedy and relief; like a man that will rather chuſe to pine away in his ſickneſs, with ſome uſeleſs, tranſient refreſhments, than apply himſelf unto a known and approved remedy, becauſe, it may be, the uſe of it is unſuited unto ſome of his preſent occaſions. Now this is not to live in the exerciſe of faith in Chriſt Jeſus: this himſelf aſſures us of, John xv. 4. 5. *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are*

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the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

There is a twofold *coming unto Christ* by believing. The first is, that *we may have life*; that is, a spring and principle of spiritual life communicated unto us from him, *for he is our life*, Col. iii. 3. and *because he liveth, we live also*, John xiv. 19.; yea, it is not so much *we that live, as he that liveth in us*, Gal. ii. 19. 20.: and unbelief is a *not coming unto him*, that we may have life, John v. 40. But secondly, there is also a coming unto him by believers in the actual exercise of faith, that they may *have this life more abundantly*, John x. 10. that is, such supplies of grace as may keep their souls in a healthy, vigorous acting of all the powers of spiritual life. And as he reproacheth some that they would not *come unto him that they might have life*, so he may justly reprove us all, that we do not *so come unto him* in the actual exercise of faith, as that we might *have this life more abundantly*.

Secondly, When the Lord Christ is near us, and we do behold his glory, he will frequently communicate *spiritual refreshment* in peace, consolation, and joy unto our souls. We shall not only hereby have our graces excited with respect unto him as their object, but be made sensible of his actings *towards us*, in the communications of himself and his love unto us. When the Sun of righteousness ariseth on any soul, or makes any near approach thereunto, it shall find *healing under his wings*; his beams of grace shall convey by his Spirit, holy spiritual refreshment thereunto: for he is present with us by his Spirit, and these are his fruits and effects as he is the Comforter, suited unto his office, as he is promised unto us.

Many love to walk in a very careless unwise profession. So long as they can hold out in the performance of outward duties, they are very regardless of the greatest evangelical privileges; of those things which are the marrow of divine promises, all real endeavours of a vital communion with Christ: such are spiritual peace, refreshing consolations, ineffable joys, and the blessed composure of assurance. Without some taste and experience of these things, profession is heartless, lifeless, useless; and religion itself a dead carcase, without an animating soul. The peace which some enjoy is a mere stupidity. They judge not these things to be real, which are

the ſubſtance of Chriſt's preſent reward; and a renunciation whereof would deprive the church of its principal ſupportments and encouragements in all its ſufferings. It is a great evidence of the power of unbelief, when we can ſatisfy ourſelves without an experience in our own hearts of the great things in this kind of *joy*, *peace*, *conſolation*, *aſſurance*, that are promiſed in the goſpel. For how can it be ſuppoſed that we do indeed believe the promiſes of things future, namely, of heaven, immortality, and glory, the faith whereof is the foundation of all religion, when we do not believe the promiſes of the *preſent reward* in theſe ſpiritual privileges? And how ſhall we be thought to believe them, when we do not endeavour after an experience of the things themſelves in our own ſouls, but are even contented without them? But herein men deceive themſelves. They would very deſirouſly have evangelical joy, peace, and aſſurance, to countenance them in their evil frames, and careleſs walking. And ſome have attempted to reconcile theſe things unto the ruin of their ſouls. But it will not be. Without the diligent exerciſe of the grace of obedience, we ſhall never enjoy the grace of conſolation. But we muſt ſpeak ſomewhat of theſe things afterwards.

It is peculiarly, in the *view of the glory of Chriſt*, in his approaches unto us, and abiding with us, that we are made partakers of evangelical peace, conſolation, joy, and aſſurance. Theſe are a part of the royal train of his graces, of the reward wherewith he is accompanied; *His reward is with him.* Where ever he is graciouſly preſent with any, theſe things are never wanting in a due meaſure and degree, unleſs it be by their own fault, or for their trial. In theſe things doth he give the church of his loves, Cant. vii. 12. *There will I give thee my loves.* For, *if any man*, ſaith he, *loveth me, I will love him, and manifeſt myſelf unto him*, John xiv. 21.; *yea, I and the Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him*, ver. 23.; and that ſo as to *ſup with him*, Rev. iii. 20.; which, on his part, can be only by the communication of thoſe ſpiritual refreſhments. The only inquiry is, By what *way* and *means* we do receive them? Now, I ſay, this is in and by our *beholding of the glory of Chriſt by faith*, 1 Pet. i. 9. 10. Let that glory be rightly ſtated, as before laid down; the glory of his perſon, his office, his condeſcenſion, exaltation, love, and grace. Let faith be fixed in a view and contemplation

templation of it, mix itſelf with it as repreſented in the glaſs of the goſpel, meditate upon it, embrace it, and virtue will proceed from Chriſt, communicating ſpiritual, ſupernatural refreſhment and joy unto our ſouls. Yea, in ordinary caſes, it is impoſſible that believers ſhould have a *real proſpect of this glory* at any time, but that it will in ſome meaſure affect their hearts with a ſenſe of his love, which is the ſpring of all conſolation in them. In the exerciſe of faith on the diſcoveries of the glory of Chriſt made unto us in the goſpel, no man ſhall ever totally want ſuch intimations of his love, yea ſuch effuſions of it in his heart, as ſhall be a living ſpring of thoſe ſpiritual refreſhments, John iv. 14. *But the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life.* Rom. v. 5. *The love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us.* When therefore we loſe theſe things as unto a ſenſe of them in our ſouls, it is evident that the Lord Chriſt is withdrawn, and that we do not behold his glory.

But I cannot here avoid another ſhort digreſſion. There are thoſe by whom all theſe things are derided, as diſtempered fancies and imaginations; yea, ſuch things have been ſpoken and written of them, as contain a virtual renunciation of the goſpel, the powers of the world to come, and the whole work of the Holy Ghoſt as the Comforter of the church. And hereby all real intercourſe between the *perſon of Chriſt* and the ſouls of them that do believe, is utterly overthrown; reducing all religion to an outward ſhew and pageantry, fitter for a ſtage than that temple of God which is in the minds of men. According unto the ſentiments of theſe *profane ſcoffers*, there is no ſuch thing as the *ſhedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt*; nor as the *witneſſing of the Spirit of God with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God*; from which theſe ſpiritual joys and refreſhments are inſeparable, as their neceſſary effects: no ſuch thing, as the *lifting up of the light of God's countenance upon us, which will put gladneſs into our hearts*; that gladneſs which comprizeth all the things mentioned: no ſuch thing as *rejoicing upon believing, with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*: no ſuch thing as *Chriſt's ſhewing and manifeſting himſelf unto us, ſupping with us*, and *giving us of his loves*: that the divine promiſes of a *feaſt of fat things, and wines well refined* in goſpel-mercies, are empty and inſignificant words: that all

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thoſe raviſhing joys and exultations of ſpirit that multitudes of faithful *martyrs* of old, and in later ages, have enjoyed by a view of the glory of God in Chriſt, and a ſenſe of his love, whereunto they gave teſtimony unto their laſt moments, in the midſt of their torments, were but fancies and imaginations. But it is the height of impudence in theſe profane ſcoffers, that they proclaim their own ignorance of thoſe things which are the real powers of our religion.

Others there are, who will not *deny the truth* of theſe things; they dare not riſe up in contradiction unto thoſe expreſs teſtimonies of the ſcripture, wherewith they are confirmed; and they do ſuppoſe that ſome are partakers of them, at leaſt they were ſo *formerly*: but as for their parts, they have no experience of them, nor do judge it their duty to endeavour after it: they can make a ſhift to live on hopes of heaven and future glory; as unto what is preſent, they deſire no more, but to be found in the performance of ſome duties in anſwer unto their convictions, which gives them that ſorry peace which they do enjoy. So do many countenance themſelves in their ſpiritual ſloth and unbelief, keeping themſelves at liberty to ſeek for refreſhment and ſatisfaction in other things, whilſt thoſe of the goſpel are deſpiſed. And theſe things are inconſiſtent. While men look for their *chief refreſhment* and ſatisfaction in temporal things, it is impoſſible they ſhould ſeek after thoſe that are ſpiritual in a due manner. And it muſt be confeſſed, that when we have a due regard unto ſpiritual, evangelical conſolations and joys, it will abate and take off our affections unto, and ſatisfaction in preſent enjoyments, Phil. iii. 8. 9. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.*

But there is no more ſacred truth than this, That where Chriſt is preſent with believers, where he is not withdrawn for a ſeaſon from them, where they live in the view of his glory by faith, as it is propoſed unto them in the goſpel, he will give unto them at his own ſeaſons ſuch intimations of his love, ſuch ſupplies of his Spirit, ſuch holy joys and rejoicings, ſuch repoſe of ſoul in aſſurance, as ſhall refreſh

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their ſouls, fill them with joy, ſatisfy them with ſpiritual delight, and quicken them unto all acts of holy communion with himſelf.

Let no ſuch *diſhonour* be reflected on the goſpel, that whereas the faith of it, and obedience unto it, are uſually accompanied with outward troubles, afflictions, perſecution, and reproaches, as we are foretold they ſhould be; that it doth not by its inward conſolations and divine refreſhments, outbalance all thoſe evils which we may undergo upon the account of it. So to ſuppoſe, is expreſsly contrary to the promiſe of Chriſt himſelf, who hath aſſured that even, *even now in this life*, in this world, diſtinct from eternal life in the world to come, *we ſhall receive an hundred-fold recompenſe* for all that we can loſe or ſuffer for his ſake, Matth. xix. 29.: as alſo unto the experience of them, who in all ages have *taken joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, as knowing in themſelves*, (by the experience which they have of its firſt-fruits), *that they have in heaven a better and more abiding ſubſtance*, Heb. x. 34. If we come ſhort in a participation of theſe things, if we are ſtrangers unto them, the blame is to be laid on ourſelves alone, as it ſhall be immediately declared.

Now the deſign of the Lord Chriſt in thus *withdrawing* himſelf from us, and *hiding his glory* from our view, being the exerciſe of our graces, and to ſtir us up unto diligence in our inquiries after him, here lieth our guidance and direction in this caſe. Do we find ourſelves lifeleſs in the ſpiritual duties of religion? are we ſtrangers unto the heavenly viſits of conſolation and joys, thoſe *viſitations of God* whereby he preſerves our ſouls? do we ſeldom enjoy a ſenſe of the *ſhedding abroad of his love in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt?* We have no way of recovery but this alone. To this *ſtrong tower* muſt we turn ourſelves as *priſoners of hope*; unto Chriſt muſt we look that we may be ſaved. It is a ſteady view or contemplation of his glory by faith alone, that will bring in all theſe things in a lively experience in our hearts and ſouls.

Again, in the ſecond place, It is from *ourſelves* principally, if we loſe the views of the glory of Chriſt, and the exerciſe of faith be obſtructed therein. All our ſpiritual diſadvantages do ariſe from ourſelves. It is the remainder of luſts and corruptions in us, either indulged by ſloth and negligence, or excited and inflamed by Satan's temptations, that do

do obſtruct us in this duty. Whilſt they are in any diſorder or diſturbance, it is in vain for us to expect any clear view of this glory.

That view of the glory of Chriſt, whereof we treat, conſiſts in two things; namely, its *eſpecial nature*, and its neceſſary *adjunct* or effects. The firſt is, a *ſpiritual perception or underſtanding of it as revealed in the ſcriptures*. For the revelation of the glory of his perſon, office and grace, is the principal ſubject of them, and the principal object of our faith. And the other conſiſts in *multiplied thoughts about him*, with actings of faith in love, truſt, delight, and longing after the full enjoyment of him, 1 Pet. i. 8. *Whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*. If we ſatisfy ourſelves in mere notions and ſpeculations about the glory of Chriſt as doctrinally revealed unto us, we ſhall find no transforming power or efficacy communicated unto us thereby. But when, under the conduct of that ſpiritual light, our affections do cleave unto him with full purpoſe of heart, our minds are filled with thoughts of him, and delight in him, and faith is kept up unto its conſtant exerciſe in truſt and affiance on him, virtue will proceed from him to purify our hearts, increaſe our holineſs, ſtrengthen our graces, and to *fill us* ſometimes *with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*. This is the juſt temperature of a ſtate of ſpiritual health; namely, when our *light* of the knowledge of the glory of God in Chriſt, doth anſwer the *means* of it which we enjoy; and when our *affections* unto Chriſt do hold proportion unto that light; and this according unto the various degrees of it; for ſome have more, and ſome have leſs. Where *light* leaves the *affections* behind, it ends in formality or Atheiſm: and where *affections* outrun *light*, they ſink in the bog of ſuperſtition, doting on images and pictures, or the like. But where things go not into theſe exceſſes, it is better that our affections exceed our light on the defect of our underſtandings, than that our light exceed our effections from the corruption of our wills. In both theſe is the exerciſe of faith frequently interrupted and obſtructed by the remainder of corruption in us, eſpecially if not kept conſtantly under the *diſcipline of mortification*, but ſome way indulged unto. For,

1*ſt*, The *ſteam of their diſorder* will cloud and darken the underſtanding;

underſtanding, that it ſhall not be able clearly to diſcern any ſpiritual object, leaſt of all the greateſt of them. There is nothing more acknowledged, even in things natural and moral, than that the diſorder of the paſſions and affections will blind, darken, and deceive the mind in its operations. And it is much more ſo in things *ſpiritual*, wherein that diſorder is an immediate rebellion againſt its proper conducting light; that is, againſt the light and rule of grace.

There are three ſorts of them unto whom the goſpel is preached, in whom there are various obſtructions of this view.

1. There is in obſtinate unbelievers a darkneſs that is an effect of the power of Satan on their minds, in blinding of them, which makes it impoſſible for them to behold any thing of the glory of Chriſt. So the apoſtle declares it, *If our goſpel be hid, it is hid unto them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them*, 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4. Of theſe we do not ſpeak.

2. There is in all men, a *corrupt, natural darkneſs*; or ſuch a depravation of their minds by nature, as that they cannot diſcern this glory of Chriſt in a due manner. Hence *the light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehendeth it not*, John i. 5. For *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Hence it is, that although Chriſt be preached among us continually, yet there are very few who diſcern any glory or beauty in him, for which *he ſhould be deſired*, as the prophet complains, Iſ. liii. 1. 2. But I ſpeak not of this *natural darkneſs* in general. But even theſe perſons have their minds filled with prejudices againſt the goſpel, and darkened as unto the glory of Chriſt, according as corrupt luſts and affections are prevalent in them, John xii. 42. 43. *Nevertheleſs, among the chief rulers alſo, many believed on him; but becauſe of the Phariſees they did not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out of the ſynagogue: for they loved the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God.* Hence is the difference that is among the common hearers of the word. For although no man can do any thing of himſelf for the receiving of Chriſt, and the beholding of his glory, without the eſpecial aid of the grace of God, Matth.

xi. 25. John vi. 44. 45.; yet ſome may make more oppoſition unto believing, and lay more hindrances in their own way, than others; which is done by their luſts and corruptions.

3. There are thoſe in whom both theſe evils are cured by faith, wherein the eyes of our *underſtandings are enlightened* to perceive and diſcern ſpiritual things, Eph. i. 16. 17. 18. But this cure is wrought in this life but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *For now we ſee through a glaſs, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then ſhall I know even as alſo I am known.* And in this cure by a ſupply of a principle of ſaving light unto our minds, there are many degrees. For ſome have a clearer light than others, and thereby a more clear diſcerning of the myſtery of the wiſdom of God, and of the glory of Chriſt therein. But whatever be our attainments herein, that which obſtructs this light, that hinders it from ſhining in a due manner, *that* obſtructs and hinders faith in its view of the glory of Chriſt. And this is done by the *remainders of corrupt nature* in us, when they act in any prevalent degree; for they darken the mind, and weaken it in its ſpiritual operations: that is, where any corrupt and inordinate affections, as love of the world, cares about it, inclinations unto ſenſuality, or the like ſpiritual diſorders do prevail, faith is weakened in its ſpiritual acts, eſpecially in diſcerning and beholding the glory of Chriſt; for the mind is rendered *unſteady* in its inquiries after it, being continually diſtracted and diverted with vain thoughts and imaginations.

Perſons under the power of ſuch diſtempers, may have the ſame *doctrinal knowledge* of the perſon of Chriſt, his office and his grace, with other men, and the ſame evidence of its truth fixed on their minds; but when they endeavour a real *intuition* into the things themſelves, all things are *dark* and confuſed unto them from the uncertainty and inſtability of their own minds.

This is the ſum of what I do deſign. We have by faith a view of the glory of Chriſt. This view is weak and unſteady from the nature of faith itſelf, and the way of its propoſal unto us as in a *glaſs*, in compariſon of what by *ſight* we ſhall attain unto. But moreover, where corrupt luſts or inordinate affections are indulged unto, where they are not continually *mortified*, where any one ſin hath a perplexing prevalency in the mind, faith will be ſo far weakened thereby,

by, as that it can neither ſee nor meditate upon this glory of Chriſt in a due manner. This is the reaſon why the moſt are ſo weak and unſtable in the performance of this duty, yea are almoſt utterly unacquainted with it. The light of faith in the minds of men being impaired, clouded, darkened by the prevalency of unmortified luſts, it cannot make ſuch diſcoveries of this glory, as otherwiſe it would do. And this makes the preaching of Chriſt unto many ſo unprofitable as it is.

2*dly*, In the view of the glory of Chriſt which we have by faith, it will fill the mind with *thoughts and meditations* about him, whereon the affections will cleave unto him with delight. This, as was ſaid, is inſeparable from a ſpiritual view of his glory in its due exerciſe. Every one that hath it, muſt and will have many *thoughts* concerning, and great affections to him. See the deſcription of theſe things, Phil. iii. 8. 10. *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt: That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death.* It is not poſſible, I ſay, that we ſhould behold the glory of his perſon, office, and grace, with a due conviction of our concernment and intereſt therein, but that our minds will be greatly affected with it, and be filled with contemplations about it. Where it is not ſo with any, it is to be feared that they *have not heard his voice at any time, nor ſeen his ſhape*, whatever they profeſs. A ſpiritual ſight of Chriſt will aſſuredly produce love unto him; and if any man love him not, he never ſaw him, he knows him not at all. And that is no love, which doth not beget in us many *thoughts* of the object beloved. He therefore who is partaker of this grace, will think much of what Chriſt is in himſelf, of what he hath done for us, of his love and condeſcenſion, of the manifeſtation of all the glorious excellencies of the divine nature in him, exerted in a way of infinite wiſdom and goodneſs for the ſalvation of the church. Thoughts and meditations of theſe things will abound in us, if we are not wanting unto the due exerciſe of faith: and intenſe inflamed affections unto him, will enſue thereon, at leaſt they will be active unto our own refreſhing experience. And where theſe things are not in reality,

(though in ſome they may be only in a mean and low degree), men do but deceive their own ſouls in hopes of any benefit by Chriſt or the goſpel.

This therefore is the preſent caſe. Where there are prevailing ſinful diſtempers or inordinate affections in the mind, ſuch as thoſe before mentioned, as ſelf-love, love of the world, cares and fears about it, with an exceſſive valuation of relations and enjoyments; they will ſo far cumber and perplex it with a multitude of thoughts about their own objects, as ſhall leave no place for ſedate meditations on Chriſt and his glory. And where the thoughts are engaged, the affections which partly excite them, and partly are led by them, will be fixed alſo, Col. iii. 1. 2. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

This is that which, in the moſt, greatly promoteth that *imperfection* which is in our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith in this life. According to the proportion and degree of the prevalency of affections, corrupt, earthly, ſelfiſh or ſenſual, filling the heads and hearts of men with a multitude of thoughts about what they are fixed on, or inclined unto; ſo is faith obſtructed and weakened in this work and duty.

Wherefore, whereas there is a remainder of theſe luſts, as to the ſeeds of them in us all, though more mortified in ſome than in others; yet having the ſame effects in the minds of all, according to the degree of their remainder; thence it is, as from an efficacious cauſe of it, that our view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, is in many ſo weak, imperfect, and unſteady.

3*dly*, We have interruption given unto the work of faith herein, by the *temptations of Satan*. His original great deſign, where-ever the goſpel is preached, is to *blind the eyes of men, that the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould not ſhine unto them*, or *irradiate* their minds, 2 Cor. iv. 4. And herein he prevails unto aſtoniſhment. Let the light of the goſpel in the preaching of the word be never ſo glorious; yet by various means and artifices, he blinds the minds of the moſt, that they ſhall not behold any thing of the glory of Chriſt therein. By this means he continues his rule in the children of diſobedience. With reſpect unto the elect, God overpowers him herein.

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He *ſhines into their hearts, to give them the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, ver. 6. Yet will not Satan ſo give over. He will endeavour by all ways and means to trouble, diſcompoſe, and *darken* the mind even of them that believe, ſo as that they ſhall not be able to retain clear and diſtinct views of this glory. And this he doth two ways.

1. With ſome he employs all his engines, uſeth all his methods of ſerpentine ſubtilty, and caſts in his fiery darts, ſo to diſquiet, diſcompoſe and deject them, as that they can retain no comfortable views of Chriſt or his glory. Hence ariſe fears, doubts, diſputes, uncertainties, with various diſconſolations. Hereon they cannot apprehend the love of Chriſt, nor be ſenſible of any intereſt they have therein, or any refreſhing perſuaſions that they are accepted with him. If ſuch things ſometimes ſhine and beam into their minds, yet they quickly vaniſh and diſappear. Fears that they are rejected and caſt off by him, that he will not receive them here nor hereafter, do come in their place; hence they are filled with anxieties and deſpondencies, under which it is impoſſible they ſhould have any clear view of his glory.

I know that *ignorance*, *Atheiſm*, and *obſtinate ſecurity* in ſenſual ſins, do combine to deſpiſe all theſe things. But it is no new thing in the world, that men outwardly profeſſing Chriſtian religion, when they find gain in that godlineſs, ſhould ſpeak evil of the things which they know not, and corrupt themſelves in what they know naturally, as brute beaſts.

2. With others he deals after another manner. By various means he ſeduceth them into a *careleſs ſecurity*, wherein they promiſe peace unto themſelves, without any diligent ſearch into theſe things. Hereon they live, in a general preſumption that they ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt, although they know not how. This makes the apoſtle ſo earneſt in preſſing the duty of ſelf-examination on all Chriſtians, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. *Examine yourſelves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own ſelves: know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?* The rule of ſelf-judging preſcribed by him, is, *whether Chriſt be in us or no*: and in us he cannot be, unleſs he be received by that faith wherewith we behold his glory. For by faith we receive him, and by faith he dwelleth in our hearts, John i. 12. *But*

as

as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Eph. iii. 17. *That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith, &c.*

This is the principal way of his prevailing in the world. Multitudes by this ſeduction live in great *ſecurity* under the utmoſt neglect of theſe things. Security is granted to be an evil deſtructive of the ſouls of men; but then it is ſuppoſed to conſiſt only in impenitency for great and open ſins; but to be neglective of endeavouring an experience of the power and grace of the goſpel in our own ſouls, under a profeſſion of religion, is no leſs deſtructive and pernicious, than impenitency in any courſe of ſin.

Theſe and the like obſtructions unto faith in its operations, being added unto its own imperfections, are another cauſe whence our view of the glory of Chriſt in this world is *weak* and *unſteady;* ſo that for the moſt part it doth but tranſiently affect our minds, and not ſo fully transform them into his likeneſs, as otherwiſe it would.

It is now time to conſider that ſight which we ſhall have of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, in compariſon of that which we have here below. Now this is *equal, ſtable, always the ſame, without interruption or diverſion.* And this is evident, both in the cauſes or means of it, as alſo in our perfect deliverance from every thing that might be an hindrance in it, or an obſtruction unto it.

1. We may conſider the *ſtate of our minds* in glory. The faculties of our ſouls ſhall then be made perfect, Heb. xii. 23. *The ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* (1.) Freed from all the clogs of the fleſh, and all its influence upon them, and reſtraint of their powers in their operations. (2.) Perfectly purified from all principles of inſtability and variety; of all inclinations unto things ſenſual and carnal, and all contrivances of ſelf-preſervation or advancement, being wholly transformed into the image of God, in ſpirituality and holineſs. And to take in the ſtate of our *bodies* after the reſurrection; even they alſo in all their powers and ſenſes, ſhall be made entirely ſubſervient unto the moſt ſpiritual actings of our minds in their higheſt elevation by the light of glory. Hereby ſhall we be enabled and fitted eternally to abide in the contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, with joy and ſatisfaction. The underſtanding ſhall be always perfected with the

the vision of God, and the affections cleave inseparably to him; which is blessedness.

The very *essential faculties* of our souls in that way and manner of working, which by their union with our bodies they are confined unto, are not able to comprehend and abide constantly in the contemplation of this glory. So that, though our sight of it here be dim and imperfect, and the proposal of it obscure; yet from the weakness of our minds, we are forced sometimes to turn aside from what we do discern, as we do our bodily eyes from the beams of the sun, when it shines in its brightness. But in this perfect state they are able to behold and delight in this glory constantly, with eternal satisfaction.

But as for me, (saith David), *I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness*, Psal. xvii. 15. It is Christ alone, who is the *likeness* and *image* of God. When we *awake* in the *other world*, with our minds purified and rectified, the beholding of him shall be always satisfying unto us. There will be then no satiety, no weariness, no indispositions; but the mind being made perfect in all its faculties, powers, and operations, with respect unto its utmost end, which is the enjoyment of God, is satisfied in the beholding of him for evermore. And where there is perfect satisfaction without satiety, there is blessedness for ever. So the Holy Spirit affirms of the *four living creatures* in the Revelation; *They rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty*, chap. iv. 8. They are continually exercised in the admiration and praises of God in Christ, without weariness or interruption. Herein shall we be made *like unto angels*.

2. As our minds in their *essential powers* and faculties shall be enabled to comprehend and acquiesce in this glory of Christ, so the *means* or *instrument* of the beholding of it, is much more excellent than *faith*, and in its kind absolutely perfect, as hath in part been before declared. This is *vision* or *sight*. Here we walk by *faith*, there by *sight*. And this sight is not an *external aid*, like a glass helping the weakness of the *visive faculty* to see things afar off; but it is an *internal power*, or an act of the internal power of our minds, wherewith they are endued in a glorified state. Hereby we shall be able to *see him face to face*, *to see him as he is*, in direct comprehension of his glory; for this sight or visive

power

power ſhall be given us for this very end, namely, to enable us ſo to do. Hereunto the whole glory of Chriſt is clear, perſpicuous, and evident, which will give us eternal acquieſcency therein. Hence ſhall our ſight of the glory of Chriſt be *invariable*, and always the ſame.

3. The Lord Chriſt will never in any *one inſtance*, on *any occaſion*, ſo much as one moment *withdraw himſelf* from us, or eclipſe the propoſal and manifeſtation of himſelf unto our ſight. This he doth ſometimes in this life, and it is needful for us that ſo he ſhould do. *We ſhall be ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. without end, without interruption. This is the centre of good and evil, as to the future different ſtates of men, *they ſhall be for ever*. Eternity makes them abſolutely good on the one hand, and abſolutely evil on the other. To be in *hell* under the wrath of God, is in itſelf the greateſt penal evil; but to be there *for ever*, without the intermiſſion of miſery, or determination of time, is that which renders it the greateſt evil unto them who ſhall be in that condition. So is *eternity* the life of future bleſſedneſs. We ſhall be *ever with the Lord*, without limitation of time, without interruption of enjoyment.

There are no viciſſitudes in the heavenly ſtate. The New Hieruſalem hath no temple in it, *for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple thereof*, Rev. xxi. 22. There is no need of inſtituted means of worſhip, nor of ordinances of divine ſervice; for we ſhall need neither increaſe of grace, nor excitations unto its exerciſe. The conſtant, immediate, uninterrupted enjoyment of God and the Lamb, ſupplieth all. And it hath *no need of the ſun, nor of the moon to ſhine in it; for the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*. The light of the ſun is excellent; howbeit, it hath its ſeaſons, after it hath ſhone in its brighteſt luſtre, it gives place to the night and darkneſs: ſo is the light of the *moon* of great uſe in the night; but it hath its ſeaſons alſo. Such is the light we have of the glory of God and the Lamb in this world. Sometimes it is as the light of the *ſun*, which under the goſpel is *ſevenfold*, as the *light of ſeven days* in one, in compariſon of the law, Iſ. xxx. 26.: ſometimes as the light of the *moon*, which giveth relief in the night of temptations and trials. But it is not conſtant; we are under a viciſſitude of light and darkneſs, views of Chriſt, and a loſs of

of him. But in heaven, the perpetual preſence of Chriſt with his ſaints, makes it always *one noon* of light and glory.

4. This *viſion* is not in the leaſt liable unto any weakenings from *internal defects*, nor any *aſſaults from temptations*, as is the *ſight* of faith in this life. No doubts or fears, no diſturbing darts or injections ſhall there have any place. There ſhall no habit, no quality, no inclination or diſpoſition remain in our ſouls, but what ſhall eternally lead us unto the contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, with delight and complacency; nor will there be any defect in the gracious powers of our ſouls, as unto a perpetual exerciſe of them. And as unto all other *oppoſing enemies*, we ſhall be in a perpetual triumph over them, 1 Cor. xv. 55. 56. 57. *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law: but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopped for ever, and the voice of the ſelf-avenger ſhall be heard no more.

Wherefore the *viſion* which we ſhall have in heaven of the glory of Chriſt, is *ſerene*; always the ſame, always new and indeficient, wherein nothing can diſturb the mind in the moſt perfect operations of a bleſſed life. And when all the faculties of the ſoul can without any internal weakneſs or external hindrances exerciſe their moſt perfect operations on the moſt perfect Object; therein lies all the *bleſſedneſs* which our nature is capable of.

Wherefore, whenever in this life we attain any comfortable refreſhing view of the glory of Chriſt, by the exerciſe of faith on the revelation of it, with a ſenſe of our intereſt therein, we cannot but long after, and deſire to come unto this more perfect, abiding, invariable aſpect of it.

CHAP. XIV.

Other differences between our beholding the glory of Chriſt by faith in this world, and by ſight in heaven.

AMONG the many other *differences* which might be inſiſted on, (although the greateſt of them are unto us at preſent abſolutely incomprehenſible, and ſo not to be in-

quired

quired into), I ſhall name two only, and ſo put a cloſe to this diſcourſe.

Firſt, In the view which we have here of the glory of Chriſt by faith, we gather things as it were *one by one*, *in ſeveral parts and parcels*, out of the ſcripture; and comparing them together in our minds, they become the object of our preſent ſight, which is our ſpiritual comprehenſion of the things themſelves. We have no propoſal of the glory of Chriſt unto us by viſion or illuſtrious appearance of his perſon, as Iſaiah had of old, chap. vi. 1. 2. 3. 4. or as John had in the Revelation, chap. i. ver. 13. 14. 15. 16. We need it not, it would be of no advantage unto us: for as unto the aſſurance of our faith, we have a *word of prophecy* more uſeful unto us than a *voice from heaven*, 2 Pet. i. 17. 18. 19. And of thoſe who received ſuch viſions, though of eminent uſe unto the church, yet as unto themſelves, one of them cried out, *Wo is me, I am undone;* and the other *fell as dead at his feet.* We are not able in this life to bear ſuch glorious repreſentations of him, unto our edification.

And as we have no ſuch external propoſals of his glory unto us in *viſions*, ſo neither have we any *new revelations* of him by *immediate inſpiration.* We can ſee nothing of it, know nothing of it, but what is propoſed unto us in the ſcripture, and that as it is propoſed. Nor doth the ſcripture itſelf in any one place, make an entire propoſal of the glory of Chriſt, with all that belongs unto it; nor is it capable of ſo doing; nor can there be any ſuch repreſentation of it unto our capacity on this ſide heaven. If all the light of the heavenly *luminaries* had been contracted into one, it would have been deſtructive, not uſeful to our ſight; but being by divine wiſdom diſtributed into *ſun*, *moon*, and *ſtars*, each giving out his own proportion, it is ſuited to declare the glory of God, and to enlighten the world: ſo if the whole revelation of the glory of Chriſt, and all that belongs unto it, had been committed into one *ſeries and contexture of words*, it would have overwhelmed our minds, rather than enlightened us. Wherefore God hath diſtributed the light of it through the whole *firmament* of the books of the Old and New Teſtament, whence it communicates itſelf by various parts and degrees unto the proper uſe of the church. In one place we have a deſcription of his *perſon*, and the glory of it; ſometimes in words plain and proper, and ſometimes in great variety of *allegories*, conveying

conveying an heavenly ſenſe of things unto the minds of them that do believe; in others, of his *love* and *condeſcenſion* in his office, and his glory therein. His *humiliation*, *exaltation*, and *power*, are in like manner in ſundry places repreſented unto us. And as *one ſtar differeth from another in glory*; ſo it was one way whereby God repreſented the glory of Chriſt in types and ſhadows under the Old Teſtament, and another wherein it is declared in the New. Illuſtrious teſtimonies upon all theſe things are planted up and down in the ſcripture, which we may collect as choice flowers in the paradiſe of God, for the object of our faith and ſight thereby.

So the *ſpouſe* in the Canticles conſidered every part of the perſon and grace of Chriſt diſtinctly by itſelf; and from them all, concludes that *he is altogether lovely*, chap. v. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. So ought we to do in our ſtudy of the ſcripture, to find out the revelation of the glory of Chriſt, which is made therein, as did the prophets of old, as unto what they themſelves received by immediate inſpiration. *They ſearched diligently what the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignify, when it teſtified beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory which ſhould enſue*, 1 Pet. i. 11. 12. But this ſeeing of Chriſt by parts in the revelation of him, is one cauſe why we ſee him here but in part.

Some ſuppoſe that by *chopping*, and *painting*, and *gilding*, they can make an image of Chriſt that ſhall perfectly repreſent him to their ſenſes and carnal affections, from head to foot: but they *feed on aſhes*, and have *a lie in their right hand*. *Jeſus Chriſt is evidently crucified before our eyes in the ſcripture*, Gal. iii. 1.; ſo alſo is he evidently exalted, and glorified therein: and it is the wiſdom of faith to gather into one thoſe *parcelled deſcriptions* that are given of him, that they may be the object of its view and contemplation.

In the viſion which we ſhall have *above*, the whole glory of Chriſt will be at *once* and *always* repreſented unto us; and we ſhall be enabled in one act of the light of glory to comprehend it. Here indeed we are at a loſs; our minds and underſtandings fail us in their contemplations. It will not yet enter into our hearts to conceive what is the beauty, what is the glory of this complete repreſentation of Chriſt unto us. To have at *once* all the glory of what he is, what he was in his outward ſtate and condition, what he did and ſuffered, what he is exalted unto, his love and condeſcenſion, his

myſtical union with the church, and the communication of himſelf unto it, with the *recapitulation* of all things in him; and the glory of God, even the Father, in his wiſdom, righteouſneſs, grace, love, goodneſs, power, ſhining forth eternally in him, in what he is, hath done, and doth, all preſented unto us in *one view*, all comprehended by us at once, is that which at preſent we cannot conceive. We can long for it, pant after it, and have ſome foretaſtes of it; namely, of that ſtate and ſeaſon, wherein our whole ſouls in all their powers and faculties, ſhall conſtantly, inſeparably, eternally cleave by love unto whole Chriſt in the ſight of the glory of his perſon and grace, until they are watered, diſſolved and inebriated in the waters of life, and the rivers of pleaſure that are above for evermore. So muſt we ſpeak of the things which we admire, which we adore, which we love, which we long for, which we have ſome foretaſtes of in ſweetneſs ineffable, which yet we cannot comprehend.

Theſe are ſome few of thoſe things whence ariſeth the difference between that view which we have here of the glory of Chriſt, and that which is reſerved for heaven; namely, ſuch as are taken from the difference between the *means* or *inſtruments* of the one and the other, *faith* and *ſight*.

In the *laſt* place, the great difference between them, conſiſts in, and is manifeſted by their *effects*. Hereof I ſhall give ſome few inſtances, and cloſe this diſcourſe.

Firſt, The viſion which we ſhall have of the glory of Chriſt in heaven, and of the glory of the immenſe God in him, is perfectly and abſolutely *transforming*. It doth change us wholly into the image of Chriſt. *When we ſhall ſee him, we ſhall be as he is; we ſhall be like him, becauſe we ſhall ſee him*, 1 John iii. 2. But although the cloſing, perfecting act of this *transformation* be an act of ſight, or the ſight of glory; yet there are many things towards it, or degrees in it, which we may here take notice of in our way.

1. The ſoul upon its *departure from the body*, is immediately freed from all the weakneſs, diſability, darkneſs, uncertainties and fears, which were impreſſed on it from the fleſh; wherewith it was in the ſtricteſt union. The image of the firſt Adam as fallen, is then aboliſhed. Yea, it is not only freed from all irregular ſinful diſtempers cleaving to our nature as corrupted, but from all thoſe *ſinleſs grievances* and

infirmities

infirmities which belong unto the original conſtitution of it. This neceſſarily enſues on the *diſſolution of the perſon* in order unto a bleſſed ſtate. The firſt entrance by mortality into immortality, is a ſtep towards glory. The eaſe which a bleſſed ſoul finds in a deliverance from this encumbrance, is a door of entrance into eternal reſt. Such a change is made in that, which in itſelf is the centre of all evil, namely *death*, that it is made a means of freeing us from all the remainders of what is evil.

For this doth not follow abſolutely on the nature of the thing itſelf. A *mere diſſolution* of our natures can bring no advantage with it, eſpecially as it is a part of the curſe. But it is from the ſanctification of it by the death of Chriſt. Hereby that which was God's ordinance for the infliction of judgement, becomes an effectual means for the communication of mercy, 1 Cor. xv. 54. *So when this corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption, and this mortal ſhall have put on immortality, then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up in victory.* It is by virtue of the death of Chriſt alone, that the ſouls of believers are freed by death from all impreſſions of ſin, infirmity and evils, which they have had from the fleſh, which were their burden, under which they groaned all their days. No man knows in any meaſure the excellency of this privilege, and the dawnings of glory which are in it, who hath not been wearied, and even worn out, through long conflicting with the body of death. The ſoul hereon being freed from all annoyances, all impreſſions from the fleſh, is expedite and enlarged unto the exerciſe of all its gracious faculties, as we ſhall ſee immediately.

With wicked men it is not ſo. Death unto them is a curſe; and the curſe is the means of the conveyance of all evil, and not deliverance from any. Wherein they have been warmed and refreſhed by the influences of the fleſh, they ſhall be deprived of it. But their ſouls in their ſeparate ſtate, are perpetually haraſſed with the *diſquieting paſſions* which have been impreſſed on their minds by their corrupt fleſhly luſts. In vain do ſuch perſons look for relief by death. If there be any thing remaining of preſent good and uſefulneſs to them, they ſhall be deprived of it. And their freedom for a ſeaſon from bodily pains, will no way lie in the

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balance againſt that confluence of evils which death will let in upon them.

2. The *ſpirits of juſt men* being freed by death from the clog of the fleſh, not yet refined; all the faculties of their ſouls, and *all the graces in them*, as faith, love, and delight, are immediately ſet at liberty, enabled conſtantly to exerciſe themſelves on God in Chriſt. The end for which they were created, for which our nature was endued with them, was, that we might adhere unto God by them, and come unto the enjoyment of him. Being now freed wholly from all that impotency, perverſeneſs, and diſability unto this end, with all the effects of them, which came upon them by the *fall*; they are carried with a full ſtream towards God, cleaving unto him with the moſt intenſe embraces. And all their actings towards God, ſhall be natural, with facility, joy, delight and complacency. We know not yet the excellency of the operations of our ſouls in divine things, when diſburdened of their preſent weight of their fleſh. And this is a ſecond ſtep towards the conſummation of glory. For,

In the *reſurrection of the body*, upon its full redemption, it ſhall be ſo purified, ſanctified, glorified, as to give no obſtruction unto the ſoul in its operations, but be a bleſſed organ for its higheſt and moſt ſpiritual actings. The *body* ſhall never more be a trouble, a burden unto the ſoul, but an aſſiſtant in its operations, and participant of its bleſſedneſs. Our eyes were made to *ſee our Redeemer*, and our other ſenſes to receive impreſſions from him, according unto their capacity. As the bodies of wicked men ſhall be reſtored unto them to increaſe and complete their miſery in their ſufferings; ſo ſhall the bodies of the juſt be reſtored unto them, to heighten and conſummate their bleſſedneſs.

3. Theſe things are *preparatory* unto glory. The complete communication of it, is by the *infuſion of a new heavenly light* into the mind, enabling us to ſee the Lord Chriſt as he is. The ſoul ſhall not be brought into the immediate preſence of Chriſt, without a *new power* to behold him, and the immediate repreſentation of his glory. Faith now doth ceaſe as unto the manner of its operation in this life, whilſt we are abſent from Chriſt. This *light of glory* ſucceeds into its room, fitted for that ſtate and all the ends of it, as *faith* is for that which is preſent. And,

4. In the *firſt operation* of this light of glory, believers ſhall

ſhall ſo behold the glory of Chriſt, and the glory of God in him, as that therewith, and thereby they ſhall be immediately and univerſally *changed unto his likeneſs*. They ſhall be as he is, when they ſhall ſee him as he is. There is no growth in glory, as unto *parts*, there may be as unto *degrees*. Additions may be outwardly made unto what is at firſt received, as by the reſurrection of the body; but the internal light of glory, and its transforming efficacy, is capable of no degrees, though new revelations may be made unto it, unto eternity. For the infinite fountain of life, and light, and goodneſs, can never be fathomed, much leſs exhauſted. And what God ſpake on the entrance of ſin, by the way of contempt and reproach, *Behold, the man is become like one of us*, upbraiding him with what he had fooliſhly deſigned; on the accompliſhment of the work of his grace, he ſays in love and infinite goodneſs, *Man is become like one of us*, in the perfect reſtoration of our image in him. This is the firſt effect of the light of glory.

Faith alſo in beholding the glory of Chriſt in this life, is accompanied with a *transforming efficacy*, as the apoſtle expreſsly declares, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is the *principle* from whence, and the *inſtrumental cauſe* whereby all ſpiritual change is wrought in us in this life; but the work of it is imperfect; firſt, becauſe it is *gradual*, and then becauſe it is *partial*.

1. As unto the *manner* of its operation, it is *gradual*, and doth not at once tranſform us into the image of Chriſt. Yea, the degrees of its progreſs therein, are unto us for the moſt part imperceptible. It requires much ſpiritual wiſdom and obſervation, to obtain an *experience* of them in our ſouls. *The inward man is renewed day by day*, whilſt we behold theſe inviſible things, 2 Cor. iv. 16. 17. 18.; but how? even as the *outward man* decays by age, which is by inſenſible degrees and alterations. Such is the *tranſformation* which we have by faith, in its preſent view of the glory of Chriſt. And according to our experience of its efficacy herein, is our evidence of its truth and reality in the beholding of him. No man can have the leaſt ground of aſſurance that he hath ſeen Chriſt and his glory by faith, without ſome *effects* of it in changing him into his likeneſs. For as on the touch of his garment

garment by the woman in the goſpel, virtue went out from him to heal her infirmity; ſo upon this view of faith, an influence of *transforming* power will proceed from Chriſt unto the ſoul.

2. As unto the *event* it is but *partial*. It doth not bring this work unto perfection. The change wrought by it is indeed great and glorious; or as the apoſtle ſpeaks, it is *from glory to glory*, in a progreſs of glorious grace: but *abſolute perfection* is reſerved for viſion. As unto divine worſhip, *perfection was not by the law;* it did many things preparatory unto the revelation of the will of God concerning it, but it *made nothing perfect*: ſo *abſolute perfection* in holineſs, and the reſtoration of the image of God, is not by the goſpel, is not by faith; however, it gives us many preparatory degrees unto it, as the apoſtle fully declares, Phil. iii. 10.—14. *That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead: not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus. Brethren, I count not myſelf to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.*

Secondly, *Viſion* is *beatifical*, as it is commonly called, and that not amiſs. It gives perfect reſt and bleſſedneſs unto them in whom it is. This may be a little opened in the enſuing obſervations.

1. There are *continual operations* of God in Chriſt, in the ſouls of them that are glorified, and communications from him unto them. For all creatures muſt eternally live even in heaven, in dependence on him who is the eternal fountain of being, life, goodneſs, and bleſſedneſs unto all. As we cannot ſubſiſt one moment in our beings, lives, ſouls, bodies, the inward or outward man, without the continual actings of divine power in us, and towards us; ſo in the glorified ſtate, our *all* ſhall depend eternally on divine power and goodneſs, communicating themſelves unto us, for all the ends of our bleſſed ſubſiſtence in heaven.

2. What is the *way and manner* of theſe communications, we

we cannot comprehend. We cannot indeed fully underſtand the nature and way of his *ſpiritual communications* unto us in this life. We know theſe things by their ſigns, their outward means, and principally by the effects they produce in the real change of our natures: but in themſelves we ſee but little of them. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and we hear the ſound thereof, but we know not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit,* John iii. 8. All God's real operations in heaven and earth are incomprehenſible, as being acts of infinite power, and we cannot ſearch them out unto perfection.

3. All *communications* from the divine Being and infinite fulneſs in heaven unto glorified ſaints, are in and through Chriſt Jeſus, who ſhall ever be the *medium* of communication between God and the church, even in glory. All things being *gathered into one head* in him, even things in heaven, and things in earth; that head being in immediate dependence on God, this order ſhall never be diſſolved, Eph. i. 10. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 23. And on theſe communications from God through Chriſt, depends entirely our continuance in a ſtate of bleſſedneſs and glory. We ſhall no more be ſelf-ſubſiſtent in glory, than we are in nature or grace.

4. The way on our part whereby we ſhall receive theſe communications from God by Chriſt, which are the eternal ſprings of life, peace, joy, and bleſſedneſs, is this *viſion*, the *ſight* whereof we ſpeak. For as it is expreſsly aſſigned thereunto in the ſcripture; ſo whereas it contains the perfect operation of our minds and ſouls in a perfect ſtate, on the moſt perfect Object, it is the only means of our bleſſedneſs. And this is the true cauſe, whence there neither is, nor can be any *ſatiety* or wearineſs in heaven, in the eternal contemplation of the ſame glory. For not only the *Object* of our ſight is abſolutely infinite, which can never be ſearched into the bottom, yea, is *perpetually new* unto a finite underſtanding; ſo our *ſubjective* bleſſedneſs conſiſting in continual freſh communications from the infinite fulneſs of the divine nature, derived unto us through *viſion*, is always *new*, and always will be ſo to eternity. Herein ſhall all the ſaints of God drink of the *rivers of pleaſure* that are at his right hand, be ſatisfied with his likeneſs, and refreſh themſelves in the eternal ſprings of life, light, and joy for evermore.

This *effect*, that view which we have by faith of the glo-

ry of Chriſt in this world, doth not produce. It is *ſanctifying*, not *glorifying*. The beſt ſaints are far from a perfect or *glorified ſtate* in this life: and that not only on the account of the *outward evils*, which in their perſons they are expoſed unto; but alſo of the weakneſs and imperfection of their inward ſtate in grace. Yet we may obſerve ſome things unto the *honour* of faith in them who have received it. As,

1. In its due exerciſe on Chriſt, it will give unto the ſouls of believers ſome *previous participation* of future glory, working in them *diſpoſitions* unto, and *preparation* for the enjoyment of it.

2. There is no *glory*, no *peace*, no *joy*, no ſatisfaction in this world, to be compared with what we receive by that weak and *imperfect view* which we have of the glory of Chriſt by faith. Yea, all the joys of the world are a thing of nought, in compariſon of what we ſo receive.

3. It is ſufficient to give us ſuch a *perception*, ſuch a *foretaſte* of future bleſſedneſs in the enjoyment of Chriſt, as may continually ſtir us up to breathe and pant after it. But it is not *beatifical*.

Other differences of an alike nature, between our *beholding of the glory of Chriſt* in this life by faith, and that *viſion* of it which is reſerved for heaven, might be inſiſted on; but I ſhall proceed no further. There is nothing farther for us to do herein, but that now and always we ſhut up all our meditations concerning it, with the *deepeſt ſelf-abaſement*, out of a ſenſe of our unworthineſs and inſufficiency to comprehend thoſe things, *admiration* of that excellent glory which we cannot comprehend, and *vehement longings* for that ſeaſon when we ſhall *ſee him as he is*, be *ever with him*, and know him, even as we are known.

PART

PART II.

The APPLICATION of the foregoing MEDITATIONS concerning the GLORY of CHRIST.

CHAP. XV.

An exhortation unto ſuch as are not yet partakers of Chriſt.

THAT which remains, is to make ſome application of the glorious truth inſiſted on unto the ſouls of them that are concerned. And what I have to offer unto that end, I ſhall diſtribute under *two heads*. The *firſt* ſhall be with reſpect unto them who are yet *ſtrangers* from this holy and glorious One, who are not yet made partakers of him, nor have any eſpecial intereſt in him. And the *ſecond* ſhall be directed unto *believers*, as a guide and aſſiſtance unto their *recovery from ſpiritual decays, and the revival of a ſpring of vigorous grace, holineſs, and obedience in them.*

For the firſt of theſe, although it ſeems not directly to lie in our way, yet it is ſuited unto the method of the goſpel, that where-ever there is a declaration of the excellencies of Chriſt, in his perſon, grace, or office, it ſhould be accompanied with an invitation and exhortation unto ſinners to come unto him. This method he himſelf firſt made uſe of, Matth. xi. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him.* ver. 28. 29. 30. *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls. For my yoke is eaſy, and my burden is light.* John vii. 37. *In the laſt day, that great day of the feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him come unto me, and drink.* And he conſecrated this method unto our uſe alſo. Beſides, it is ne-

ceſſary from the nature of the things themſelves; for who can dwell on the conſideration of the glory of Chriſt, being called therewith to the declaration of it, but his own mind will engage him to invite loſt ſinners unto a participation of him? But I ſhall at preſent proceed no further in this exhortation, but only unto the propoſal of ſome of thoſe conſiderations which may prepare, incline, and diſpoſe their minds unto a cloſure with him as he is tendered in the goſpel. As,

Firſt, Let them conſider well what is their preſent ſtate with reſpect unto God and eternity. This Moſes wiſheth for the Iſraelites, Deut. xxxii. 29. *Oh that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end!* It is the greateſt folly in the world to leave the iſſues of theſe things unto an uncertain hazard. And that man who cannot prevail with himſelf ſtrictly to examine what is his ſtate and condition with reſpect unto eternity, doth never do any good, nor abſtain from any evil in a due manner. Remember therefore, that *many are called, but few are choſen.* To be called, is to enjoy all the outward privileges of the goſpel, which is all you unto whom I ſpeak can pretend unto, yet this you may do and not be choſen. Even among thoſe unto whom the word is preached, they are but few that ſhall be ſaved. In the diſtribution made by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt of the hearers of the word into four ſorts of ground, it was but one of them that received real benefit thereby; and if our congregations are no better than were his hearers, there is not above a fourth part of them that will be ſaved, it may be a far leſs number: and is it not ſtrange, that every one of them is not jealous over himſelf and his own condition? Many herein deceive themſelves, until they fall under woful ſurpriſals. And this is repreſented in the account of the final judgement; for the generality of thoſe who have profeſſed the goſpel are introduced as complaining of their diſappointments, Matth. xxv. 10. 11. 12. *And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was ſhut. Afterward came alſo the other virgins, ſaying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he anſwered and ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, I know you not.* For what is there ſpoken, is only a declaration of what befel them here

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in the close of their lives, and their personal judgement thereon.

Secondly, Take heed of being deluded by common presumptions. Most men have some thoughts in general about what their state is, and what it will be in the issue: but they make no diligent search into this matter, because a number of common presumptions do immediately insinuate themselves into their minds for their relief; and they are such, as all whose force and efficacy unto this end lies in this, that they differ from others, and are better than they; as that they are Christians, that they are in the right way of religion, that they are partakers of the outward privileges of the gospel, hearing the word, and participation of the sacraments; that they have light and convictions, so as that they abstain from sin, and perform duties so as others do not, and the like. All those with whom it is not so, who are behind them in these things, they judge to be in an ill state and condition, whence they entertain good hopes concerning themselves; and this is all that most trust unto. It is not my present business to discourse the vanity of presumptions, it hath been done by many; I give only this warning in general unto those who have the least design or purpose to come to Christ, and to be made partakers of him, that they put no trust in them, that they rely not on them; for if they do so, they will eternally deceive their souls. This was a great part of the preparatory ministry of John the Baptist, Matth. iii. 9. *Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father.* This was their great comprehensive privilege, containing all the outward church and covenant advantages. These they rested in, and trusted to unto their ruin: herein he designed to undeceive them.

Thirdly, Consider aright what it is to live and die without an interest in Christ, without a participation of him. Where this is not stated in the mind, where thoughts of it are not continually prevalent, there can be no one step taken in the way towards him Unless we are thoroughly convinced that without him we are in a state of apostasy from God, under the curse, obnoxious unto eternal wrath, as some of the worst of God's enemies, we shall never flee unto him for refuge in a due manner: *The whole have no need of a physician, but the sick; Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*; and the conviction intended, is the principal

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end of the miniſtry of the law. The miſeries of this ſtate have been the ſubject of innumerable ſermons and diſcourſes; but there is a general miſery in the whole, that few take themſelves to be concerned therein, or apply theſe things unto themſelves. Let us tell men of it a thouſand times, yet they either take no notice of it, or believe it not, nor look on it as that which belongs unto the way and courſe of preaching, wherein they are not concerned. Theſe things it ſeems preachers muſt ſay, and they may believe them who have a mind thereunto. It is a rare thing that any one ſhall as much as ſay unto himſelf, Is it ſo with me? And if we now, together with this caution, tell the ſame men again, that whilſt they are unintereſted in Chriſt, not ingrafted into him by faith, that they run in vain, that all their labour in religion is loſt, that their duties are all rejected, that they are under the diſpleaſure and curſe of God, that their end is eternal deſtruction, which are all unqueſtionably certain, yet will they let all theſe things paſs by without any further conſideration.

But here I muſt fix with them unto whom I ſpeak at preſent; unleſs there be a full conviction in them of the woful deplorable condition of every ſoul, of whatever quality, profeſſion, religion, outward ſtate it be, who is not yet made partaker of Chriſt, all that I have further to add will be of no ſignification. Remember then that the due conſideration hereof is unto you in your ſtate, your chiefeſt concernment in this world; and be not afraid to take in a full and deep ſenſe of it, for if you are really delivered from it, and have good evidence thereof, it is nothing unto you but matter of eternal praiſe and thankſgiving. And if you are not ſo, it is highly neceſſary that your minds ſhould be poſſeſſed with due apprehenſion of it. The work of this conviction is the firſt effect of true religion; and the great abuſe of religion in the world is, that a pretence of it deludes the minds of men to apprehend that it is not neceſſary; for to be of this or that religion, of this or that way in religion, is ſuppoſed ſufficient to ſecure the eternal ſtate of men, though they are never convinced of their loſt eſtate by nature.

Fourthly, Hereon conſider the infinite condeſcenſion and love of Chriſt, in his invitations and calls of you to come unto him for life, deliverance, mercy, grace, peace, and eternal ſalvation. Multitudes of theſe invitations and calls are recorded

corded in the ſcripture, and they are all of them filled up with thoſe bleſſed encouragements, which divine wiſdom knows to be ſuited unto loſt convinced ſinners in their preſent ſtate and condition. It were a bleſſed contemplation to dwell on the conſideration of the infinite condeſcenſion, grace, and love of Chriſt, in his invitations of ſinners to come unto him, that they may be ſaved; of that mixture of wiſdom and perſuaſive grace that is in them; of the force and efficacy of the pleading and argument that they are accompanied withal, as they are recorded in the ſcripture; but that belongs not to my preſent deſign: this I ſhall only ſay, that in the declaration and preaching of them, Jeſus Chriſt yet ſtands before ſinners, calling, inviting, encouraging of them to come unto him.

This is ſomewhat of the word which he now ſpeaks unto you, Why will ye die? why will ye periſh? why will you not have compaſſion on your own ſouls? can your hearts endure, or can your hands be ſtrong in the day of wrath that is approaching? It is but a little while before all your hopes, your reliefs, and preſumptions will forſake you, and leave you eternally miſerable: look unto me, and be ſaved: come unto me, and I will eaſe you of all ſins, ſorrows, fears, burdens, and give reſt unto your ſouls: come I intreat you, lay aſide all procraſtinations, all delays, put me off no more, eternity lies at the door; caſt out all curſed ſelf-deceiving reſerves, do not ſo hate me, as that ye will rather periſh than accept of deliverance by me.

Theſe and the like things doth the Lord Chriſt continually declare, proclaim, plead, and urge on the ſouls of ſinners; as it is fully declared, Prov. i. ver. 20. to the 24. He doth it in the preaching of the word, as if he were preſent with you, ſtood amongſt you, and ſpake perſonally to every one of you: and becauſe this would not ſuit his preſent ſtate of glory, he hath appointed the miniſters of the goſpel to appear before you, and to deal with you in his ſtead, avowing, as his own, the invitations that are given you in his name, 2 Cor. v. 19. 20. *To wit, that God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us: we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.*

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Conſider therefore his infinite condeſcenſion, grace, and love herein: Why all this towards you? doth he ſtand in need of you? have you deſerved it at his hands? did you love him firſt? cannot he be happy and bleſſed without you? hath he any deſign upon you, that he is ſo earneſt in calling you unto him? Alas, it is nothing but the overflowing of mercy, compaſſion, and grace, that moves and acts him herein. Here lies the entrance of innumerable ſouls into a death and condemnation far more ſevere than thoſe contained in the curſe of the law, 2 Cor. ii. 15. 16. *For we are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh. To the one we are the ſavour of death unto death; and to the other, the ſavour of life unto life.* In the contempt of this infinite condeſcenſion of Chriſt, in his holy invitation of ſinners to himſelf, lies the ſting and poiſon of unbelief, which unavoidably gives over the ſouls of men unto eternal ruin: and who ſhall once pity them to eternity who are guilty of it? Yea but,

Fifthly, Perhaps if you ſhould on his invitation begin to look to him, and reſolve to come to him, you are greatly afraid that when it comes to the trial he will not receive you; for no heart can conceive, no tongue can expreſs what wretched, vile, and provoking ſinners you have been: that the Lord Chriſt will receive unto him ſuch as we are, we have no hopes, or that ever we ſhall find acceptance with him: I ſay, it is not amiſs when perſons come ſo far, as to be ſenſible of what diſcouragements they have to conflict withal, what difficulties lie in their way, and what objections do ariſe againſt them; for the moſt do periſh in a ſenſeleſs ſtupidity, they will not conſider how it is with them, what is required of them, nor how it will be in the latter end; they doubt not but that either they do believe already, or can do ſo when they pleaſe; but when any comes ſo far as to charge the failure of their acceptance with Chriſt on their own unworthineſs, and ſo are diſcouraged from coming unto him, there are arguments for their conviction and perſuaſion, which nothing but the devil and unbelief can defeat: wherefore, that which is now propoſed unto conſideration in anſwer hereunto, is the readineſs of Chriſt to receive every ſinner, be he who or what he will, that ſhall come unto him: and hereof we have the higheſt evidences that divine wiſdom and grace can give unto us. This is the

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language of the gospel, of all that the Lord Christ did or suffered, which is recorded therein. This is the divine testimony of the three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and of the three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; all give their joint testimony that the Lord Christ is ready to receive all sinners that come to him: they who receive not this testimony, make God a liar, both Father, Son, and Spirit. Whatever the Lord Christ is in the constitution of his person, in the representation of the Father, in his office, in what he did on the earth, in what he doth in heaven, proclaims the same truth. Nothing but cursed obstinacy in sin and unbelief can suggest a thought unto our minds, that he is not willing to receive us when we come unto him. Herein we are to bear testimony against the unbelief of all unto whom the gospel is preached, that come not unto him. Unbelief acting itself herein, includes a contempt of the wisdom of God, a denial of his truth or faithfulness, an impeachment of the sincerity of Christ in his invitations, making him a deceiver, and will issue in an express hatred of his person and office, and of the wisdom of God in him. Here then you are shut up, you cannot from hence take any countenance unto your unbelief.

Sixthly, Consider that he is as able to save us, as he is ready and willing to receive us. The testimonies which he hath given us unto his goodness and love are uncontrollable, and none dare directly to call in question, or deny his power. Generally this is taken for granted by all, that Christ is able to save us if he will; yea, who shall question his ability to save us, though we live in sin and unbelief? and many expect that he will do so, because they believe he can if he will. But indeed Christ hath no such power, no such ability; he cannot save unbelieving impenitent sinners, for this cannot be done without denying himself, acting contrary to his word, and destroying his own glory. Let none please themselves with such vain imaginations; Christ is able to save all them, and only them who come to God by him. Whilst you live in sin and unbelief, Christ himself cannot save you. But when it comes to the trial in particular, some are apt to think, that although they will not conclude that Christ cannot save them, yet they do on various accounts say, that they cannot be saved by him. This therefore we also give testimony unto, in

our exhortation to come unto him; namely, that his power to ſave thoſe that ſhall comply with his call is ſovereign, incontrollable, almighty, that nothing can ſtand in the way of. All things in heaven and earth are committed unto him, all power is his, and he will uſe it unto this end, namely, the aſſured ſalvation of all that come unto him.

Seventhly, Conſider greatly what hath been ſpoken of the repreſentation of God, and all the holy properties of his nature in him. Nothing can poſſibly give us more encouragement to come unto him; for we have manifeſted, that God who is infinitely wiſe and glorious, hath deſigned to exert all the holy properties of his nature, his mercy, love, grace, goodneſs, righteouſneſs, wiſom and power in him, in and unto the ſalvation of them that do believe. Whoever therefore comes unto Chriſt by faith on this repreſentation of the glory of God in him, he aſcribes and gives unto God all that glory and honour which he aimeth at from his creatures, and we can do nothing wherewith he is pleaſed equal unto it. Every poor ſoul that comes by faith unto Chriſt, gives unto God all that glory which it is his deſign to manifeſt and be exalted in; and what can we do more? There is more glory given unto God by coming unto Chriſt in believing, than in keeping the whole law, inaſmuch as he hath more eminently manifeſted the holy properties of his nature in the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, than in giving of the law: there is therefore no man who under goſpel-invitations refuſeth to come unto, and cloſe with Chriſt by believing, but ſecretly, through the power of darkneſs, blindneſs, and unbelief, he hates God, diſlikes all his ways, would not have his glory exalted, nor manifeſted, chooſing rather to die in enmity againſt him, than to give glory to him. Do not deceive yourſelves, it is not an indifferent thing, whether you will come in unto Chriſt upon his invitations or no; a thing that you may put off from one ſeaſon unto another: your preſent refuſal of it, is as high an act of enmity againſt God, as your nature is capable of.

Eighthly, Conſider that by coming unto Chriſt, you ſhall have an intereſt in all that glory which we have propoſed unto you; for Chriſt will become yours more intimately than your wives and children are yours, and ſo all his glory is yours alſo. All are apt to be affected with the good things of their relations, their grace, their riches, their beauty,

their

their power; for they judge themselves to have an interest in them, by reason of their relation unto them. Christ is nearer to believers than any natural relations are to us whatever; they have therefore an interest in all his glory. And is this a small thing in your eyes, that Christ shall be yours, and all his glory shall be yours, and you shall have the advantage of it unto your eternal blessedness? Is it nothing unto you to continue strangers from, and unconcerned in all this glory? to be left to take your portion in this world in lusts, and sins, and pleasures, and a few perishing trifles, with eternal ruin in the close, whilst such durable substance, such riches of glory are tendered unto you?

Lastly, Consider the horrible ingratitude there is in a neglect or refusal to come in to Christ upon his invitation, with the doleful eternal ruin that will ensue thereon: *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* Impenitent unbelievers under the preaching of the gospel, are the vilest and most ungrateful of all God's creation. The devils themselves, as wicked as they are, are not guilty of this sin, for Christ is never tendered unto them, they never had an offer of salvation on faith and repentance; this is their peculiar sin, and will be the peculiar aggravation of their misery unto eternity. Hear, ye despisers, wonder, and perish. The sin of the devil is in malice and opposition unto knowledge, above what the nature of man is capable of in this world. Men therefore must sin in some instance above the devil, or God would not give them their eternal portion with the devil and his angels: this is unbelief.

Some, it may be, will say, What then shall we do? what shall we apply ourselves unto? what is it that is required of us?

1. Take the advice of the apostle, Heb. iii. 7. 8. 13.—*To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: but exhort one another daily while it is called, To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* This day, even this is unto you in the tender of grace the acceptable time, this is the day of salvation. Others have had this day as well as you, and have missed their opportunity; take heed lest it should be so with you also. How if any one should write it down, or peculiarly commit it to remembrance, this day there was a tender of Christ and salvation in him made

unto my ſoul; from this time I will reſolve to give up myſelf unto him. And if you find your reſolutions, charge your conſciences with what you have engaged, and make yourſelves to know, that if you go back from it, it is a token that you are going to ruin.

2. Conſider that it is high time for you to make ſomewhat of religion. Do not hang always in ſuſpenſe; let it not be a queſtion with yourſelves, whether you have a mind to be ſaved or no. This is as good a time and ſeaſon for a reſolution as ever you are like to have whilſt in this world. Some things, nay, many things may fall in between this and the next opportunity, that ſhall put you backward, and make your entrance into the kingdom of heaven far more difficult than ever it was; and the living in that uncertainty at beſt, which you do, of what will become of you unto eternity, is the moſt miſerable kind of life in the world. Thoſe who put far from them the evil day, and live in the purſuit of luſts and pleaſures, have ſomewhat that gives them preſent ſatisfaction, and they ſay not, there is no hope, becauſe they find the life of the hand: but you have nothing that gives you any prevalent refreſhment, neither will your latter end be better than theirs, if you die without an intereſt in Chriſt Jeſus. Come therefore at length unto a determinate reſolution what you will do in this matter. Chriſt hath waited long for you, and who knows how ſoon he may withdraw, never to look after you any more?

Upon occaſion of the preceding *diſcourſe concerning the glory of Chriſt*, I thought it neceſſary to add unto it this brief exhortation unto faith in him, aiming to ſuit it unto the capacity of the meaneſt ſinner that is capable of any ſelf-conſideration as unto his eternal welfare. But yet a little further, to give efficacy unto this exhortation, it will be neceſſary to remove ſome of thoſe common and obvious tergiverſations that convinced ſinners do uſually betake themſelves unto, to put off a preſent compliance with the calls of Chriſt to come unto him; for although it is unbelief alone acting in the darkneſs of mens minds, and the obſtinacy of their wills, that effectually keeps off ſinners from coming unto Chriſt upon his call, yet it ſhrouds itſelf under various pretences, that it may not appear in its own ugly form; for no ſin, whereof men can be guilty of in this world, is of ſo horrible a nature, and ſo dreadful an aſpect, as is this unbelief, where a clear

view

view of it is obtained in evangelical light; wherefore by the aid of Satan, it suggests other pleas and pretences unto the minds of sinners, under which they may countenance themselves in a refusal to come to Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 4. *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* Any thing else it shall be, but not unbelief, that they all disavow. I shall therefore speak unto a few of those tergiversations in this case which are obvious, and which are exemplified in the gospel itself.

I. Some do say on such exhortations, What is it that you would have us to do? we hear the word preached, we believe it as well as we can, we do many things willingly, and abstain from many evils diligently; what is more required of us? This is the language of the hearts of the most with whom in this case we have to do. And I say,

1. It is usual with them who do something in the ways of God, but not all they should, and so nothing in a due manner, to expostulate about requiring of them more than they do. So the people dispute with God himself, Mal. i. 6. *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name: and ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?* chap. iii. 8. 13. *Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me: but ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and in offerings. Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord; yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?* So they in the gospel, who esteemed themselves to have done their duty, being pressed unto faith by Christ Jesus, ask him with some indignation, *What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?* John vi. 28. If what we do be not enough, what is it that you require more of us? So was it with the young man, Matth. xix. 20. *What do I lack yet?* Be advised therefore not to be too confident of your state, lest you should yet lack that one thing, the want whereof might prove your eternal ruin.

2. The things mentioned, with all of the like nature, which may be multiplied, may be where there is no one spark of saving faith. Simon Magus heard the word, and believed as well as he could; Herod heard it, and did many things

things gladly; and all ſorts of hypocrites do upon their convictions perform many duties, and abſtain from many ſins: ſo as that notwithſtanding this plea you may periſh for ever.

3. Where theſe things are ſincere, they belong unto the exerciſe of faith: they may be after a ſort without faith, but faith cannot be without them. But there is a fundamental act of faith, whereby we cloſe with Chriſt, whereby we receive him, that is in order of nature antecedent unto its actings in all other duties and occaſions; it is laying the foundation, other things belong to the building. This is that you are called on to ſecure, and you may know it by theſe two properties.

(1.) It is *ſingular*. So our Saviour tells the Jews, John vi. 29. *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent*. The act, work, or duty of faith in the receiving of Chriſt, is a peculiar ſingular work, wherein the ſoul yields eſpecial obedience unto God: it is not to be reckoned unto ſuch common duties as thoſe mentioned, but the ſoul muſt find out wherein it hath in a ſingular manner cloſed with Chriſt upon the command of God.

(2.) It is accompanied with an univerſal ſpiritual change in the whole ſoul, 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſſed away, behold, all things are become new*. Wherefore if you would not chooſe rather to deceive and ruin your own ſouls, come to the trial, whether indeed you have received Chriſt in ſuch a ſingular transforming act of faith; do not on ſuch pretences want a compliance with the word of exhortation propoſed unto you. But,

II. Some will ſay, they know not how to proceed in this work. They can make nothing of it; they have tried to come to this believing, but do ſtill fail in what they deſign; they go on and off, but can make no progreſs, can come to no ſatisfaction; therefore they think it beſt to let things go in general as they are, without putting themſelves to farther trouble as unto any eſpecial act of faith in the receiving of Chriſt. This is the language of mens hearts, though not of their mouths, another ſhelter of unbelief, and they act accordingly; they have a ſecret deſpondency, which keeps them ſafe from attempting a real cloſure with Chriſt on the tender of the goſpel. Something may be offered unto this diſtempered frame of mind.

1. Remember

1. Remember the disciples that were fishing, and had toiled all night, but caught nothing, Luke v. 3. 4. Upon the coming of Christ unto them, he requires that they should cast out their nets once more; Peter makes some excuse from the labour which they had taken in vain all night; however he would venture once more on the command of Christ, and had an astonishing draught of fishes, ver. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. Have you been wearied with disappointments in your attempts and resolutions? yet cast in your net this once more upon the command of Christ, venture this once more to come unto him on his call and invitation, you know not what success he may give unto you.

2. Consider that it is not failing in this or that attempt of coming to Christ, but a giving over your endeavours that will be your ruin. The woman of Canaan in her great outcry to Christ for mercy, Matth. xv. 22. had many a repulse: first it is said, he answered her not a word; then his disciples desired that he would send her away, that she might not trouble him any more; whereon he gives a reason why he would not regard her, or why he could justly pass her by, she was not an Israelitish, unto whom he was sent; yet she gives not over, but pressing into his presence, cries out for mercy, ver. 25. Being come to that issue, to try and draw out her faith to the utmost, which was his design from the beginning, he reckons her among dogs, that were not to have childrens bread given unto them. Had she now at last given over upon this severe rebuke, she had never obtained mercy; but persisting in her request she at last prevailed, ver. 27. 28. It may be you have prayed, and cried, and resolved, and vowed, but all without success, as you suppose; sin hath broken through all: however, if you give not over, you shall prevail at last; you know not at what time God will come in with his grace, and Christ will manifest his love unto you, as unto the poor woman, after many a rebuke. It may be, after all, he will do it this day, and if not, he may do it another, do not despond. Take that word of Christ himself for your encouragement, Prov. viii. 34. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.* If you hear him, and wait, though you have not yet admission, but are kept at the gates and posts of the doors, yet in the issue you shall be blessed.

3. The rule in this case is, Hos. vi. 3. *Then shall we know, if*

if we follow on to know. Are you in the way of knowing Chriſt, in the uſe of means, hearing the word, and ſincere endeavours in holy duties? though you cannot yet attain unto any evidence that you have received him, have cloſed with him, nothing can ruin you but giving over the way wherein you are; for then ſhall you know if you follow on to know the Lord. Many can give you their experiences, that if they had been diſcouraged by preſent overwhelming difficulties, ariſing from their diſappointments, breaking of vows, relapſes into folly, they had been utterly ruined, whereas now they are at reſt and peace in the boſom of Chriſt. On a great ſurpriſal Chriſt loſt at once many diſciples, and they loſt their ſouls, John vi. 66. *They went back, and walked no more with him:* take heed of the like diſcouragements.

III. Some may ſay, yea, practically they do ſay, that theſe things indeed are neceſſary; they muſt come to Chriſt by believing, or they are undone; but this is not the ſeaſon of it, there will be time enough to apply themſelves unto it when other occaſions are paſt; at preſent they have not leiſure to enter upon, and go through with this duty: wherefore they will abide in their preſent ſtate for a while, hearing and doing many things, and when time ſerves will apply themſelves unto this duty alſo.

1. This is an uncontrollable evidence of that ſottiſhneſs and folly which is come upon our nature by ſin. A depravation that the apoſtle places in the head of the evils of corrupted nature, Tit. iii. 3. *For we ourſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures,* &c. Can any thing be more fooliſh, ſottiſh, and ſtupid, than for men to put off the conſideration of the eternal concernment of their ſouls for one hour, being altogether uncertain whether they ſhall live another or no? to prefer preſent trifles before the bleſſedneſs or miſery of an immortal ſtate? For thoſe who never heard of theſe things, who never had any conviction of ſin and judgement, to put the evil day far from them, is not much to be admired: but for you who have Chriſt preached unto you, who own a neceſſity of coming unto him, to put it off from day to day upon ſuch ſlight pretences, it is an aſtoniſhable folly. May you not be ſpoken unto in the language of the Wiſdom of God, Prov. vi. 9. *How long wilt thou ſleep, O ſluggard? when wilt thou*

ariſe

arise out of thy sleep? You come to hear the word, and when you go away the language of your hearts is, *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:* we will abide a little while in our present state, and afterwards we will rouse up ourselves. Under this deceit do multitudes perish every day. This is a dark shade, wherein cursed unbelief lies hid.

2. Consider that this is the greatest engine that Satan makes use of in the world, among them that hear the word preached unto them, for the ruin of their souls. He hath other arts, and ways, and methods of dealing with other men, as by sensual and worldly lusts: but as unto them who through their convictions do attend unto the preaching of the word, this is his great and almost only engine for their ruin. There needs no haste in this matter, another time will be more seasonable, you may be sure not to fail of it before you die: however, this present day and time is most unfit for it, you have other things to do, you cannot part with your present frame, you may come again to hear the word the next opportunity. Know assuredly, if your minds are influenced unto delays of coming to Christ by such insinuations, you are underthe power of Satan, and he is like enough to hold you fast unto destruction.

3. This is as evil and dangerous a posture, or frame of mind, as you can well fall under. If you have learned to put off God, and Christ, and the word, for the present season, and yet relieve yourselves in this, that you do not intend like others always to reject them, but will have a time to hearken to their calls; you are secured and fortified against all convictions and persuasions, all fears; one answer will serve for all, within a little while you will do all that can be required of you. This is that which ruins the souls of multitudes every day. It is better dealing with men openly profligate, than with such a trifling promifer. See Is. v. 7. 10.

4. Remember that the scripture confines you unto the present day, without the least intimation that you shall have either another day, or another tender of grace and mercy in any day, 2 Cor. vi. 2. *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation,* Heb. iii. 7. 13. chap. xii. 15. Take care lest you come short of the grace of God, miss of it by missing your opportunity. Redeem the time, or you are lost for ever.

5. As unto the pretence of your occaſions and buſineſs, there is a ready way to diſappoint the craft of Satan in that pretence, namely, to mix thoughts of Chriſt, and the renovation of your reſolutions, either to come or to cleave unto him, with all your occaſions. Let nothing put it utterly out of your minds; make it familiar unto you, and you will beat Satan out of that ſtrong-hold, Prov. vii. 4. *Say unto wiſdom, Thou art my ſiſter; and call underſtanding thy kinſwoman.* However, ſhake yourſelves out of this duſt, or deſtruction lies at the door.

IV. It is the language of the heart of ſome, that if they give up themſelves unto a compliance with this exhortation, and go ſeriouſly about this duty, they muſt relinquiſh and renounce all their luſts and pleaſures, yea much of their converſe and ſociety, wherein they find ſo much preſent ſatisfaction, as that they know not how to part with them. If they might retain their old ways, at leaſt ſome of them, it were another matter, but this total relinquiſhment of all is very ſevere.

Anſw. 1. The Jeſuites preaching and painting of Chriſt among ſome of the Indians, concealed from them his croſs and ſufferings, telling them only of his preſent glory and power; ſo as they pretended to win them over to faith in him, hiding from them that whereby they might be diſcouraged; and ſo preached a falſe Chriſt unto them, one of their own framing. We dare do no ſuch thing for all the world; we can here uſe no condeſcenſion, no compliance, no compoſition with reſpect unto any ſin or luſt; we have no commiſſion to grant that requeſt of Lot, *Is it not a little one? let it be ſpared*; nor to come to Naaman's terms, *God be merciful to me in this thing, in all others I will be obedient.* Wherefore,

2. We muſt here be peremptory with you, whatever be the event; if you are diſcouraged by it, we cannot help it: curſed be the man that ſhall encourage you to come to Chriſt, with hopes of indulgence unto any one ſin whatever. I ſpeak not this, as though you could at once abſolutely and perfectly leave all ſin in the root and branches of it; but only you are to do it in heart and reſolution, engaging into an univerſal mortification of all ſin, as by grace from above you ſhall be enabled: but your choice muſt be abſolute, without reſerves, as to love, intereſt, and deſign; God or the world,

world, Christ or Belial, holiness or sin; there is no medium, no terms of composition, 2 Cor. vi. 15. 16. 17. 18.

3. As unto what you pretend of your pleasures, the truth is, you never yet had any real pleasure, nor do know what it is: how easy were it to declare the folly, vanity, bitterness, poison of those things which you have esteemed your pleasures? Here alone, namely in Christ, and a participation of him, are true pleasures and durable riches to be obtained; pleasure of the same nature with, and such as like pleasant streams flow down into the ocean of eternal pleasures above. A few moments in these joys are to be preferred above the longest continuance in the cursed pleasures of this world, Prov. iii. 13.—18. *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her.*

V. It will be said by some, that they do not see those who professs themselves to be believers, to be so much better than they are, as that you need to press us so earnestly to so great a change; we know not why we should not be accounted believers already as well as they. I shall in a few words, as well as I am able, lay this stumbling-block out of the way, though I confess at this day it is weighty and cumbersome. And I say,

1. Among them that professs themselves to be believers, there are many false, corrupt hypocrites; and it is no wonder that on various occasions they lay the stumbling-block of their iniquities before the face of others: but they shall bear their own burden and judgement.

2. It is acknowledged, it must be bewailed that some who have reason to be judged true believers, yet through their unmortified pride, or covetousness, or carelessness in their conversation, or vain attire, and conformity to the world, or frowardness, do give just occasion of offence. We confess that God is displeased herewith, Christ and the gospel dishonoured, and many that are weak are wounded, and o-

therwiſe diſcouraged. But as for you, this is not your rule; this is not propoſed unto you, but that word only is ſo that will never fail you.

3. The world doth not know, nor is able to make a right judgement of believers; nor do you ſo, for it is the ſpiritual man alone that diſcerneth the things of God. Their infirmities are viſible to all, their graces inviſible; the King's daughter is glorious within. And when you are able to make a right judgement of them, you will deſire no greater advancement than to be of their ſociety, Pſal. xvi. 3.

Theſe few inſtances of the pretences wherewith unbelief covers its deformity, and hides that deſtruction wherewith it is accompanied, may ſuffice unto our preſent purpoſe; they are multiplied in the minds of men, impregnated by the ſuggeſtions of Satan on their darkneſs and folly. A little ſpiritual wiſdom will rend the vail of them all, and expoſe unbelief acting in enmity againſt Chriſt under them. But what hath been ſpoken, may ſuffice to anſwer the neceſſity of the preceding exhortation on this occaſion.

CHAP. XVI.

The way and means of the recovery of ſpiritual decays, and of obtaining freſh ſprings of grace.

THE application of the ſame truth, in the *ſecond* place, belongs unto *believers*, eſpecially ſuch as have made any long profeſſion of walking in the ways of God and the goſpel. And that which I deſign herein, is to manifeſt, that a ſteady ſpiritual view of the glory of Chriſt by faith, will give them a gracious revival from inward decays, and freſh ſprings of grace, even in their latter days. A truth this is, as we ſhall ſee confirmed by ſcripture, with the joyful experience of multitudes of believers, and is of great importance unto all that are ſo.

There are two things, which thoſe who after a long profeſſion of the goſpel are entering into the confines of eternity, do long for and deſire. The one is, that all their breaches may be repaired, their decays recovered, their backſlidings healed: for unto theſe things they have been leſs or more obnoxious

noxious in the courſe of their walking before God. The other is, that they may have freſh ſprings of ſpiritual life, and vigorous actings of all divine graces, in ſpiritual mindedneſs, holineſs, and fruitfulneſs, unto the praiſe of God, the honour of the goſpel, and the increaſe of their own peace and joy. Theſe things they value more than all the world, and all that is in it; about theſe things are their thoughts and contrivances exerciſed night and day. Thoſe with whom it is otherwiſe, whatever they pretend, are in the dark unto themſelves, and their own condition; for it is in the nature of this grace to grow and increaſe unto the end. As rivers, the nearer they come unto the ocean whither they tend, the more they increaſe their waters, and ſpeed their ſtreams; ſo will grace flow more freely and fully in its near approaches to the ocean of glory. That is not ſaving which doth not ſo.

An experience hereof, I mean of the thriving of grace towards the end of our courſe, is that alone which can ſupport us under the troubles and temptations of life, which we have to conflict withal. So the apoſtle tells us, that this is our great relief in all our diſtreſſes and afflictions, whereon *we faint not, that as our outward man doth periſh, ſo the inward man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. If it be ſo, that in the daily decays of the outward man, in all the approaches of its diſſolution, we have inward ſpiritual revivals and renovation, we ſhall not faint in what we undergo. And without ſuch continual renovations, we ſhall faint in our diſtreſſes, whatever other things we may have, or whatever we pretend unto the contrary.

And ordinarily it is ſo in the holy, wiſe providence of God, that afflictions and troubles increaſe with age. It is ſo in an eſpecial manner with miniſters of the goſpel; they have many of them a ſhare in the lot of Peter, which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt declared unto him, John xxi. 18. *When thou waſt young, thou girdedſt thyſelf, and walkedſt whither thou wouldſt: but when thou ſhalt be old, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thy hands, and another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldſt not.* Beſides thoſe natural diſtempers and infirmities which accompany the decays of life, troubles of life, and in their affairs do uſually grow upon them, when they look for nothing leſs, but were ready to ſay with Job, *We ſhall die in our neſt*, Job xxix. 18. So was

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it with Jacob after all his hard labour and travel to provide for his family, ſuch things fell out in it in his old age, as had almoſt broken his heart: And oft-times both perſecutions and public dangers do befal them at the ſame ſeaſon. Whilſt the outward man is thus periſhing, we need great ſupportment that we faint not. And this is only to be had in an experience of daily ſpiritual renovations in the inner man.

The excellency of this mercy the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth in an heavenly manner, Pſal. xcii. 12. 13. 14. 15. *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the palm-tree: he ſhall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God. They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age: they ſhall be fat, and flouriſhing: to ſhew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.*

The promiſe in the 12th verſe, reſpects the times of the Meſſiah, or of the New Teſtament, for ſo it is propheſied of him; *In his days ſhall the righteous flouriſh*, Pſal. lxxii. 7. namely, through the abundance of grace that ſhould be adminiſtered from his fulneſs, as John i. 16. *And of his fulneſs have all we received, and grace for grace.* Col. i. 19. *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* And herein conſiſts the glory of the goſpel, and not in outward proſperity, or external ornaments of divine worſhip. The flouriſhing of the righteous, I ſay, in grace and holineſs, is the glory of the office of Chriſt, and of the goſpel. Where this is not, there is no glory in the profeſſion of our religion. The glory of kings is in the wealth and peace of their ſubjects; and the glory of Chriſt is in the grace and holineſs of his ſubjects.

This *flouriſhing* is compared to the *palm-tree*, and the growth of the *cedar*. The *palm-tree* is of the greateſt verdure, beauty, and fruitfulneſs, and the *cedar* of the greateſt and longeſt growth of any trees. So are the *righteous* compared to the *palm-tree*, for the beauty of profeſſion, and fruitfulneſs in obedience; and unto the *cedar*, for a continual conſtant growth and increaſe in grace. Thus it is with all that are righteous, unleſs it be from their own ſinful neglect, as it is with many in this day. They are hereon rather like the *ſhrubs* and *heaths in the wilderneſs, which ſee not when good cometh*, than like the *palm-tree*, or the *cedars of Lebanon*.

And

And hereby do men what lies in them, to obſcure the glory of Chriſt and his kingdom, as well as diſquiet their own ſouls.

The words that follow, ver. 13. *They that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God,* are not diſtinctive of ſome from other, as though ſome only of the flouriſhing righteous were ſo planted; but they are deſcriptive of them all, with an addition of the way and means whereby they are cauſed ſo to grow and flouriſh. And this is their implantation in the houſe of the Lord; that is, in the church, which is the ſeat of all the means of ſpiritual life, both as unto growth and flouriſhing, which God is pleaſed to grant unto believers. To be planted in the houſe of the Lord, is to be fixed and rooted in the grace communicated by the ordinances of divine worſhip. Unleſs we are planted in the houſe of the Lord, we cannot flouriſh in his courts; Pſal. i. 3. *And he ſhall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf alſo ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper.* Unleſs we are partakers of the grace adminiſtered in the ordinances, we cannot flouriſh in a fruitful profeſſion. The outward participation of them is common unto hypocrites, that bear ſome leaves, but neither grow like the cedar, nor bear fruit like the palm-tree. So the apoſtle prays for believers, that Chriſt may dwell in their hearts by faith, that they may be *rooted and grounded in love,* Eph. iii. 17. *rooted, built up, and eſtabliſhed,* Col. ii. 7. The want hereof is the cauſe that we have ſo many fruitleſs profeſſors; they have entered the courts of God by profeſſion, but were never planted in his houſe by faith and love. Let us not deceive ourſelves herein; we may be entered into the church, and made partakers of the outward privileges of it, and not be ſo planted in it as to flouriſh in grace and fruitfulneſs.

That which on this occaſion I principally intend, is the grace and privilege expreſſed ver. 14. *They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age: they ſhall be fat, and flouriſhing.* There be three things which conſtitute a ſpiritual ſtate, or belong to the life of God. (1.) That believers be fat, that is, by the heavenly juice, ſap, or fatneſs of the true olive, of Chriſt himſelf; as Rom. xi. 17. This is the principle of ſpiritual life and grace derived from him. When this abounds in them, ſo as to give them ſtrength and vigour in the exerciſe of grace, to keep them from decays and withering, they are

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ſaid to be fat, which in the ſcripture-phraſe is ſtrong and healthy. (2.) That they flouriſh in the greenneſs (as the word is) and verdure of profeſſion; for vigorous grace will produce a flouriſhing profeſſion. (3.) That they ſtill bring forth fruit in all duties of holy obedience. All theſe are promiſed unto them even in old age.

Even trees when they grow old (the palm and the cedar) are apt to loſe of their juice and verdure; and men in old age are ſubject unto all ſorts of decays, both outward and inward. It is a rare thing to ſee a man in old age naturally vigorous, healthy, and ſtrong; and would it were not more rare to ſee any ſpiritually ſo at the ſame ſeaſon. But this is here promiſed unto believers as an eſpecial grace and privilege, beyond what can be repreſented in the growth or fruit-bearing of plants and trees.

The grace intended is, that when believers are under all ſorts of bodily and natural decays, and it may be have been overtaken with ſpiritual decays alſo, there is proviſion made in the covenant to render them fat, flouriſhing, and fruitful, vigorous in the power of internal grace, and flouriſhing in the expreſſion of it in all duties of obedience, which is that which we now inquire after.

Bleſſed be God for this good word of his grace, that he hath given us ſuch encouragement againſt all the decays and temptations of old age which we have to conflict withal.

And the pſalmiſt in the next words declares the greatneſs of this privilege: *To ſhew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.* Conſider the oppoſitions that lie againſt the flouriſhing of believers in old age, the difficulties of it, the temptations that muſt be conquered, the actings of the mind above its natural abilities which are decayed, the wearineſs that is apt to befal us in a long ſpiritual conflict, the cries of the fleſh to be ſpared, and we ſhall ſee it to be an evidence of the faithfulneſs, power, and righteouſneſs of God in covenant; nothing elſe could produce this mighty effect. So the prophet treating of the ſame promiſe, Hoſ. xiv. 4.—8. cloſeth his diſcourſe with that bleſſed remark, ver. 9. *Who is wiſe, and he ſhall underſtand theſe things? prudent, and he ſhall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them.* Spiritual wiſdom will make us to ſee that the faithfulneſs and

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power of God are exerted in this work of preſerving believers flouriſhing and fruitful unto the end.

Having laid the foundation of this illuſtrious teſtimony, I ſhall farther declare and confirm my intention, ſo to make way for the application of the truth under conſideration, unto this caſe, manifeſting, that the way whereby we may be made partakers of this grace, is by a ſteady view of the glory of Chriſt, as propoſed unto us in the goſpel.

There is a latter ſpring in the year, a ſpring in autumn; it is indeed for the moſt part but faint and weak, yet is it ſuch as the huſbandman cannot ſpare. And it is an evident ſign of barren ground, when it doth not put forth afreſh towards the end of the year. God the good huſbandman looks for the ſame from us, eſpecially if we had a ſummer's drought in ſpiritual decays; as the pſalmiſt complains, Pſal. xxxii. 4. *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moiſture is turned into the drought of ſummer.* Had we not had a latter ſpring the laſt year, the land had greatly ſuffered under the drought of the ſummer. And if we have had ſuch a drought in the courſe of our profeſſion by ſpiritual decays, as God the good huſbandman looks for a latter ſpring in us, even in old age, in the vigorous acting of grace and fruitful obedience; ſo without it we can neither have peace nor joy in our own ſouls. If a man therefore hath made a great appearance of religion in his former or younger days, and when he is growing into age becomes dead, cold, worldly, ſelfiſh; if he have no freſh ſprings of ſpiritual life in him, it is an evidence that he hath a barren heart, that was never really fruitful to God. I know that many ſtand in need of being excited by ſuch warning, unto a diligent conſideration of their ſtate and condition.

It is true, that the latter ſpring doth not bring forth the ſame fruit with the former. There is no more required in it, but that the ground evidence itſelf to be in good heart, and to put forth that which is proper unto the ſeaſon. It may be, ſuch graces as were active and vigorous in men at their firſt converſion unto God, as were carried in a ſtream of warm natural affections, may not ſo eminently abound in the latter ſpring of old age: but thoſe which are proper for the ſeaſon, as namely, ſpirituality, heavenly-mindedneſs, weanedneſs from the world, readineſs for the croſs, and death, are neceſſary, even in old age, to evidence that we have

a living principle of grace, and to ſhew thereby that God is upright, he is our rock, and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.

What is further to be inſiſted on, ſhall be reduced unto theſe four heads.

Firſt, That the conſtitution of ſpiritual life, is ſuch as is meet to thrive, grow, and increaſe unto the end, and will do ſo, unleſs it be from the default of them in whom it is.

Secondly, That notwithſtanding this nature and conſtitution of ſpiritual life, yet believers are ſubject unto many decays, partly gradual, and partly by ſurpriſals in temptation, whereby the growth of it is obſtructed, unto the diſhonour of the goſpel, and the loſs of their own peace with joy.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew that ſuch at preſent is the condition of many profeſſors, namely, that they are viſibly fallen under ſpiritual decays, and do not evidence any intereſt in the bleſſed promiſe inſiſted on.

Fourthly, On the confirmation of theſe things, our inquiry will be, How ſuch perſons may be delivered from ſuch decays, and by what means they may obtain the grace here promiſed, of ſpiritual flouriſhing in old age, both in the ſtrengthening of the inward principle of life, and abounding in fruits of obedience, which are to the praiſe of God by Jeſus Chriſt: and then we ſhall make application unto this caſe, of that truth which is the ſubject of the preceding diſcourſe.

Firſt, The conſtitution of ſpiritual life is ſuch, as is meet to grow and increaſe unto the end. Hereby it doth diſtinguiſh itſelf from that faith which is temporary; for there is a temporary faith which will both flouriſh for a ſeaſon, and bring forth ſome fruit, but it is not in its nature and conſtitution to abide, to grow and increaſe, but rather to decay and wither. It is deſcribed by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Matth. xiii. 20. 21. *But he that received the ſeed into ſtony places, the ſame is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it: yet hath he not root in himſelf, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended.* Either ſome great temptation extinguiſheth it, or it decays inſenſibly, until the mind wherein it was do manifeſt itſelf to be utterly barren. And therefore whoever is ſenſible of any ſpiritual decays, he is called unto a ſevere trial and examination of himſelf, as unto the nature of the principle of his profeſſion and obedience; for ſuch de-

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cays do rather argue a principle of temporary faith only, unto which they are proper and natural, than that whoſe nature it is to thrive and grow to the end, whereon thoſe that have it, ſhall, as it is in the promiſe, ſtill bring forth fruit, and without their own great guilt be always freed from ſuch decays.

That this ſpiritual life is in its nature and conſtitution ſuch as will abide, thrive and grow to the end, is three ways teſtified unto in the ſcripture.

1. In that it is compared unto things of the moſt infallible increaſe and progreſs: for beſides that its growth is frequently likened unto that of plants and trees well watered, and in a fruitful ſoil, which fail not to ſpring, unleſs it be from ſome external violence; it is likewiſe compared unto ſuch things as whoſe progreſs is abſolutely infallible, Prov. iv. 18. *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* The path of the juſt is his covenant-walk before God, as it is frequently called in the ſcripture, Pſal. cxix. 35. 105. Iſ. xxvi. 7. Pſal. xxiii. 3. Matth. iii. 3. Heb. xii. 13. and it compriſeth the principle, profeſſion, and fruits of it. This, ſaith the wiſe man, is as the ſhining light, that is, the morning light: and wherein is it ſo? why, as that goeth on by degrees, and ſhineth more and more unto the high noon, (though it may be interrupted ſometimes by clouds and ſtorms); ſo is this path of the juſt, it goes on and increaſeth unto the high noon, the perfect day of glory. It is in its nature ſo to do, though it may ſometimes meet with obſtructions, as we ſhall ſee afterwards; and ſo doth the morning light alſo.

There is no viſible difference as unto light, between the light of the morning, and the light of the evening; yea, this latter ſometimes, from gleams of the ſetting ſun, ſeems to be more glorious than the other. But herein they differ; the firſt goes on gradually unto more light, until it comes to perfection; the other gradually gives place unto darkneſs, until it comes to be midnight. So is it as unto the light of the juſt and of the hypocrite, and ſo is it as unto their paths. At firſt ſetting out they may ſeem alike and equal; yea, convictions and ſpiritual gifts acted with corrupt ends in ſome hypocrites, may for a time give a greater luſtre of profeſſion, than the grace of others ſincerely converted unto God may attain unto. But herein they diſcover their different natures; the one increaſeth and goeth on conſtantly, though it may be

ſometimes but faintly; the other decays, grows dim, gives place to darkneſs and crooked walking.

This then is the nature of the path of the juſt: and where it is otherwiſe with us in our walk before God, we can have no evidence that we are in that path, or that we have a living, growing principle of ſpiritual life in us. And it is fit that profeſſors of all ſorts ſhould be minded of theſe things; for we may ſee not a few of them under viſible decays, without any ſincere endeavours after a recovery, who yet pleaſe themſelves that the root of the matter is in them. It is ſo, if love of the world, conformity unto it, negligence in holy duties, and coldneſs in ſpiritual love be an evidence of ſuch decays. But let none deceive their own ſouls; where-ever there is a ſaving principle of grace, it will be thriving and growing unto the end. And if it fall under obſtructions, and thereby into decays for a ſeaſon, it will give no reſt or quietneſs unto the ſoul wherein it is, but will labour continually for a recovery. Peace in a ſpiritually decaying condition, is a ſoul-ruining ſecurity; better be under terror on the account of ſurpriſal into ſome ſin, than be in peace under evident decays of ſpiritual life.

And by the way, this comparing of the path of the juſt unto the morning light, minds me of what I have ſeen more than once. That light hath ſometimes chearfully appeared unto the world, when after a little ſeaſon, by reaſon of clouds, tempeſts, and ſtorms, it hath given place again to darkneſs, like that of the night; but it hath not ſo been loſt and buried like the evening light; after a while it hath recovered itſelf unto a greater luſtre than before, manifeſting that it increaſed in itſelf, whilſt it was eclipſed as to us. So hath it been with not a few at their firſt converſion unto God; great darkneſs and trouble have by the efficacy of temptation, and injections of Satan, poſſeſſed their minds: but the grace which they have received being as the morning light, hath after a while diſentangled itſelf, and given evidence, that it was ſo far from being extinguiſhed, as that it grew and thrived under all thoſe clouds and darkneſs; for the light of the juſt doth in the iſſue always increaſe by temptations, as that of the hypocrite is conſtantly impaired by them.

Again, as it is as the morning light, than which nothing hath a more aſſured progreſs; ſo it is called by our Saviour *living water*, John iv. 10. yea, a *well of water ſpringing up into*

into everlaſting life, ver. 14. It is an indeficient ſpring, not a pool or pond, though never ſo large, which may be dried up. Many ſuch pools of light, gifts, and profeſſion, have we ſeen utterly dried up, when they have come into age, or been inſnared by the temptations of the world. And we may ſee others every day under dangerous decays; their countenances are changed, and they have loſt that oil which makes the face of a believer to ſhine, namely, the oil of love, meekneſs, ſelf-denial, and ſpirituality of converſe; and inſtead thereof there is ſpread upon them the fulſome ointment of pride, ſelf-love, earthly-mindedneſs, which increaſeth on them more and more. But where this principle of ſpiritual life is, it is as the morning light, as an indeficient ſpring that never fails, nor can do ſo, until it iſſue in eternal life: and ſundry other ways there are whereby the ſame truth is aſſerted in the ſcripture.

2. There are ſundry divine promiſes given unto believers, that ſo it ſhall be, or to ſecure them of ſuch ſupplies of grace as ſhall cauſe their ſpiritual life to grow, increaſe, and flouriſh unto the end, ſuch as that in the Pſalm which we have conſidered: for theſe promiſes are the means whereby this ſpiritual life is originally communicated unto us, and whereby it is preſerved in us; by them are we made partakers of this divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.; and through them is it continued in us. Now, promiſes of this nature, namely, that by the diſpenſation of the Spirit of Chriſt, and ſupplies of his grace, our ſpiritual life ſhall flouriſh, and be made fruitful to the end, I ſhall briefly call over one of them only at preſent, which is recorded, Iſ. xliv. 3. 4. *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine offspring: and they ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes.*

Although this promiſe may have reſpect unto the gracious dealing of God with the people of the Jews after their return from the captivity, yet hath it ſo only as it was typical of the redemption of the church by Jeſus Chriſt: but it belongs properly to the times of the goſpel, when the righteous were to flouriſh; and it is a promiſe of the new covenant, as is manifeſt, in that it is not only given unto believers, but is alſo extended unto their ſeed and offspring, which is an aſſured ſignature of new-covenant promiſes. And here is,

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(1.) A ſuppoſition of what we are in ourſelves, both before and after our converſion unto God, namely, as thirſty, dry, and barren ground. We have nothing in ourſelves, no radical moiſture to make us flouriſhing and fruitful. And as it is before, ſo it is after converſion; *We are not ſufficient of ourſelves, our ſufficiency is of God,* 2 Cor. iii. 5. Being left to ourſelves, we ſhould utterly wither and periſh. But, (2.) Here is the bleſſed relief which God in this caſe hath provided; he will pour the ſanctifying water of his Spirit, and the bleſſing of his grace upon us. And this he will ſo do, as to cauſe us to ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes. There is nothing of a more eminent and almoſt viſible growth than willows by the water-courſes. Such ſhall be the ſpiritual growth of believers under the influences of theſe promiſes; that is, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing, and ſtill bring forth fruit. And other promiſes of the ſame nature there are many; but we muſt obſerve two things concerning them, that we may be ſatisfied in their accompliſhment. As,

(1.) The promiſes of the new covenant, as unto the firſt communication of grace unto the elect, are abſolute and unconditional; they are the executive conveyances of God's immutable purpoſes and decrees: and what ſhould be the condition of the communication of the firſt grace unto us? Nothing that is not grace can be ſo. If it be ſaid, that this alſo is of God in us, which is the condition of the communication of the firſt ſaving grace unto us, then I would know whether that be beſtowed on us without any condition? If it be, then that is the firſt grace, as being abſolutely free; if it be not, then what is the condition whereon it is beſtowed? concerning which the ſame inquiry muſt be made, and ſo for ever. But this is the glory of covenant-promiſes, that as unto the communication of the grace of converſion and ſanctification unto the elect, they are abſolutely free and unconditionate. But,

(2.) The promiſes which reſpect the growth, degrees, and meaſures of this grace in believers are not ſo. There are many duties required of us, that theſe promiſes may be accompliſhed towards us, and in us; yea, watchful diligence in univerſal goſpel-obedience is expected from us unto this end, 2 Pet. i. 4.—10. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes; that by theſe you might be partakers*

takers of the divine nature, having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt. And beſides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience: and to patience, godlineſs; and to godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity. For if theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye ſhall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. But he that lacketh theſe things, is blind, and cannot ſee far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old ſins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election ſure: for if ye do theſe things, ye ſhall never fall. This is the ordinary method of the communication of all ſupplies of grace to make us ſpiritually flouriſh, and be fruitful, namely, that we be found in the diligent exerciſe of what we have received. God doth ſometimes deal otherwiſe in a way of ſovereignty, and ſurpriſeth men with healing grace in the midſt of their decays and backſlidings, Iſ. lvii. 17. 18. *For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs was I wroth, and ſmote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have ſeen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him alſo, and reſtore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.* So hath many a poor ſoul been delivered from going down into the pit. The good Shepherd will go out of his way to ſave a wandering ſheep; but this is the ordinary method.

(3.) Notwithſtanding theſe bleſſed promiſes of growth, flouriſhing, and fruitfulneſs, if we are negligent in the due improvement of the grace which we have received, and the diſcharge of the duties required of us, we may fall into decays, and be kept in a low, unthrifty ſtate all our days. And this is the principal ground of the diſcrepancy between the glory and beauty of the church, as repreſented in the promiſes of the goſpel, and as exemplified in the lives and walking of profeſſors, they do not live up unto the condition of their accompliſhment in them; howbeit, in God's way and time they ſhall be all fulfilled. We have therefore innumerable bleſſed promiſes concerning the thriving, growing, and flouriſhing of the principle of ſpiritual life in us even in old age, and until death: but the grace promiſed unto this end, will not befal us whilſt we are aſleep in ſpiritual ſloth and ſecurity; fervent prayer, the exerciſe of all grace received,

with

with watchfulneſs unto all holy duties, are required hereunto.

3. God hath ſecured the growth of this ſpiritual life, by the proviſion of food for it, whereby it may be ſtrengthened and increaſed, for life muſt be preſerved by food. And this in our caſe is the word of God, with all other ordinances of divine worſhip which depend thereon, 1 Pet. ii. 2. 3. *As new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if ſo be ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* Whatever the ſtate of this life be, whether in its beginning, its progreſs, its decays, there is ſuitable nouriſhment provided for it in the good word of God's grace. If men will neglect their daily food that is provided for them, it is no wonder if they be weak and thriftleſs. And if believers are not earneſt in their deſires after this food, if they are not diligent in providing of it, attending unto it, much more if through corruptions and temptations they count it in the preaching of it light and common food, which they do not value, it is no wonder if they fall into ſpiritual decays; but God hath herein provided for our growth even unto old age.

And this is the *firſt* thing which was propoſed unto confirmation, namely, that the conſtitution and nature of ſpiritual life is ſuch, as to be indeficient, ſo as to thrive and grow even in old age, and unto the end.

The *ſecond* thing propoſed is, That notwithal this proviſion for the growth of ſpiritual life in us, believers, eſpecially in a long courſe of profeſſion, are ſubject to decays, ſuch as may caſt them into great perplexities, and endanger their eternal ruin.

And theſe ſpiritual decays are of two ſorts. (1.) Such as are gradual and univerſal, in the loſs of the vigour and life of grace, both in its principle, and in its exerciſe. (2.) Such as are occaſioned by ſurpriſal into ſin through the power of temptation; I mean, ſuch ſins as do waſte the ſpiritual powers of the ſoul, and deprive it of all ſolid peace.

As for temporary believers, give them but time enough in this world, eſpecially if it be accompanied with outward proſperity, or perſecution; and for the moſt part their decays of one ſort or another will make a diſcovery of their hypocriſy. Though they retain a form of godlineſs, they deny the power of it, Prov. i. 31. *Therefore ſhall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.* And if they

do

do not openly relinquiſh all duties of religion, yet they will grow ſo lifeleſs and ſavourleſs in them, as ſhall evidence their condition; for ſo it is with them who are lukewarm, who are neither hot nor cold, who have a name to live, but are dead.

And herein lieth a ſignal difference in this matter, between ſincere believers, and thoſe who believe only for a time; for thoſe of the latter ſort do either not perceive their ſickneſs and decays, their minds being taken up and poſſeſſed with other things; or if they do find that it is not with them as it hath been formerly, they are not much concerned, and on any occaſional new conviction they cry, *Yet a little* more *ſlumber*, *a little* more *ſleep*, *a little* more *folding of the hands to ſleep*. But when the other do find any thing of this nature, it makes them reſtleſs for a recovery. And although through the many ſnares, temptations, and deceits of ſin, or through their ignorance of the right way for their healing, they do not many of them obtain a ſpeedy recovery, yet none of them do approve themſelves in ſuch a condition, or turn unto any undue reliefs.

Now that believers are ſubject to decays in both the ways mentioned, we have full teſtimony in ſcripture: for as unto that general gradual decay, in the loſs of our firſt faith, love and works, in the weakning of the internal principle of ſpiritual life, with the loſs thereon of delight, joy and conſolation, and the abatement of the fruits of obedience, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth expreſsly charge on five of the ſeven churches of Aſia, Rev. ii. iii. And in ſome of them, as Sardis and Laodicea, thoſe decays had proceeded unto ſuch a degree, as that they were in danger of utter rejection. And hereunto anſwers the experience of all churches, and all believers in the world. Thoſe who are otherwiſe minded, are dead in ſin, and have got pretences to countenance themſelves in their miſerable condition. So is it with the church of Rome; and I wiſh others did not in ſome meaſure follow them therein.

As unto thoſe of the ſecond ſort, whereinto men are caſt by ſurpriſals and temptations, producing great ſpiritual diſtreſs and anguiſh of ſoul, under a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, we have an inſtance in David, as he gives an account of himſelf, Pſal. xxxviii. ver. 2. to the 10. *O Lord, thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore. There is*

no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger: neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds ſtink, and are corrupt; becauſe of my fooliſhneſs, &c.

It is certain, that here is a deſcription of a very woful ſtate and condition: and the pſalmiſt knowing that he was called of God to be a teacher and inſtructer of the church in all ages, records his own experience unto that end. Hence the title of it is, *A pſalm to bring to remembrance*: ſome judge that David had reſpect unto ſome great and ſore diſeaſe that he was then viſited withal. But if it were ſo, it was only an occaſion of his complaint; the cauſe of it was ſin alone. And four things he doth repreſent. (1.) That he had departed from God, and fallen into provoking ſins, which had produced great diſtreſſes in his mind, ver. 3. 4. (2.) That he had fooliſhly continued in that ſtate, not making timely application to grace and mercy for healing, whereby it was grown deplorable, ver. 5. And this folly is that alone which makes ſuch a condition dangerous; namely, when men on their ſurpriſals in ſin, do not ſpeedily apply themſelves unto healing remedies. (3.) That he had herein a continual ſenſe of the diſpleaſure of God by reaſon of ſin, ver. 2. 3. 4. (4.) That he was altogether reſtleſs in this ſtate, mourning, groaning, labouring continually for deliverance. This is a clearer delineation of the condition of believers, when either by the greatneſs of any ſin, or by a long continuance in an evil and a careleſs frame, they are caſt under a ſenſe of divine diſpleaſure. This opens their minds and their hearts, declaring how all things are within, which they cannot deny. It is not ſo with many in the ſame meaſures and degrees as it was with David, whoſe falls were very great, but the ſubſtance of it is found in them all. And herein the heart knoweth its own bitterneſs; a ſtranger intermeddleth not with it: none knows the groaning and labouring of a ſoul convinced of ſuch ſpiritual decays, but he alone in whom they are. Hereon is it caſt down to the earth, going mourning all the day long, though others know nothing of its ſorrows. But it is of a far more ſad conſideration, to ſee men manifeſting their inward decays by their outward fruits, and yet are little or not at all concerned therein. The former are in ways

of

of recovery, theſe in the paths that go down to the chambers of death.

I ſuppoſe, therefore, I may take it for granted, that there are few profeſſors of religion, who have had any long continuance in the ways of it, having withal been expoſed unto the temptations of life, and much exerciſed with the occaſions of it; but that they have been aſleep in their days, as the ſpouſe complains of herſelf, Cant. v. 2.; that is, they have been overtaken with decays of one ſort or another, either with reſpect unto ſpiritual or moral duties, in their relation unto churches or families; in their judgements, or their affections; in their inward frames or outward actions, they have been overtaken with the effects of ſloth, negligence, or the want of a continual watch in the life of faith: I wiſh it were otherwiſe.

I principally herein intend thoſe gradual declenſions in the life and power of grace, which men in a long courſe of profeſſion are ſubject unto. And theſe for the moſt part proceed from formality in holy duties, under the conſtant outward performance of them; vehement engagements in the affairs of life, an overvaluation of ſinful enjoyments, growth in carnal wiſdom, neglect of daily mortification of ſuch ſins as men are naturally diſpoſed unto, with a ſecret influence from the prevalent temptation of the days wherein we live, which things are not now to be ſpoken unto.

Thirdly, But I come to that which was propoſed in the *third* place, namely, to ſhew that this at preſent is the ſtate of many profeſſors of religion, that they are fallen under thoſe ſpiritual decays, and do not enjoy the effects of the promiſes concerning flouriſhing and fruitfulneſs, which we have inſiſted on. To faſten a conviction on them, or ſome of them at leaſt, that it is indeed ſo with them, is my preſent deſign; and this ought to be done with ſome diligence. The glory of Chriſt, the honour of the goſpel, and the danger of the ſouls of men do call for it. This is the ſecret root of all our evil, which will not be removed unleſs it be digged up. Who ſees not, who complains not of the loſs of, or decays in the power of religion, in the days wherein we live? but few there are, who either know or apply themſelves, or direct others unto the proper remedy of this evil. Beſides, it is almoſt as difficult to convince men of their ſpiritual decays, as it is to recover them from them; but without this, healing

is impoſſible. If men know not their ſickneſs, they will not ſeek for a cure. Some when they ſee their ſickneſs, and their wound, will apply themſelves unto wrong uſeleſs remedies, like them in the prophet, Hoſ. v. 13. *When Ephraim ſaw his ſickneſs, and Judah ſaw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.* But none will make uſe of any cure who ſee no diſeaſe at all. Wherefore, to faſten a conviction hereof on the minds of ſome, we may make uſe of the enſuing inquiries and obſervations.

1. Have you in the way of your profeſſion had any experience of theſe ſpiritual decays? I doubt not but there are ſome who have been preſerved green and flouriſhing, from their firſt converſion unto God, who never fell under the power of ſloth, neglect, or temptation, at leaſt not for any remarkable ſeaſon, but they are but few. It was not ſo ſcarce with any of theſe believers under the Old Teſtament, whoſe lives and walkings are recorded for our inſtruction; and they muſt be ſuch as lived in an exact and diligent courſe of mortification. And ſome there are who have obtained relief and deliverance from under their decays, whoſe backſlidings have been healed, and their diſeaſes cured. So it was with David, as he divinely expreſſeth it, Pſal. ciii. 1.—5. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul: and all that is within me, bleſs his holy name. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diſeaſes. Who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction: who crowneth thee with loving kindneſs and tender mercies. Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things: ſo that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.* So doth he celebrate his deliverance from that ſtate, whereof he complains, Pſal. xxxviii. which we mentioned before. And there is no grace or mercy that doth more affect the hearts of believers, that gives them a greater tranſport of joy and thankfulneſs, than this of deliverance from backſlidings. It is a bringing of the ſoul out of priſon, which enlargeth it unto praiſe, Pſal. cxlii. 7. Of this ſort I doubt not but that there are many; for God hath given great warnings of the danger of a ſpiritually decaying ſtate; and he hath made great promiſes of recovery from it, and multitudes in the church are daily exerciſed herein: but I ſpeak in general unto all. Have you any experience of ſuch ſpiritual decays, either in the frame of your ſpirits, or in the manner

manner of your walking before God, or at leaſt that you are prone unto them, if not mightily preſerved by the power of grace in your own utmoſt diligence? If you have not ſo, then I fear it is from one of theſe two cauſes.

(1.) That indeed you have never had any flouriſhing ſpiritual ſtate in your ſouls. He that hath been always weak and ſickly, doth not know what it is to want a ſtate of health and ſtrength, becauſe he never had experience of it; much leſs doth he that is dead, know what it is to want life. But he that from an exquiſite temper of health, falls into languiſhing diſtempers, knows diſtinctly, both how it was, and how it is with him. And the frame of the minds of many profeſſors of religion, with the manner of their walking, is ſuch, as that if they are not ſenſible of ſpiritual decays, it is evident that they never had any good ſpiritual health; and it is to no purpoſe to treat with ſuch perſons about a recovery. There are amongſt thoſe who make an outward profeſſion of true religion, many that live in all ſorts of ſins. If you ſhould deal with them about backſlidings, decays, and a recovery, you will ſeem unto them as Lot did to his ſons-in-law, when he told them of the deſtruction of Sodom, as one that mocked, or made ſport with them, Gen. xix. 14. or you will be mocked by them for your pains; they have been always ſuch as they are, it was never otherwiſe with them, and it is a ridiculous thing to ſpeak to them of a recovery. We muſt be able in this caſe to ſay to men, *Remember whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your firſt works*, Rev. ii. 5. They muſt have had an experience of a better ſtate, or they will not endeavour a recovery from that wherein they are. Such therefore as ſee neither evil nor danger in their preſent condition, but ſuppoſe all is well enough with them, becauſe it is as good as ever it was, will not eaſily be brought under this conviction; but they have that which is of no leſs importance for them to inquire into, namely, whether they have had any thing of the truth of grace or no? Or,

(2.) If you have not this experience, it is to be feared that you are aſleep in ſecurity, which is hardly diſtinguiſhable from death in ſin. The church of Laodicea was ſenſibly decayed, and gone off from its primitive faith and obedience, yet ſhe was ſo ſecure in her condition, knew ſo little of it, that ſhe judged herſelf on the contrary to be in a thriving flouriſhing ſtate. She thought herſelf increaſed in all church

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riches and goods, that is, gifts and graces, while ſhe was *wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked,* Rev. iii. 17. in ſuch a ſtate as wherein it is queſtionable, whether ſhe had any thing of the life and power of grace to be found in her or no. And ſo is it with many churches at this day, eſpecially that which boaſts itſelf to be without error, or blame: and it is ſtrange that a church ſhould ſuppoſe that it flouriſheth in grace and gifts, when it hath nothing but a noiſe of words in their ſtead.

So God teſtified concerning Ephraim, that *gray hairs were ſprinkled on him, yet he knew it not,* Hoſ. vii. 9.; he was in a declining, dying condition, but did not underſtand it. Hence it is added, *They did not return to the Lord their God, nor ſeek him for all this,* ver. 10. If men will not learn, and own their ſpiritual decays, there is no hopes of prevailing with them to return unto the Lord; *The whole have no need of a phyſician, but the ſick;* Chriſt *came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance:* ſuch perſons are under the power of a ſtupid ſecurity, from whence it will be very hard to rouſe them up. Hence it is that we have ſo little ſucceſs for the moſt part, in calling perſons to look after a revival and recovery of their decays; they acknowledge no ſuch thing in themſelves, ſuch calls may belong unto others; yea, if any word ſeem to come near them unto their diſquietment, they are apt to think it was ſpoken out of ſpite and ill-will towards them; they approve of themſelves in their preſent condition. Hence is the complaint of Chriſt in the miniſtry of the word: *I have called, and ye have refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded; ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and you would none of my reproof,* Prov. i. 24. 25. Hence let this truth be preſſed a thouſand times, it is not one of a thouſand who will think himſelf ſo concerned, as to apply himſelf unto a relief. A ſpirit of ſlumber ſeems to be poured on many.

2. To improve this conviction, I would aſk of ſome, whether they have been able to maintain ſpiritual peace and joy in their ſouls? I take it for granted, that ordinarily they are inſeparable adjuncts of the life of faith, in an humble fruitful walk before God. The ſcripture teſtifieth that they are ſo, and no experience lies againſt it in ordinary caſes. And I ſuppoſe that thoſe unto whom I ſpeak, do in ſome meaſure know what they are, and do not delude themſelves with

with fancies and imaginations; they have ſubſtance in them, however by ſome derided, and to ſome unknown. Have this peace and joy been maintained and borne ſway in your minds? have they under all trials and ſurpriſals been quickly compoſed by them? or are you not rather on all occaſions uneaſy and perplexed? This is certain, that a decaying ſpiritual ſtate, and ſolid ſpiritual peace, are inconſiſtent: and if ever you had ſuch peace, you may by the loſs of it, know into what ſtate you are come.

3. Not to inquire further into things internal and hidden, wherein men may juſtify themſelves if they pleaſe, there are too many open viſible evidences of theſe decays among profeſſors of religion; they have not kept them from the eyes of the church, nor yet from the world: Do pride, ſelfiſhneſs, worldlineſs, levity of attire, and vanity of life, with corrupt unſavoury communication, abound among many? The world was never in a worſe poſture for conformity, than it is at this day, wherein all fleſh hath corrupted its ways; and yet as unto things of outward appearance, how little diſtinction is left between it, and thoſe who would be eſteemed more ſtrict profeſſors of religion! Was this the way and manner of the ſaints of old, of thoſe that went before us in the ſame profeſſion? was it ſo with ourſelves in the time of our firſt eſpouſals, when we went after God in the wilderneſs, in a land that was not ſown, as Jer. ii. 2.? Some underſtand what I ſay: if we have not ſome of us had better days, we never had good days in our lives; if we have had them, why do we not ſtir up ourſelves to look after a recovery?

4. May not God ſay of many of us, what he ſaid of his people of old, *Thou haſt been weary of me, O Iſrael?* Iſ. xliii. 22. Have we not been weary of God, until we have abundant cauſe to be weary of ourſelves? The moſt I preſume will be ready with them in Malachi, to ſay, *How, or wherein have we been weary of God?* do we not abide, yea, abound in the duties of his ſervice? what can be more required of us? wherein are we to blame? This were ſomething indeed, but it is often ſo, that men are weary of God, when they even weary God with their duties and ſervices, Iſ. i. 13. 14. *Bring no more vain oblations, incenſe is an abomination unto me, the new moons and ſabbaths, the calling of aſſemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the ſolemn*

lemn meeting. Your new moons, and your appointed feaſts my ſoul hateth: they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. God ſays in his word, he is weary; they ſay in their hearts, they are weary, Mal. i. 13. *Behold, what a wearineſs is it! and ye have ſnuffed at it, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* But I anſwer,

1*ſt*, Many cannot with any modeſty make uſe of this pretence. Their ſloth, indifferency, and negligence in the obſervance of the duties of divine worſhip, both in private and public, is notorious. In particular, is not the duty of family-prayer neglected by many, at leaſt as to its conſtancy and fervency? And although it be grounded in the light of nature, confirmed by the general rules of the ſcripture, requiſite unto the dedication of a family unto God, ſtrengthened by the conſtant example of all the ſaints of old, and neceſſary in the experience of all that walk with God; yet do not many begin to ſeek out pleas and arguings to juſtify their omiſſion hereof? Are not all things filled with the fruits of the negligence of ſuch profeſſors, in the inſtruction of their children and ſervants? and hath not God given ſevere rebukes unto many of us in their fearful miſcarriages? And as unto the public worſhip of God, I wiſh that ſloth and indifferency did not appear upon too many, under various pretences. But,

2*dly*, This is not that which I do intend; men may be weary of God, whilſt they abide in the obſervance of a multitude of outward duties.

(1.) They may be ſo, with reſpect unto that ſpirituality and intention of mind unto the exerciſe of all grace, which are required unto ſuch duties. Theſe are the life, the ſoul, the animating principle of them, without which their outward performance is but a dead carcaſe. Men may draw nigh to God with their lips, when their hearts are far from him. This is that which becomes God in his worſhip, and is uſeful to our own ſouls; for *God is a Spirit, and he will be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth;* which he is not, but in the exerciſe of the graces of his Spirit in the worſhippers; *for bodily exerciſe profiteth little; but godlineſs is profitable unto all things*, 1 Tim. iv. 8.

To keep up the mind unto this frame, to ſtir up all grace unto a conſtant vigorous exerciſe in all holy duties, is a matter whereunto great ſpiritual diligence and watchfulneſs is required: *Watch unto prayer.* A thouſand pretences riſe againſt

againſt it; all the arts of ſloth, formality, wearineſs of the fleſh, and the buſineſs of life, do contend to fruſtrate the deſign of it. And the ſuitableneſs of reſting in the work done unto the principles of a natural conſcience, gives efficacy to them all: and when men come to ſatisfy themſelves herein, it may be it were better that for a time ſuch duties were wholly omitted; for in that caſe conſcience itſelf will urgently call on men not hardened in ſin, to a conſideration of their condition; wherefore much ſpiritual labour and diligence is required in this matter. The outward performance of religious duties, be they never ſo many, or however ſtrictly enjoined, as the daily and nightly canonical hours amongſt the popiſh devotioniſts, is an eaſy taſk, much inferior unto the conſtant labour which ſome men uſe in their trades and callings. And in them, in the performance of them either public, or in their families, men may be weary of God: and according as they are remiſs in the conſtant keeping up of ſpirituality, and exerciſe of grace in ſacred duties, ſo is the degree of their wearineſs. And there is almoſt nothing whereby men may take a ſafer meaſure of their decays, or growth, than by the uſual frame of their minds in theſe duties. If they do conſtantly in them *ſtir up themſelves to take hold of God*, as Iſ. lxiv. 7. it is an evidence of a good temper of ſpiritual health in the ſoul. But this will not be done without the utmoſt watchfulneſs and care againſt impreſſions from the fleſh and other temptations. But ſloth and formality herein, is a ſign of a thriftleſs ſtate in the inner man: and all inventions of ſuch formality are diſſerviceable unto the intereſt of grace.

(2.) So is it with them alſo, who attending unto the outward duties of religion, do yet indulge themſelves in any known ſin; for there is nothing of God in thoſe duties, which tend not unto the mortification of all ſin; and men may keep up a form of godlineſs, to countenance themſelves in the neglect of its power. And in particular, where any known ſin is indulged unto, where the mortification of it is not duly endeavoured, where our religious duties are not uſed, applied and directed unto that end, there is a wearineſs of whatever is of God in them, nor hath the ſoul any real intercourſe or communion with God by them.

5. If we ſhould make a particular inquiry into the ſtate of our ſouls, with reſpect unto thoſe graces which are moſt uſe-

ful, and tend moſt to the glory of God, it is to be feared, that the decays of many would be made very evident; ſuch are zeal, humility, contriteneſs of heart, ſpiritual-mindedneſs, vigour of ſoul, and delight in the ways of God, love, charity, ſelf-denial, and the like. Are we fat and flouriſhing in theſe things even in old age? are they in us, and do abound, as the apoſtle ſpeaks? 2 Pet. i. 8. *For if theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye ſhall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Do we bring forth the fruit of them ſo as to ſhow the faithfulneſs of God in his ſupply of grace? I ſhall not make a particular inquiry into them, but only give two general rules whereby we may try ourſelves with reſpect unto them all.

1*ſt*, The loſs of a ſpiritual appetite unto the food of our ſouls, is an evidence of a decay in all theſe graces. Spiritual appetite conſiſts in earneſt deſires, and a ſavoury reliſh: ſo it is deſcribed by the apoſtle, 1 Pet. ii. 2. 3. *As new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if ſo be ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* There is required unto this ſpiritual appetite an earneſt deſire of the word, grounded on an experience of the grace of God in it unto this end, that we may grow and thrive ſpiritually thereby. And this appetite will give us as juſt a meaſure of the ſtate of grace in us, as a natural appetite unto wholeſome food, with due digeſtion thereon, doth give of a good ſtate of health in the body.

This therefore we are to inquire into. Doth it abide in us as formerly? We hear the word preached as much as ever; but do we do it with the ſame deſire and ſpiritual reliſh as before? Some hear to ſatisfy their convictions, ſome to pleaſe their fancies, and ſome to judge of the perſons by whom it is diſpenſed. It is but in few that the neceſſary preparation for the due receiving of it are found.

When men grow in age, they loſe much of their natural appetite unto food; they muſt eat ſtill for the maintenance of life, but they do it not with that deſire after it, and that guſt in it as in the days of youth and health. Hence they are apt to think, that the meat which they had formerly was more ſavoury than what is now provided for them; though what they now enjoy is much to be preferred before what they then had; the change is in themſelves. So we may find not a few profeſſors, who are ready to think and ſay, that

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the preaching which they had in former days, and the religious exerciſes which they were engaged in, were far to be preferred above what they now enjoy. But the change is in themſelves, they have loſt their ſpiritual appetite, or their hunger and thirſt after the food of their ſouls.

The full ſoul loatheth an honey-comb; but to the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet, Prov. xxvii. 7. Men being grown full of themſelves, and of a good conceit of their own abilities, have loſt their ſpiritual appetite unto the word of God; and this makes the word loſe its power and efficacy towards them. That word which the Pſalmiſt ſays is *ſweeter than the honey, or honey-comb*, Pſal. xix. 10. hath little or no taſte or reliſh in it unto them. If they were hungry, they would find a ſweetneſs in the bittereſt of its reproofs, beyond what they can now find in the ſweeteſt of its promiſes. They come to hear the word with ſick deſires, and low expectations, as if they were invited to eat after a feaſt, being ſelf-full before. But this loſs of a ſpiritual appetite, is an evidence of the decay of all other graces whatever.

2*dly*, A neglect of making religion our principal buſineſs, is another evidence of the decay of all ſorts of grace in us: for where grace is in its proper exerciſe, it will ſubordinate all things unto religion, and the ends of it, as David twenty times declares in the 119th Pſalm. All things, all occaſions of life ſhall be poſtponed thereunto: the love and valuation of it will bear ſway in our minds, our thoughts and affections, and the practice of it ſhall give rule unto all other concernments. But is it ſo with many amongſt us? It is well if religion be *one thing*, it is far enough from being *the one thing*; every other thing is preferred before it, and it can hardly crowd in to poſſeſs any place in their minds. To ſee men continually plodding in the affairs of the world, regulating all their actings by their concernment in them, diverting only at ſome ſeaſons, as it were, out of their way unto duties of religion, it is vain to ſay, that they make religion their buſineſs: but there is ſcarce a more certain evidence of a frame of mind ſpiritually decaying in all ſorts of graces, if ever any of them were in it in ſincerity and power, than this one, that men do not make religion their chiefeſt buſineſs: and a little ſelf-examination will help men to judge what it is that they make ſo to be.

Laſtly, I might alſo inſtance in the uſeleſſneſs of men in

their profeſſion; in want of love unto all ſaints, barrenneſs in good works, unreadineſs and unwillingneſs to comply in any extraordinary manner with the calls of God unto repentance and reformation; in love of the world, and pride of life, with paſſions ſuited unto ſuch principles, predominant in them; for they are all undeniable evidences, that thoſe with whom they are found, had never any true grace at all, or that they are fallen under woful decays. But what hath been ſpoken may be ſufficient unto our preſent purpoſe.

This is the *third* thing that was propoſed, namely, an endeavour to leave convictions on the minds of ſome concerning their ſpiritual decays, and the neceſſity of ſeeking after a revival by the means that ſhall be inſiſted on. And I intend it principally for thoſe of us, who under a long profeſſion, are now come unto age, and ſhall not have much time for duty continued unto us. And the truth is, I meet with none, who are Chriſtians of any conſiderable experience, and are ſpiritually minded, but they are ſenſible of the danger of ſuch decays in this hour of temptation, and how difficult it is in the uſe of all means to keep up a vigorous active frame of mind, in faith, love, holineſs, and fruitfulneſs. And for thoſe who are not concerned herein, I confeſs I know not what to make of them, or their religion.

Fourthly, I proceed unto that which was propoſed in the *fourth* or *laſt* place; namely, The way and means whereby believers may be delivered from theſe decays, and come to thrive and flouriſh in the inward principle, and outward fruits of ſpiritual life, which will bring us back unto the conſideration of that truth, which we may ſeem to have diverted from. And to this end, the things enſuing are propoſed unto conſideration.

1. The ſtate of ſpiritual decays is recoverable. No man that is fallen under it hath any reaſon to ſay there is no hope, provided he take the right way for his recovery. If every ſtep that is loſt in the way to heaven ſhould be irrecoverable, wo would be unto us; we ſhould all aſſuredly periſh. If there were no reparation of our breaches, no healing of our decays, no ſalvation but for them who are always progreſſive in grace; if God *ſhould mark all that is done amiſs*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *O Lord, who ſhould ſtand?* Nay, if we had not recoveries every day, we ſhould go off with a perpetual backſliding. But then, as was ſaid, it is required that the

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right means of it be uſed, and not that which is deſtructive of what is deſigned, whereof I ſhall give an inſtance. When trees grow old, or are decaying, it is uſual to dig about them, and manure them, which may cauſe them to flouriſh again, and abound in fruit: but inſtead hereof, if you remove them out of their ſoil, to plant them in another, which may promiſe much advantage, they will aſſuredly wither and die. So it is with profeſſors, and hath been with many; finding themſelves under manifold decays, and little or nothing of the life and power of religion left in them, they have grown weary of their ſtation, and have changed their ſoil, or turning from one way in religion to another, as ſome have turned Papiſts, ſome Quakers, and the like, apprehending that fault to be in the religion which they profeſſed, which was indeed only in themſelves. You cannot give an inſtance of any one who did not viſibly wither and die therein; but had they uſed the proper means for their healing and recovery, they might have lived and brought forth fruit.

2. A ſtrict attendance unto the ſeverities of mortification, with all the duties that lead thereunto, is required unto this end; ſo alſo is the utmoſt diligence in all duties of obedience. Theſe things naturally offer themſelves, as the firſt relief in this caſe, and they ought not to be omitted. But if I ſhould inſiſt upon them, they would branch themſelves into ſuch a multitude of particular directions, as it is inconſiſtent with my deſign here to handle. Beſides, the way which I intend to propoſe is of another nature, though conſiſtent with all the duties included in this propoſal; yea, ſuch as without which not one of them can be performed in a due manner. Wherefore, as unto theſe things, I ſhall only aſſert their neceſſity, with a double limitation.

1*ſt*, That no duties of mortification be preſcribed unto this end, as a means of recovery from ſpiritual decays, but what for matter and manner are of divine inſtitution and command. All others are laid under a ſevere interdict, under what pretence ſoever they may be uſed; *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?* Want hereof, is that whereby a pretended deſign to advance religion in the Papacy, hath ruined it. They have, under the name and pretence of the means of mortification, or the duties of it, invented and enjoined, like the Phariſees, a number of works, ways, duties, ſo called, which God never appointed, nor approved, nor

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will accept, nor shall they ever do good unto the souls of men. Such are their confessions, disciplines, pilgrimages, fastings, abstinence, framed prayers to be repeated in stated canonical hours, in such a length and number. In the bodily labour of these things, they exercise themselves to no spiritual advantage.

But it is natural to all men to divert to such reliefs in this case. Those who are thoroughly convinced of spiritual decays, are therewithal pressed with a sense of the guilt of sin; for it is sin which hath brought them into that condition. Hereon in the first place, they set their contrivance at work, how they may atone divine displeasure, and obtain acceptance with God: and if they are not under the actual conduct of evangelical light, two things immediately offer themselves unto them. *First*, Some extraordinary course in duties, which God hath not commanded. This is the way which they betake themselves unto in the Papacy, and which guilt in the darkness of corrupted nature vehemently calls for. *Secondly*, An extraordinary multiplication of such duties, as for the substance of them are required of us. An instance in both kinds we have, Micah vi. 6. 7. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* And by this means they hope for a restitution into their former condition. And whereas spiritual decays are of two sorts; *first*, from the power and effect of convictions only, which are multiplied among temporary believers; and, *secondly*, from degrees in the power and effects of saving grace: Those whose decays are of the first sort, are never to be diverted from attempting their relief by such means: and when they find them fail, for the most part they cease contending, and abandon themselves to the power of their lusts; for they have no evangelical light to guide them in another course.

Unto them who are of the second sort, is this direction given, in an endeavour for a recovery from backsliding, and thriving in grace, by a redoubling attendance unto the duties of mortification, and new obedience. Let care be taken, that as unto the matter of them they be of divine appoint-

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ment, and as to the manner of their performance, that it be regulated by the rules of the ſcripture. Such are conſtant reading and hearing of the word, prayer with fervency therein, a diligent watch againſt all temptations and occaſions of ſin; eſpecially an endeavour by an holy earneſtneſs, and vehement rebukes, of the entrance of any other frame, to keep the mind ſpiritual and heavenly in its thoughts and affections.

2*dly*, Let them take heed, that they attempt not theſe things in their own ſtrength. When men have ſtrong convictions, that ſuch and ſuch things are their own duty, they are apt to act as if they were to be done in their own ſtrength. They muſt do them, they will do them, that is, as unto the outward work, and therefore they think they can do them, that is, in a due manner. The Holy Ghoſt hath for ever rejected this confidence, none ſhall proſper in it, 2 Cor. iii. 5. *Not that we are ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves: but our ſufficiency is of God.* chap. ix. 8. *And God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all ſufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.* But hereby many deceive themſelves, labouring in the fire, while all they do doth immediately periſh; they have been negligent and careleſs, whereby things are come to an ill poſture with them, and that peace which they had is impaired: but now they will pray, and read, and faſt, and be liberal to the poor, and now an abſtinence from ſin. All theſe things they ſuppoſe they can do of themſelves, becauſe they can and ought to perform the outward works, wherein the duties intended do conſiſt. Hereby Chriſt is left out of the whole deſign, who when all is done, is the Lord that healeth us, Exod. xv. 26. And there is another evil herein; for whatever men do in their own natural abilities, there is a ſecret reſerve of ſome kind of merit in it. Thoſe who plead for theſe things, do aver there can be no merit in any thing, but what proceeds from our own free-will; and what is ſo done, hath ſome kind of merit inſeparably accompanying of it: and this is enough to render all endeavours of this kind not only uſeleſs and fruitleſs, but utterly rejected. Faith muſt engage the aſſiſtance of Chriſt and his grace in and unto theſe duties; or however they may be multiplied, they will not be effectual unto our healing and recovery. Theſe things are to be uſed, according as we receive ſupplies of

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grace from above, in ſubordination unto that work of faith that ſhall be declared. Wherefore,

3. The work of recovering backſliders or believers from under their ſpiritual decays, is an act of ſovereign grace, wrought in us by virtue of divine promiſes; out of this eater cometh meat. Becauſe believers are liable to ſuch declenſions, backſlidings, and decays, God hath provided and given unto us great and precious promiſes of a recovery, if we duly apply ourſelves unto the means of it. One of the places only wherein they are recorded, I ſhall here call over, and explain, Hoſ. xiv. 1.—8. *O Iſrael, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, ſay unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly: ſo will we render the calves of our lips,* &c. *I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Iſrael: he ſhall grow as the lily, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the olive-tree, and his ſmell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall return, they ſhall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the ſcent thereof ſhall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim ſhall ſay, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and obſerved him: I am like a green fir-tree, from me is thy fruit found.*

The whole matter treated of in general, both as unto the diſeaſe and remedy, is fully ſtated in this paſſage of ſcripture; and that in the experience of the church, and God's dealing with them: we may therefore receive many plain directions from it, and a ſafe guidance in our progreſs, which we ſhall endeavour to take in the enſuing obſervations.

1. This application of God unto Iſrael, *(O Iſrael, return)*, was made when the generality of the people were wicked and devoted unto utter deſtruction. So it is declared in the laſt words of the foregoing chapter, and their deſolation fell out not long after accordingly. Wherefore, no ſeaſon nor circumſtances of things ſhall obſtruct ſovereign grace, when God will exerciſe it towards his church; it ſhall work in the midſt of deſolating judgements.

2. In ſuch a time the true Iſrael of God, the elect themſelves, are apt to be overtaken with the ſins of the whole, and ſo to backſlide from God, and ſo to fall into ſpiritual decays. So Iſrael had now done, though ſhe had not abſolutely

lutely broken covenant with God; he was yet unto her *the Lord thy God*, yet ſhe had fallen by her iniquity. Times of public apoſtaſy are often accompanied with partial defects in the beſt; *Becauſe iniquity aboundeth, the love of many ſhall wax old*, Matth. xxiv. 12.

3. When God deſigns to heal the backſliding of his people by ſovereign grace, he gives them effectual calls unto repentance, and the uſe of means for their healing: ſo he doth here by his prophet, *O Iſrael, return, take with you words.* And if I could ſee that God did ſtir up his faithful miniſters to apply themſelves in a peculiar manner unto this work of preſſing vehemently all their congregations with their duty herein, and let them know, that there is no other way to prevent their ruin, but by returning unto the Lord, according to the ways of it here preſcribed; I ſhould not doubt but that the time of healing were at hand.

4. The means preſcribed unto this end, that our backſlidings may be healed, in a way ſuited unto the glory of God, is renewed repentance. And this acts itſelf,

1*ſt*, In fervent prayer; *Take with you words, and ſay*; conſider the greatneſs and importance of the work before you, and weigh well what you do in your dealing with God. The matter of this prayer is twofold: (1.) The pardon of all iniquity; that is, the taking of it away: and no ſin is omitted, all being now become equally burdenſome; *take away all iniquity.* When the ſouls of ſinners are in good earneſt in their return unto God, they will leave out the conſideration of no one ſin whatever. Nor are we meet for healing, nor ſhall we apply ourſelves unto it in a due manner, without ſome previous ſenſe of the love of God in the pardon of our ſin. (2.) Gracious acceptation; *receive us graciouſly.* The words in the original are only, *receive good*; but both the words being uſed variouſly, the ſenſe eminently included in them, is well expreſſed by *receive us graciouſly.* After we have caſt ourſelves under tokens of thy diſpleaſure, now let us know that we are freely accepted with thee. And this alſo lies in the deſires of them who deſign to obtain an healing of their backſlidings; for under them they are ſenſible that they are obnoxious unto God's diſpleaſure.

2*dly*, Affectionate confeſſions of the ſin, wherein their backſlidings did conſiſt, or which were the occaſions of them. *Aſſur ſhall not ſave us*, &c. *we will ſay no more to the work*

of our hands, Ye are our gods. Fleſhly confidence, and falſe worſhip, were the two great ſins that had now ruined the body of the people: theſe believers themſelves had an acceſſion unto them more or leſs, as now they have unto the prevailing ſins of the days wherein we live, by conformity unto the world. Of theſe ſins God expecteth a full and free confeſſion in order unto our healing.

3*dly*, A renewed covenant-engagement to renounce all other hopes and expectation, and to betake themſelves with their whole truſt and confidence unto him; whereof they expreſs, *firſt*, the cauſe, which was his mere grace and mercy; *for in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy:* and, *ſecondly*, the effect of it, which is praiſe and thankſgiving; *ſo will we render the calves of our lips.* And ſome things we may hence farther obſerve as unto the caſe under conſideration. As,

(1.) Although God will repair our ſpiritual decays, and heal our backſlidings freely, yet he will do it ſo, or in ſuch a way, as wherein he may communicate grace unto us, to the praiſe of his own glory. Therefore are theſe duties preſcribed unto us in order thereunto; for although they are not the procuring cauſe of the love and grace from whence alone we are healed, yet are they required in the method of the diſpenſation of grace, to precede the effect of them. Nor have we any where a more illuſtrious inſtance and teſtimony of the conſiſtency and harmony which is between ſovereign grace, and the diligent diſcharge of our duty, than we have in this place: for as God promiſeth, that he would heal their backſlidings out of his free love, ver. 4. and would do it by the communication of effectual grace, ver. 5.; ſo he injoins them all theſe duties in order thereunto.

(2.) That unleſs we find theſe things wrought in us in a way of preparation, for the receiving of the mercy deſired, we have no firm ground of expectation, that we ſhall be made partakers of it: for this is the method of God's dealing with the church. Then, and then only we may expect a gracious reviving from all our decays, when ſerious repentance working in the ways declared, is found in us. This grace will not ſurpriſe us in our ſloth, negligence, and ſecurity, but will make way for itſelf, by ſtirring us up unto ſincere endeavours after it, in the perſeverance of theſe duties. And until we ſee better evidences of this repentance among

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us than as yet appears, we can have but ſmall hopes of a general recovery from our preſent decays.

5. The work itſelf is declared, (1.) By its nature. (2.) In its cauſes. (3) From its effects.

1. In the nature of it, it is the healing of backſlidings; *I will heal their backſlidings;* the ſin whereby they are fallen off from God, unto whom they are now exhorted to return. Theſe bring the ſouls of men into a diſeaſed eſtate, and danger of death: the cure hereof, is the work of God alone. Hence he gives himſelf that title, *I am the Lord that healeth thee*, Exod. xv. 26. And becauſe of the poiſonous nature of ſin, and the danger it brings of eternal death unto the ſouls of men, the removal of it, or a recovery from it, is often called by the name of *healing*, Pſal. vi. 2. Iſ. lvii. 18. 19. Hoſ. vi. 1. Here it includeth two things; firſt, the pardon of ſin paſt, and then a ſupply of grace to make us fruitful in obedience; *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael*, as we ſhall ſee. This is God's healing of backſlidings.

2. In the cauſes of it, which are, (1.) The principal moving cauſe, and that is free undeſerved love; *I will love them freely*. From hence alone is our recovery to be expected. (2.) The efficient cauſe, which as unto ſins paſt is pardoning mercy; *Mine anger is turned away from him:* and as unto renewed obedience, in which two our recovery conſiſts, it is in a plentiful ſupply of effectual grace; *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael.* Freſh ſupplies of the Spirit of grace from above are ſo expreſſed: this is neceſſary unto our healing and recovery.

3. It is deſcribed by its effect, which is a much more abundant fruitfulneſs in holineſs and obedience, in peace and love, than ever they had before attained. This the prophet ſets out in multiplied ſimilitudes and metaphors, to denote the greatneſs and efficacy of the grace ſo communicated.

I have a little inſiſted on the opening of this context, for ſundry reaſons.

1. The caſe which I would conſider, is in all the parts of it ſtated diſtinctly, and repreſented clearly unto us. There is nothing remains, but only the eſpecial way, whereby in the exerciſe of faith this grace may be obtained, which is that which I ſhall ſpeak unto in the laſt place, as that which is principally intended in this diſcourſe.

2. That I might ſhew how great a thing it is to have our

ſpiritual decays made up, our backſlidings healed, and ſo to attain the vigorous acting of grace and ſpiritual life, with a flouriſhing profeſſion, and fruitful obedience in old age. It is ſo ſet forth here by the Holy Ghoſt, as that every one muſt needs have a ſenſe of the beauty and glory of the work: it is that which divine love, mercy, and grace are eminently effectual in unto the glory of God, that which ſo many duties are required to prepare us for. Let no man think that it is a light or common work, every thing in it is peculiar: it is unto them who are made partakers of it, a life from the dead.

3. That none may utterly deſpond under their decays. When perſons are awakened by new convictions, and begin to feel the weight of them, and how implicitly they are entangled with them, they are ready to faint, and even to deſpair of deliverance. But we ſee, that here is a promiſe of deliverance from them by pardoning mercy, and alſo of ſuch freſh ſprings of grace as ſhall cauſe us to abound in holineſs and fruitfulneſs. Who is it that is entangled with corruptions and temptations, that groans under a ſenſe of a cold lifeleſs barren frame of heart? he may take in ſpiritual refreſhment, if by faith he can make application of this promiſe unto himſelf.

4. That which remains, is to declare the particular way whereby in the exerciſe of faith, we may obtain the fruit of this and all other promiſes of the like nature, unto the end ſo often propoſed; namely, of being flouriſhing and fruitful even in old age. Now, ſuppoſing a due attendance unto the duties mentioned, I ſhall give ſome directions with reſpect unto that which gives life, power, and efficacy unto them all, and which will infallibly bring us unto the full enjoyment of this ſignal mercy: and they are theſe that follow.

1. All our ſupplies of grace are from Jeſus Chriſt. Grace is declared in the promiſes of the Old Teſtament, but the way of its communication, and our receiving of it, is revealed unto us in the New. This belongs to the myſtery of it, that all grace is from Chriſt, and ſhall be in vain expected any other way. He hath aſſured us, that *without him we can do nothing*; we can no more bring forth fruit, than a branch can that is ſeparated from the vine, John xv. 3. 4. 5. He is our head, and all our ſpiritual influences, that is, divine communication of grace, are from him alone. He is

our

our life efficiently, and liveth in us effectively, ſo as that our ability for vital acts is from him, Gal. ii. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt: Nevertheleſs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* Col. iii. 1. 2. Are we then any of us under convictions of ſpiritual decays? or do we long for ſuch renovations of ſpiritual ſtrength, as may make us flouriſh in faith, love, and holineſs? we muſt know aſſuredly, that nothing of all this can be attained, but it muſt come from Jeſus Chriſt alone. We ſee what promiſes are made, what duties are preſcribed unto us; but however we ſhould endeavour to apply ourſelves unto the one or the other, they would yield us no relief, unleſs we know how to receive it from Chriſt himſelf.

2. The only way of receiving ſupplies of ſpiritual ſtrength and grace from Jeſus Chriſt, on our part, is by faith. Hereby we come unto him, are implanted in him, abide with him, ſo as to bring forth fruit. He dwells in our hearts by faith, and he acts in us by faith, and we live by faith in or on the Son of God. This I ſuppoſe will be granted, that if we receive any thing from Chriſt, it muſt be by faith, it muſt be in the exerciſe of it, or in a way of believing; nor is there any one word in the ſcripture, that gives the leaſt encouragement to expect either grace or mercy from him in any other way, or by any other means.

3. This faith reſpects the perſon of Chriſt, his grace, his whole mediation, with all the effects of it, and his glory in them all. This is that which hath been ſo much inſiſted on in the foregoing diſcourſes, as that it ought not to be again inſiſted on: this therefore is the iſſue of the whole. A ſteady view of the glory of Chriſt, in his perſon, grace, and office, through faith, or a conſtant lively exerciſe of faith on him, according as he is revealed unto us in the ſcripture, is the only effectual way to obtain a revival from under our ſpiritual decays, and ſuch ſupplies of grace as ſhall make us flouriſhing and fruitful even in old age. He that thus lives by faith in him, ſhall by his ſpiritual thriving and growth, ſhew, *that the Lord is upright, that he is our Rock, and that there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.*

We may conſider briefly, firſt, How this is teſtified unto in the ſcripture, and then what are the ways whereby this grace or duty will produce this effect, and ſo put a cloſe unto

to this part of the application of the ſacred truth before declared.

Firſt, This direction is given us, Pſal. xxxiv. 5. *They looked unto him, and were lightned, and their faces were not aſhamed.* That it is Chriſt, or the glory of God in him, that is thus looked unto, I need not prove; it will not be denied. And it is their faith which is expreſſed by their looking unto him; which is nothing but that beholding of his glory which we have deſcribed: for it is an act of truſt, ariſing from an apprehenſion of *who* and *what* he is. The iſſue or effect hereof is, that they were lightned; that is, received freſh communication of ſpiritual, ſaving, refreſhing light from him, and conſequently of all other graces, whence their faces were not aſhamed; nor ſhall we fail in our expectation of new ſpiritual communication, in the exerciſe of the ſame faith.

This is that which we are called unto, Iſ. xlv. 22. *Look unto me, and be ſaved, all ye ends of the earth.* On this look to Chriſt, on this view of his glory, depends our whole ſalvation; and therefore all things that are needful thereunto, do ſo alſo: this is the way whereby we receive grace and glory. This is the direction given us by the Holy Ghoſt for the attaining of them.

So is the ſame duty deſcribed, Mic. vii. 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my ſalvation; my God will hear me.* The church knew not any other way of relief, whatever her diſtreſſes were.

A look unto Chriſt as crucified, (and how glorious he was therein, hath been declared), is made the cauſe and fountain of that godly ſorrow, which is a ſpring unto all other graces, eſpecially in thoſe who have fallen under decays, Zech. xii. 10. *And I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace and of ſupplications, and they ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born.* And it is ſo alſo of deſiring ſtrength from him, to enable us to endure all our trials, troubles and afflictions, with patience unto the end, Heb. xii. 2. *Looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith; who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

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The only inquiry remaining, is, How a conſtant view of the glory of Chriſt, will produce this bleſſed effect in us? And it will do ſo ſeveral ways.

1. It will be effected by that transforming power and efficacy, which this exerciſe of faith is always accompanied withal. This is that which changeth us every day more and more into the likeneſs of Chriſt, as hath been at large before declared. Herein all revivals and all flouriſhings are contained. To have a good meaſure of conformity unto Chriſt, is all whereof in this life we are capable: the perfection of it is eternal bleſſedneſs. According as are our attainments therein, ſo is the thriving and flouriſhing of the life of grace in us, which is that which is aimed at. Other ways and means it may be have failed us, let us put this to the trial; let us live in the conſtant contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, and virtue will proceed from him to repair all our decays, to renew a right ſpirit within us, and to cauſe us to abound in all duties of obedience. This way of producing theſe effects, fleſh and blood will not reveal; it looks like waſhing in Jordan to cure a leproſy: but the life of faith is a myſtery known only unto them in whom it is.

2. It will fix the ſoul unto that object which is ſuited to give it delight, complacency, and ſatisfaction. This in perfection is bleſſedneſs, for it is cauſed by the eternal viſion of the glory of God in Chriſt: and the nearer approaches we make unto this ſtate, the better, the more ſpiritual, the more heavenly is the ſtate of our ſouls. And this is to be obtained only by a conſtant contemplation of the glory of Chriſt, as hath been declared. And it is ſeveral ways effectual unto the end now propoſed. For,

1*ſt*, The moſt of our ſpiritual decays and barrenneſs ariſe from an inordinate admiſſion of other things into our minds; for theſe are they that weaken grace in all its operations. But when the mind is filled with thoughts of Chriſt and his glory, when the ſoul thereon cleaves unto him with intenſe affections, they will caſt out, or not give admittance unto thoſe cauſes of ſpiritual weakneſs and indiſpoſition, Col. iii. 1.—5. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God. When Chriſt, who is our life, ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with*

with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs, which is idolatry. Eph. v. 8. *For ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.*

2*dly*, Where we are engaged in this duty, it will ſtir up every grace unto its due exercife, which is that wherein the ſpiritual revival inquired after, doth conſiſt. This is all we deſire, all we long for, this will make us fat and flouriſhing, namely, that every grace of the Spirit have its due exercife in us, Rom. v. 3. 4. 5. *And not only ſo, but we glory in tribulations alſo, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us.* 2 Pet. i. 5.—8. *And beſides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godlineſs; and to godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity. For if theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye ſhall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Whereas therefore, Chriſt himſelf is the firſt proper adequate object of all grace, and all its exercife, (for it firſt reſpects him, and then other things for him), when the mind is fixed on him, and his glory, every grace will be in a readineſs for its due exercife. And without this we ſhall never attain it by any reſolutions or endeavours of our own, let us make the trial when we pleaſe.

Laſtly, This will aſſuredly put us on a vigilant watch, and conſtant conflict againſt all the deceitful workings of ſin, againſt all the entrances of temptation, againſt all the ways and means of ſurpriſals into fooliſh frames, by vain imaginations, which are the cauſes of our decays. Our recovery or revival will not be effected, nor a freſh ſpring of grace be obtained, in a careleſs, ſlothful courſe of profeſſion. Conſtant watching, fighting, contending againſt ſin, with our utmoſt endeavour for an abſolute conqueſt over it, are required hereunto. And nothing will ſo much excite and encourage our ſouls hereunto, as a conſtant view of Chriſt and his glory; every thing in him hath a conſtraining power hereunto, as is known to all who have any acquaintance with theſe things.

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