Thomas F. Tovany.
THIRTY-FOUR
SERMON
ON THE
Most interesting Doctrines of the Gospel.

DISCOVERING
Clearly and evidently to every Capacity,
The Difference betwixt Faith and Works, Law and Gospel, the Christian and Creature Operations, Troubles and Conlications, and the best way to make Christians, keep them so, and in case of Re-lapses to recover them again by Christ, the only Cure of all Soul Maladies.

BY THAT
Eminent and great Reformer from Popery,
MARTIN LUTHER.

To which is prefix'd,
A brief Account of the Author's LIFE.

AND,
A VIEW of his gracious Spirit.

GLASGOW:
Printed by JOHN BRYCE, and sold by him at his Shop in the SALT-MARKET. 1767.
ADVERTISEMENT.

These Sermons were first published in the German and soon after in the Latin Tongue, upwards of two-hundred Years ago, by the Author himself; and in 1581, were translated and printed in English, and though they have since that time been several times re-printed, yet they are now become so exceeding scarce, that an old torn Copy has sold for six or seven Shillings. At the earnest desire of some, who have read, and justly esteem them, as excellent Sermons, it is proposed to reprint them now, That the Age might be benefited thereby, and receive those Doctrines from one of the greatest and first Reformers, who stood firm against the Efforts of the whole Power of the Church of Rome, for which we and all succeeding Ages have reason to rejoice.

The Texts of Scripture, which in the former Editions, were according to the old Translation of the Bible, are here altered to our new Translation; also several obsolete Words changed into modern; but not so as any way to alter the Sense of the Author; who, it may be justly said, has not been excelled, if equalled, by any, in clearing the most important Points of Christian Doctrine.
The Life of Martin Luther.

Martin Luther was born, Nov. 10th, Anno 1483, at a town in the Earldom of Marsfelt, called Illeben, his father being John Luther of the same place, descended of honourable parentage, his mother's name before her marriage was Margaret Lindeman, who in his infancy instructed him in the ways of virtue, so far forth as his tender years were capable to bear.

When he came to years of discretion, he was sent to Magdeburg, wherein the Free-School he greatly profited in learning, especially he there was taught to expound the Apostle's Creed, and make use of the Fathers, the reading of whose works he greatly affected: when he had stayed there a considerable time, he went to the University of Erford, where in a short time he so profited in his studies, that the whole University admired his wit and learning.

At twenty years of age he was made Master of Arts, and Professor of Physic, after which, he studied the Law: but none of these agreed with his temper, God having designed him for a better work, whereupon he rejecting the former, bent his mind wholly upon studying Divine things, and to be the more retire from noise and worldly business, he entered into the College of the Augustine Monks, and became one of their order, there he continued some time very zealous for the Romish religion; but within a while he began to dislike the errors that had crept into that church, as plainly perceiving that the religion was for the most part composed of traditions, as the ordinances of councils and decrees, the which were altogether disconsonant to the word of God, so that by excessive grief for the apostate state of the Romish church, he fell sick, and almost despaired of recovery, when as an old priest came to him, and bid him be of good comfort, for that his disease was not mortal, but
"that God would raise him up to be a comfort to many o-
thers:"
the same priest also discoursed with him con-
cerning justification by Faith, and explained to him the Ar-
ticles of the Creed; after the recovery of that sickness he
was made Presbyter, and by the persuasion of John Staupi-
cius went to the University of Wittemberg, where after he
had continued for the space of three years, gained great
commendation.

In the year 1512, seven convents of his order having a
quarrel with their vicar-general, Luther was pitched upon
to go to Rome, to maintain their cause. He was indeed a
moft proper perfon for fuch employments as thefe; for he
was a man of a moft firm and fteady temper, and had a pro-
digious share of natural courage, which nothing could break
or daunt. "At Rome he faw the Pope and the court, and
had an opportunity of observing alfo the manners of the
clergy, whose hafty, superficial, and impious way of cele-
brating masses, he has fervely noted. "I performed mafs,
"fays he, at Rome; I faw it alfo performed by others,
"but in fuch a manner, that I never think of it without
"the utmoft horror." And beholding their dilolute man-
ner of living, and the wicked practices there used, he grew
into a greater dislike of that religion, for there, as himself
reports, he heard trumpets at the communion-table boaft
of their wickednes, and that he had heard others concern-
ing the bread and wine, scoffingly fay, "That bread thou
"art, and bread thou fhalt remain; and wine thou art,
"and wine thou fhalt remain:" which made him imagine
that the church stood in great need of reformation. He
often fpoke afterwards with great pleafure of his journey
to Rome; and used to fay, that he "would not but have
"made it for a thoufand florins." As soon as he had ad-
justed the difpute, which was the bufiness of his journey,
he returned to Wittemberg, and was created Doctor of Di-
vinity, at the expence of Fredrick, elector of Saxony; who
had often heard him preach, was perfectly acquainted with
his merit, and reverenceed him highly. Luther, it feems,
declined at firft the honour of this degree, on account of his
being, in his owne opinion, too young, for he was only in
his thirtieth year; but it was told him, that "he muft
"fuffer himfelf to be dignified, for that God intended to
"bring about great things in the church by his means:
"which, though it was certainly laid in jeft, proved at length
a very serious truth.

A while after he began to explain the epiftle to the Ro-
mans, and many of the Pfalms of David, and began more
and more to decline the superflition of the Romish church;
fo that when one John Tecclous coming from Rome,
brought the pope's Indulgencies into Germany, perfuad-
ing the people that they were of fuch a fin-purging quality,
that whatever fins they committed, if they could but pur-
chafe
chase one of them, they should have them all remitted; this wicked impostor so stirs the zeal of Luther, that he wrote against his indulgencies, laying open the cheat to the world, which so enraged the indulgence merchant, that he bitterly exclaimed against him, and getting as many of his books as he could, he burned them; whereupon he yet once more wrought against his trumpery, at which time many of the divines of the university took part with Luther in what he did, and now he began to preach his doctrine of reformation openly, defending it against the Augustine-Friars at Heddleburg, he being honourably entertained by them of Wolfburg and Volfgang, the count Palatine there; he drew many to partake with him in his opinion, of which the emperor Maximilian having notice, sent to advertise the pope thereof, and to bid him take timely care for the extirpating the new opinions that were lately sprung up, and that whatsoever measures he should take he should see them put in execution throughout the empire.

Upon the receipt of the Emperor's letters, Pope Leo then holding the papacy cited Luther to appear before the council of cardinals at Rome, and signified as much to cardinal Cajetan his legate; whereupon the cardinal going to Aupurg, and finding Luther there, desired the Emperor to set a guard upon him, in order to carry him to Rome, unless he would speedily recant, but his request was not at that time fulfilled.

The Pope likewise wrote a letter to the Elector of Saxony to complain against Luther, and to forbid him to entertain him within his dukedom, and that if he took him within his jurisdiction, he should forthwith send him to Rome, there to be condemned or acquitted; but the elector gave little heed to the pope's letter, though he threatened him therein, if he complied not with his will; but when he perceived these projects fail, he sent to the master of the Augustine monks, to see if he could prevail with him to return to his former obedience, and renounce his later opinion, but this proved also ineffectual.

Yet Luther desirous to justify his doctrine, made earnest suit that he might appear before competent judges to be heard in his own country, and not at Rome, where he was assured to find his judges his enemies. In his behalf also the university of Wittenberg wrote to the pope, giving him an account of his great learning, doctrine, and pious course of life, desiring that he might be heard in Germany; in fine prince Frederick of Saxony so far prevailed with the pope's legate, that he consented that Luther should be heard at Aupurg, at what time the Bohemians sent a book to him, which was written by John Hus, desiring him to persevere in what he had begun.

A while after Erasmus was solicited to write against him, but he declined it, although a bishopric was proffered him for
Luther being now cited to appear before the pope's legate at Anspurg, procured the emperor's letters of safe conduct, when coming into the legate's presence, after some questions asked and objections made, he not only justified his doctrine, but offered to maintain the same by disputation or writing, but the cardinal being much offended at such his offer, would not permit him to be brought before him any more; so that having waited six days, he departed home; but the cardinal wrote after him to the duke of Saxony, that as he loved his honour and safety, he would expel him his dominions: this letter the duke sent to Luther, who wrote back to the legate, that rather than he would any ways endanger his prince, he would retire into what part ever of the world the Lord would please to lead him; but the university of Wintemberg wrote to the duke desiring him that he would take him into his protection, and not suffer innocency to be oppressed by force, and that if Luther had preached or did maintain any error, he might be fairly convicted of the same, upon which the duke began to take his part more than formerly, and sent to the cardinal, that seeing he having come to Anspurg had performed his promise, and could do no more in that affair.

After the death of Maximilian, and the coronation of Charles, the pope sent to the duke of Saxony, requesting him to cause all Luther's books to be burnt, and that he would see Luther either executed in Saxony, or that he would send him guarded to Rome, to which the duke replied, that he was ready to yield obedience to the pope, but that he could not send Luther to him before his cause was heard before the emperor, and till he was convicted of some error, and then if he recanted not, he should find no favour at his hands.

A while after a disputation was held between Luther and and one Eccius at Lipsick, wherein the former prevailed, and his doctrine so spread itself, that the friars and monks fearing to be unhived, sent to the pope to charge him with neglecting the church affairs, by giving himself up to pleasures; in the mean time suffering the doctrine of Luther to spread even in the very heart of Germany, upon which the pope began to bestir himself, by sending his bull against him; in which he excommunicated not only him, but all his partakers, commanding all men to apprehend him, and bring him to Rome, and that his books should be burnt, of which Luther hearing burnt the pope's bull lately sent out against him, together with several decrees and councils.

Not long after the emperor coming into Germany, the duke of Saxony so far prevailed with him, that he was content to hear him upon the diet, of which Luther having no
He being arrived at Worms, some of the popish clergy went about to persuade the emperor to apprehend him, and commit him to prison; but he would by no means hearken to their wicked counsel, alledging that the public faith ought not to be broken; the next day after his coming he present ed himself before the council assembled for that purpose; the emperor being there present, where one Eccius a lawyer, at the command of the emperor made a speech, "In which he demanded of Luther, that he would retract his works and doctrine, telling him, that it was the em perors pleasure he should do so, and if he refused it he must expect his displeasure," to which he replied, "As to my books, some of them tend to faith, and to these my adversaries give an ample testimony, others are against the pope and his doctrine, the which if I should revoke I should confirm his tyranny, and some of them are against private men, who defend the pope's cause, against whom I must confess I have been somewhat too sharp, yet I cannot revoke them, unless I will set open a gap for the imprudence of many."

But this answer nothing pleased the emperor, who would be satisfied with nothing less than Luther's recantation, nor would he suffer him to defend his doctrine by scripture and other warrantable arguments, though he earnestly desired it, telling the emperor, "That unless he could satisfy his conscience that his doctrine was false, he could by no means recant the same;" whereupon he was ordered to depart the council, and the next day the emperor sent his letters to the princes, to acquaint them that he was resolved to proscribe Luther and all his accomplices, upon which they were divided, the greatest part, and those of the most noble amongst them, alledging that Luther was not rashly to be condemned, for that the emperor was young, and in matters of religion altogether guided by the popish clergy.

The next day the bishop of Trevers sent for Luther, and used many arguments to persuade him to a recantation, telling him withal, that if he refused it was the emperor's purpose to banish him, to whom Luther replied, "That he took it as a great favour, that so great a prince would put himself to so much trouble for so mean a person as he was;" after that one Væus a lawyer came from the emperor to persuade him to recant, but he not consenting to
The Life of Martin Luther.

his request, the emperor sent to him to depart home, and withal gave him twelve days so to do, after the end of which he preferred him; whereupon prince Frederick appointed some of his most trusty nobles to convey him secretly to Wartsburg, where he continued ten months notwithstanding diligent search was made for him, and great sums of money offered: nay, his enemies employed wizards and witches to use their art to find out the place of his abode, but in vain; at the end of ten months he returned to Wittenberg, where he was most joyfully received by the university, from whence he sent letters to prince Frederick to excuse himself for leaving Wartsburg without his knowledge, telling him, "That it was God's cause he undertook, and "that God would protect him from the rage of his ene-
mies."

A while after he printed the New Testament which he had translated into the German tongue at Wartsburg, which place he usually called his Patmos, which did not not a little displease king Henry the eighth of England, and George duke of Saxony.

About this time one Thomas Muncer wrote a fanatic book against his doctrine, and persuaded the boors to rebel, who being persuaded by him to throw off all obedience to their princes, took arms in great numbers, against which unlawful proceedings, Luther wrote several treatises, persuading them to yield obedience to their princes, shewing them how disconsonant such practices were to the word of God, but when this prevailed not the princes drew out their forces, and with more convincing arguments taught them obedience. For coming to a battel about five thousand four hundred and of them was slain, and their seditious ringleaders Muncer and Fafluer taken, the former being put upon the rack to confess his accomplices, cried out grievously, when as prince George of Saxony bid him "think upon the slaughter" of the poor wretches, who seduced by him fell in bat- "tel the day before." Whereupon he laughing out-right said, "they would be seduced;" in fine he and his compa-nion with some others were beheaded; but so ended not the war, which was called the war of the clowns, for before the rebellion was suppressed about fifty thousand were slain.

In the year 1523, a diet was held at Norinberg, where the edict of Worms was made void, upon which the pope's legate complained grievously saying, "That since the publication "of the edict neither Luther nor any of his accomplices "had been published." To which the princes answered, "That since the pope and his clergy had neglected refor-
mation in the church, Germany had been greatly enlight-
ened by the sermons of Luther, and that if they should "go about to punish him, the people would think they "went about to extinguish the light of the gospel, the bet-
"ter to obscure those manifest vices that could be no long-
"er hid; and that such proceedings would raise up great
"tumults." The Romanists seeing this, resolved to bring
him into silence, but in vain: a while after Luther being
summoned to Augsburg, he there made a confession of his
faith in seventeen articles, to the great satisfaction of most
that heard him.

In October 1524, Luther flung off the monastic habit;
which, through not premeditated and designed, was yet a
very proper preparative to a step he took the year there-
after; we mean his marriage with Catharine de Bore. Ca-
tharine de Bore was a gentleman’s daughter, who had been
a nun, and was taken, as we have observed, out of the nun-
neries of Nimptschen, in the year 1523. Luther had a design,
as Melchior Adam relates, to marry her to Glacius, a mi-
nister of Oratmunden; but he did not like Glacius, and fo
Luther married her himself, upon the 13th of June 1525.
This conduct of his was blamed not only by the catholics,
but, as Melancthon says, by those of his own party. He
was even for some time ashamed of it himself; and owns,
that his marriage had made him so despicable, that he hop-
ed his humiliation would rejoice the angels, and vex the
devils. Melancthon found him so afflicted with what he
had done, that he wrote some letters of consolation to him:
he adds, however, that "this accident may possibly not be
"without its use, as it tends to humble him a little: for it
"is dangerous, says he, not only for a priest, but for any
"man, to be too much elated and puffed up: great succels
"giving occasion to the sin of a high mind, not only, as the
"orator says, in fools, but sometimes in wise men." It
was not so much the marriage, as the circumstances of the
time, and the precipitation with which it was done, that oc-
casioned the censures passed upon Luther. He married all
of a sudden, and at a time when Germany was groaning un-
der the miseries of a war, which was laid at least to be ow-
ing to Lutheranism. Then again, it was thought an inde-
cent thing of a man of forty-two years of age, who was
then, as he pretended, restoring the gospel and reforming
mankind, to involve himself in marriage with a woman of
six and twenty, either through incontinence, or any ac-
count whatever. But Luther, as soon as he had recovered
himself a little from this abashment, assumed his former air
of intrepidity, and boldly supported what he had done with
reasons. "I took a wife," says he, "in obedience to my fa-
thers commands, and hastened the consummation, in or-
der to prevent impediments, and stop the tongues of
flandersers." It appears from his own confessions, that
this reformer was very fond of Mrs. de Bore, and used to
call her his Catharine, which made profane people think
and say wicked things of him; and therefore, says he,
"I am married of a sudden, not only that I might not be
"obliged
The Life of Martin Luther.

"obliged to hear the clamours which I knew would be raised against me, but to stop the mouths of those who reproached me with Catherine de Bore." Luther also gives us to understand, that he did it partly as concurring with his grand scheme of opposing the catholics. "See, says he, because they are thus mad, I have to prepared myself, that, before I die, I may be found in God in the state in which I was created, and, if possible, retain nothing of my former papish life. Therefore let them rave yet more, and this will be their last farewell; for my mind prefages, that I shall soon be called by God unto his grace: therefore, at my father's commands, I have taken a wife." In another letter he speaks thus: "I hope I shall live a little longer, and I would not deny this last obedience to my father, who required it in hopes of issue, and also to confirm the doctrines I have taught." And again: "I think I shall marry before I leave the world, because I believe it is commanded by God."

Luther, notwithstanding, was not himself altogether satisfied with these reasons. He did not think the step he had taken could be sufficiently justified upon the principles of human prudence; and therefore we find him, in other places, endeavouring to account for it from a supernatural impulse. "The wife men amongst us are greatly provoked, says he; they are forced to own the thing to be of God, but the disguise of the persons under which it is transacted, namely, of the young woman and myself, makes them think and say every thing that is wicked." And elsewhere: "The Lord brought me suddenly, when I was thinking of other matters, to a marriage, with Catherine de Bore, the nun." His party seem also to have favoured this supposition. Thus says Melancthon: "As for the unreasonableness and want of consideration in this marriage, on which account our adversaries will chiefly flander us, we must take heed lest that disturb us: for perhaps there is some secret, or something divine couched under it, concerning which it does not become us to enquire too curiously; nor ought we to regard the scoffs of those who exercise neither piety towards God, nor virtue towards man." But whether there was any thing divine in it or not, Luther found himself extremely happy in his new state, and especially after his wife had brought him a son. "My rib Kate, says he in the joy of his heart, desires her compliments to you, and thanks you for the favour of your kind letter. She is very well through God's mercy. She is obedient and complying with me in all things, and more agreeable, I thank God, than I could have expected; so that I would not change my poverty for the wealth of Croesus." He was heard to say, Seekendorf tells us, that he would not exchange his wife for the kingdom of France, nor for the riches of the
The Life of Martin Luther

xi

the Venetians, and that for three reasons: first, because she had been given him by God, at the time when he implored the assistance of the Holy Ghost, in finding a good wife: secondly, because, though she was not without faults, yet she had fewer than other women: and, thirdly, because she religiously observed the conjugal fidelity she owed him. There went at first a report, that Catherine de Bore was brought to bed, soon after her marriage with Luther; but Erasmus, who had wrote that news to one of his friends, acknowledged the fallacy of it a little after. Take his own humorous account of this matter, in a letter to one of his friends, dated the 13th of March, 1526: "Luther's marriage is certain; the report of his wife being so speedily brought to bed is false; but I hear she is now with child. If the common story be true, that Antichrist shall be born of a monk and a nun, how many thousand antichrists are there in the world already? I was in hopes, that a wife would have made Luther a little tamer: but he, contrary to all expectation, has published, indeed, a most elaborate, but as virulent a book against me, as ever he wrote. What will become of the pacific Erasmus? to be obliged to descend upon the stage, at a time of life when gladiators are usually dismissed from the service; and not only to fight, but to fight with beasts."

A copy of the Protestantation, taken by the Protestaut Princes, against the continuation of the Popish Mass.

The elector John of Saxony, for Frederick was dead, the elector of Brandenburg, Erneftus, and Francis dukes of Lu- nenburg, the landgrave of Hesse, and the prince of Anhalt, protested, "That they ought not to do any thing in prejudice of the determination of the former diet, which had granted liberty in religion, till the holding of the council; that that resolution, having been taken by the unanimous consent of all the members of the empire, could not be repealed, but by the like consent; that, in the diet of Nurenb urg, the original cause of all the differences in religion, was searched into, and that to allay them, they had offered to the pope eighty articles, to which his holiness had given no answer; that the effect of their confutations had always been, that the best way to end disputes and reform abuses, was to hold a council; that they could not suffer opinions to be forced from them, which judged true, and agreeable to the word of God, before the council was held; that their ministers had proved, by by invincible arguments taken out of scripture, that the popish mass was contrary to the institution of Jesus Christ, and the practice of the apostles, so that they could not agree to what was ordered in the diet; that they knew the
The Life of Martin Luther.

"the judgment of their churches concerning the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist; but that they ought not to make a decree against those, who were of a contrary opinion, because they were neither summoned nor heard; that they could indeed venture to approve of the clause about preaching the gospel according to the interpretation received in the church, since that did not determine the matter, it being yet in dispute, what was the true church; that there was nothing more certain, than the word of God itself, which explains itself, and therefore they would take care, that nothing else should be taught, but the Old and New Testament in their purity; that they are the only infallible rule, and that all human traditions are uncertain; that the decree of the former diet was made for the preservation of peace, but that this last would infallibly beget wars and troubles.

For these reasons they could not approve of the decree of the diet, but yet would do nothing that should be blame- worthy, till a council, either general or national, should be held." Fourteen cities, viz. Strasburg, Nurenborg, Ulm, Constance, Retlingen, Windsheim, Memmingen, Lindow, Kempten, Halibron, Liny, Weissenburg, Nortlingen, S. Gal, joined in this protestation, which was put in writing, and published upon the 18th of April, 1529, by an instrument, in which they appealed from all that should be done to the emperor, a future council, either general or national, or to unsuspected judges; and accordingly they appointed deputies to send to the emperor, to petition, that this decree might be revoked. This was the famous protestation, which gave the name of Protestants to the reformers in Germany.

It was at this time also that the protestant princes, signed the Confession of Faith drawn up by Luther, Melanchthon, and other protestant divines. It was signed by the elector of Saxony, the marquis of Brandenburg, Erneftus and Francis dukes of Brunswick and Lunenburg, the landgrave of Hesse, the princes of Anhalt, and the deputies of the cities of Nurenborg and Retlingen.

Luther had now nothing else to do, but to sit down and contemplate the mighty work he had finished; for that a single monk should be able to give the church of Rome so rude a shock, that there needed but such another entirely to overthrow it, may very well seem a mighty work. He did indeed little else; for the remainder of his life was spent in exhorting princes, states, and universities, to confirm the reformation, which had been brought about through him; and publishing from time to time such writings, as might encourage, direct, and aid them in doing it. The emperor threatened temporal punishments with armies, and the pope eternal with bulls and anathemas; but Luther cared for none of their threats. His friend and coadjutor Melanchthon,
softhens, moderation, and diffidence in his make, which made him very uneasy, and even sorrowful in the present disorders. Hence we find many of Luther's letters, written on purpose to support and comfort him under these several diffidences and anxieties: "I am, says he, in one of these letters, much weaker than you in private conflicts, if I may call those conflicts private, which I have with the devil; but you are much weaker than me in public. You are all diffidence in the public cause, I, on the contrary, am very languid; because I am confident it is a just and a true cause, the cause of God and of Christ, which need not look pale and tremble; whereas the cause is very different with me in my private conflicts, who am a very miserable sinner, and therefore have great reason to look pale and tremble. Upon this account it is, that I can be almost an indifferent spectator amidst all the noisy threats and bullyings of the papists; for if we fall, the kingdom of Christ falls with us; and if it should fall, I had rather fall with Christ, than stand with Caefar." So again a little farther: "You, Melancthon, cannot bear these disorders, and labour to have things tranacted by reason, and agreeably to that spirit of calmness and moderation, which your philosophy dictates. You might as well attempt to be mad with reason. Do not you see, that the matter is entirely out of your power and management, and that even Christ himself forbids your measures to take place." This letter was written in the year 1539.

In the year 1534, the Bible translated by him into German was first printed, as the old privilege, dated at Bibliopolis, under the elector's hand, shews; and it was published the year after. He also published this year a book against smailes and the consecration of priests, in which he relates a conference he had with the devil upon those points; for it is remarkable in Luther's whole history, that he never had any conflicts of any kind within, but the devil was always his antagonist. In February 1537, an assembly was held at Smalkald about matters of religion, to which Luther and Melancthon were called. At this meeting Luther was seized with so grievous an illness, that there were no hopes of his recovery. He was afflicted with the stone, and had a stoppage of urine for eleven days. In this terrible condition he would needs undertake to travel, notwithstanding all his friends could say and do to prevent him; his resolution however was attended with a good effect, for the night after his departure he began to be better. As he was carried along, he made his will, in which he bequeathed his detestation of poverty to his friends, and brethren; agreeably to what he often used to say: "Pestis eram vivus, moriens ero mors tua papa;" that is, "I was the plague of poverty in my life, and shall continue to be so in my death." This
This year the pope and the court of Rome, finding it impossible to deal with the protestants by force, began to have recourse to stratagem. They affected therefore to think, that though Luther had indeed carried things on with an high hand, and to a violent extreme, yet what he had pleaded in defence of these measures, was not entirely without foundation. They talked with a seeming shew of moderation; and Pius III. who succeeded Clement VII, proposed a reformation first among themselves, and even went so far as to fix a place, for a council to meet at for that purpose. But Luther treated this farce, as it deserved to be treated, unmasked and detected it immediately; and, to ridicule it the more strongly, caused a picture to be drawn, on which was represented the pope seated on high upon a throne, some cardinals about him with foxe's tails on, and seeming to evacuate upwards and downwards, "sarfum deorfum repurgare," as Melchior Adam expresses it. This was fixed over against the title-page, to let the readers see at once the scope and design of the book; which was, to expose that cunning and artifice, with which those fable politicians affected to cleanse and purify themselves from their errors and superstitions. Luther published about the same time a confutation of the pretended grant of Con
tantine to Sylvester bishop of Rome, and also some letters of John Huf, written from his prison at Constance, to the Bohemians.

In this manner was Luther employed till his death, which happened in the year 1546. That year, accompanied by Melancthon, he paid a visit to his own country, which he had not seen for many years, and returned again in safety. But soon after, he was called thither again by the earls of Mansfelt, to compose some differences, which had arisen about their boundaries. Luther not had been used to such matters; but because he was born at Ileben, a town in the territory of Mansfelt, he was willing to do his country what service he could, even in this way. Preaching his last sermon therefore at Wittemberg, upon the 17th of January, he set out on the 23d; and at Hall in Saxony lodged with Juftus Jonas, with whom he stayed three days, because the waters were out. Upon the 28th, he passed over the river with his three sons, and Dr. Jonas; and being in some danger, he said to the doctor: "Do not you think it would re
close the devil exceedingly, if I and you, and my three sons, should be drowned?" When he entered the territories of the earls of Mansfelt, he was received by 100 horse
en, or more, and conducted in a very honourable manner; but was at the same time so very ill, that it was feared he would die. He said, that these fits of sickness often came upon him, when he had any great busines to undertake: of this however he did not recover, but died upon the 18th of February, in the 63d year of his age. A little before he expired,
The Life of Martin Luther.

The Life of Martin Luther.

expired, he admonished those that were about him to pray to God for the propagation of the gospel; “because,” said he, “the council of Trent, which had sat once or twice, and the pope, would devise strange things against it.” Soon after, his body was put into a leaden coffin, and carried with funeral pomp to the church at Isleben, when Dr. Jonas preached a sermon upon the occasion. The earls of Mansfelt desired, that his body should be interred in their territories; but the elector of Saxony insifted upon his being brought back to Wittemberg, which was accordingly done; and there he was buried with the greatest pomp, that perhaps ever happened to any private man. Princes, earls, nobles, and students without number, attended the procifion; and Melancthon made his funeral oration.

A thousand lies were invented by the papists about Luther’s death. Some said, that he died suddenly; others, that he killed himself; others, that the devil strangled him; others, that his corpse stunk so abominably, that they were forced to leave it in the way, as it was carried to be interred. Nay, lies were invented about his death, even while he was yet alive; for a pamphlet was published at Naples, and in other places of Italy, the year before, where in was given the following account. “Luther being dan- gerously sick desired to communicate, and died as soon as he had received the viaticum. As he was dying, he de- fired his body might be laid upon the altar to be adored; but that request being neglected, he was buried. When, lo! at his interment there arose a furious tempest, as if the world was at an end; and the terror was universal. Some, in lifting up their hands to heaven, perceived, that the hoist, which the deceased had presumed to take, was suspended in the air: upon which it was gathered up with great veneration, and laid in a sacred place, and the tempest ceased for the present: but it arose the night following with greater fury, and filled the whole town with confternation: and the next day Luther’s fepulchre was found open and empty, and a fulphurous fcent pro- ceeded from it, which no body could bear. The affil- tants fell fick of it, and many of them repented, and re- turned to the catholic church.”

We shall here give the reader the character of Luther, Luther, says Mr. Wharton, in his appendix to Dr. Crave’s Historia literaria, was “a man of prodigious fagacity and acutenefs, very warm, and formed for great undertakings: being a man, if ever there was one, whom nothing could daunt or intimidate. When the caufe of religion was con- cerned, he never regarded whose love he was likely to gain, or whose displeafure to incur. He treated the pope’s bulls, and the emperor’s edicts, jult alike; that is, he heartily despifed both. In the mean time, it must be owned, that Luther often gave a greater loose to his pa
fions than he ought, and did not in his writings pay that

deference to crowned heads which it is always necessary to

pay: but every man has his foible, and this was Luther's.

However, he was very diligent in his application to let-
ters, and very learned, considering the times he lived in.

His chief pursuit was in the study of the scriptures, upon a
great part of which he wrote commentaries. He reform-
ed the Christian religion from many errors and superstiti-
ions, with which it had been long corrupted; and reduced
it, as well as he could, to its primitive purity. If in some
places he appears not quite fo orthodox, we must impute
it to the times, and not to him; for it is no wonder, that
one who attempts to clean such a fttable of Agueas, as the
church of Rome, should not escape free from spots and
blemishes. He kept primitive antiquity constantly before
his eyes, as his guide and rule; and, as Erasmus has ob-
served, many things are condemned as heretical in the
writings of Luther, which are thought very orthodox
and pious in the books of Augustine and Bernard. Eras-
mus also says, that Luther wrote many things rather im-
prudently than impiously. His fstyle was rough and harsh;
for in those days every body could not write like Erasmus,
Politian, Bembus, &c. who were reading Tully, Livy,
and Terence. Yet how uncouth and inelegant foever his
fyle may be, it every where breathes a genuine zeal and
piety, which is more solicitous about things than words."

Luther's works were collected after his death, and print-
ed at Wittemberg in seven volumes folio. Catherine de
Bore survived her husband a few years, and continued the
first year of her widowhood at Wittemberg, though Luther
had advised her to seek another place of residence. She
went from thence in the year 1547, when the town was fur-
rendered to the emperor Charles V. Before her departure,
she had received a present of fifty crowns from Christian III.
king of Denmark; and the elector of Saxony, and the counts
of Mansfelt, gave her good tokens of their liberality. With
these additions, to what Luther had left her, she had where-
withal to maintain herself and her family handsomely. She
returned to Wittemberg, when the town was restored to the
elector, where she lived in a very devout and pious
manner, till the plague obliged her to leave it again in the
year 1552. She fold what she had at Wittemberg, and re-
tired to Torgau, with a resolution to end her life there.

An unfortunate mischance befel her in her journey thither,
which proved fatal to her. The horfes growing unruly,
and attempting to run away, she leaped out of the vehicle
she was conveyed in; and, by leaping, got a fall, of which
she died about a quarter of a year after, at Torgau, upon the
20th of December, 1552.
A VIEW of the gracious Spirit of LUTHER.

LUTHER, faith Melancthon, is a miracle amongst men. Another faith, That there was never any more truely servaunt to his master; never any of more undaunted courage in his master’s cause; never any that adventured, or durft adventure farther; never any that used more constancy, magnanimity and force in battering the fortresses of the enemy; never any that pierced deeper, prevailed farther, and procured larger for the safety of poor Christians, so many hundred years oppressed, imprisoned, impoverifhed, yoked and chained in miserable captivity, thro’ the monstrous outrage of the execrable Nimrod of Rome, than Luther. He had the enjoyments of God, by his spirit, in his bosom, and was carried on (though mightily oppofed) to do good to the church and state, in that age wherein he lived, by imparting what he had received from that all-powerful Spirit which revealed the hidden mysteries and deep things of God to him abundantly; and yet did not content himself with so doing, and like those of Reuben, Manafteh and Gad beyond Jordan, Joshua xxii. 21, 30. but was so carried on, by the fame spirit, that he fought the good of posterity to come, and succeeding ages will have caufe, as we have, to praise God for his labour of love and works extant, wherein we may solace ourselves as he did. Who since Paul’s death fpake and wrote so of God, Christ, Christians, the Law, Gospel, Faith, Love, Grace and Works, setting them in their proper place, in conversation amongst men, on this side Jesus Christ, as Luther hath? Never man or woman that read Luther, but it pierced their hearts, and left behind a deep impression in their minds, to the quieting of their perplexed, troubled and distressed conffences, if they were Christians; (Oh! what ease of heart, refreshings, and unspeakable delights have they had!) but a won-
derful sting in the consciences of the wicked, especially if they were brought up Antichristian, for they can’t bear to hear, that all the glory of our salvation should be given to God and Christ alone, and that Christians should have their joy, peace and consolation from a sure foundation, God’s love in Christ Jesus, whom Luther by the evident demonstration of the Spirit hath most manifestly laid down for salvation; and for good works, none ever pressed them more upon men for conversation so exactly, and according to the spiritual meaning of the law, than Luther hath; and there is more solid divinity in one leaf of Luther's works, than in many prolix treatises extant. O what voices doth he utter? what light doth he hold forth? what spiritual majesty, glory and power is there in his expressions? what heavenly doctrine doth he preach? what spiritual consolations doth he propound? what great, profound, and continual exercises, practice and experience of inward conflicts, agonies and straits of conscience had he? what fights with Satan, the flesh, the world, and the law, against sin, death and all the infernal powers of hell? what contemplations of Christ, grace, justification and faith? yea, and his phrase and eloquence of speech doth discover so much holy boasting and height of spirit, in the discovery of the inestimable, free, perfect and permanent love of God the Father, the admirable glory, durable riches and everlasting kingdom ordained for saints elected, and purchased by Christ, yet salvation is free to us, though it cost Christ full dear, all applied by faith, that maketh the nativity, conception, birth, thoughts, words, works, life, death, resurrection, ascension, mediation or intercession of Christ, ours, and this the Spirit revealeth, and faith sealeth up our salvation to us, and brings it home to the conscience, and assueth us that the conquest of Christ over sin, death and hell is ours, and that satisfaction to the law made by Christ, whereby he hath pacified the wrath of God felt in our consciences; so that all fears and terrors are removed, and conscience discharged as if it had never been stung by sin, that biting serpent, the jaws of hell so broken, death so vanquished, the
gracious Spirit of Luther.

teeth of the law to beaten out that they can bite us no more, shut us up prisoners no more, neither hurt the poorest Christian once freed, clothed and healed by Christ, and enjoying him by faith, how ghastly, strong and terrible forever they appear to sense, reason or incredulity that lies hid in our nature, like the viper's teeth under his gums, and too too often breaks forth to our great disturbance. In all these feats of spiritual activity and soul victories, he is much to be wondered at and praised, by sacred faith, so highly was he raised, as may appear in some few instances following, collected out of his works. When the law would trouble the conscience, and rule there, and disturb the Christian's sweet enjoyment of Christ; thus faith he, O law, thou mighty Queen, and cruel regent of all mankind, what have I done, that thou hast accused me, terrified me, and condemned me, which am innocent? O law thou hast no power over me, and therefore thou dost accuse and condemn me in vain, for I believe in the Son of God, whom the Father hath sent into the world, to redeem us miserable sinners, oppressed with the tyranny of the law. He gave his life and shed his blood for me; therefore feeling thy terrors and threatenings, O law, I plunge my conscience in the wounds, blood, death, resurrection and victory of my Saviour Christ. Besides him I will see nothing, I will hear nothing. O law, thou wouldst climb up into the kingdom of my conscience, and there reign and reprove it, of sin, and wouldst take from me the joy of my heart which I have by faith in Christ, and drive me to despair, that I might be without all hope, and utterly perish. This thou dost beside thy office: keep thyself within thy bounds, and exercise thy power upon the flesh, but touch not my conscience, for I am baptized, and by the Gospel I am called to the partaking of righteousness and everlasting life, to the kingdom of Christ, wherein my conscience is at rest, where no law is, but altogether forgiveness of sins, peace, quietness, joy, health and everlasting life. Trouble me not in these matters, for I will not suffer thee, so intolerable a tyrant and cruel tormentor, to reign in my conscience: for it is the seat and temple of Christ the Son.
of God, who is the King of righteousness and peace, and my most sweet Saviour and Mediator: he shall keep my conscience joyful and quiet in the sound and pure doctrine of the Gospel, and in the knowledge of this Christian and heavenly righteousness, in that righteousness and life I have no sin, no care, no sting of conscience, no fear of death. O law, thy tyranny can have no place in the throne where Christ my Lord sitteth: there I cannot hear thee, for I am free, and a son, who must not be subject to any bondage or law. Therefore when Christ is come, we ought to know nothing of the law, unless it be in this respect, that it hath power and dominion over the flesh, to bridle and keep it under. But when the law cometh to trouble thy conscience, thou must say, Lady law, thou comest not in season, for thou comest too soon, tarry yet until 430 years be expired, and when they are past, then come and spare not. But if thou comest then, yet shalt thou come too late. For then hath the promise prevented thee 430 years: to which I assent and sweetly repose myself in the same. Therefore I have nothing to do with thee; I hear thee not, for I live in Christ who hath abolished thee, O law! O law, thou accusest me and sayest, that I have committed many sins? Indeed I grant that I have committed many sins, yea, and do still commit sins daily without number. This toucheth me nothing: I am now deaf and cannot hear; therefore thou talkest to me in vain, for I am dead unto thee. But if thou wilt needs dispute with me as touching my sins, get thee to my flesh and members, crucify them, but trouble not me, nor my conscience, I say, which am a Lady and a Queen, and have nothing to do with thee, for I am dead to thee, and now I live to Christ, with whom I am under another law, viz. The law of grace, which ruleth over sin and the law. Therefore the law cannot accuse or condemn those that believe on Christ, Gal. v. 23. Indeed the law troubleth and terrifieth our consciences, but Christ apprehended by faith, vanquisheth it with all his terrors and threatenings. To them therefore the law is utterly abolished, and hath no more power to accuse them: for they do that of their own accord which the law requireth. Christ apprehended by faith, secretly
secretly by his Spirit faith thus to the soul distress'd: Doth thou see nothing but the law, sin, terror, heaviness, despair, death, hell and the devil? Is there not also grace remission of sins, righteousness, consolation, joy, peace, life, heaven, Christ and God? Trouble me no more, O my soul. What is the law? what is sin? what are all evils in comparison of these things? Trust in God who hath not spared his own dear Son, but hath given him to the death of the cross for thy sins, &c. Therefore when thou art beaten down, tormented and afflicted by the law, then say, Lady law, thou art not alone, neither art thou all things: but besides thee there are yet other things much greater and better than thou art, namely, grace, faith, and blessing, these do not accuse me, terrify me and condemn me, but they comfort me, and bid me trust in the Lord, and promise unto me victory and salvation in Christ. There is no cause therefore why I should despair. What therefore must I do? The law assailing and urging my conscience, especially when I perceive myself not to do that which it requireth? I answer, that which Christ doth here, who admitteth or acknowledgeth no law, although brought out of the law of God, to learn thou also to do, that thou mayest boldly say to the law, Leave off law to dispute with me, I have nothing to do with thee, and for that very same cause for which thou comest to dispute with me, and to enquire of me, how good and righteous I am, I will not hear thee: for it here maketh no matter what I am, or what I ought to do, and what not to do, but what Christ himself is, ought to do, and doth. For now we are in the bride-chamber, where only the bridegroom and bride must have to do, and it behoveth not thee to come thither, nor to meddle with any thing there. When he speaks of Satan, death and sin troubling the conscience, how triumphingly is it? faith he, Sir devil, I fear not thy threatenings and terrors, for there is one whose name is Jesus Christ, in whom I believe: he hath abolished the law, condemned sin, vanquished death, and destroyed hell; and he is thy tormentor, O Satan, for he hath bound thee, and holds thee captive, to the end that thou shouldst no more hurt me, or any that
that believe in him. Therefore, Satan, thou shalt not prevail against me, in that thou goest about to terrify me, in setting forth the greatness of my sins, and so to bring me into heavines, distrust, despair, hatred, contempt, and blasphemy of God. Yea rather, in that thou sayest, I am a sinner, thou givest me armour and weapon against thyself, that with thine own sword, I may cut thy throat, and tread thee under my feet: for Christ died for sinners, if I were righteous, and had no sin, I should have need of Christ to be my reconciler. Why then, O thou peevish holy Satan, wilt thou make me to be holy and seek righteousness in my self, when indeed I have nothing in me but sins, and most grievous sins, &c. This I know and more than thou canst accuse me of. Therefore whether thou lay my sins before me, or my good works, I pass not, but removing both far out of my sight, I only rest on Christ; I know him to be profitable unto me, therefore I will not make him unprofitable: which I should do, if either I should presume to purchase to myself favour and everlasting life by my good deeds, or should despair of my salvation because of my sins. Also as often as thou objectest that I am a sinner, thou callest to my remembrance the benefits of Christ my Redeemer, upon whose shoulders, and not upon mine own lie all my sins. 'For the Lord hath laid all our iniquities upon him,' Isa. liii. 6. Wherefore, when thou sayest I am a sinner, thou dost not terrify me, but comfort me above measure; and the more vehement thou, O Satan, fightest against my conscience, so much the stronger is my righteousness made, I do the more ardently pray, and my faith is increased. Here I will abide in the arms of Christ, cleaving inseparably about his neck, and creeping into his bosom, whatsoever the law shall say, and my heart shall feel. When I feel the terrors of death, I say thou hast nothing to do with me, O death; for I have another death which killeth thee, and that death which killeth, is stronger than that which is killed, namely Christ, that hath slain both death and the devil, Heb. ii. 14. If death creep upon thee and attempt to devour thee, say unto it, Good mistress death, dost thou know this man
man Christ? come and bit out his tooth, hast thou forgotten how little thy biting prevailed with him once? go to, if it be a pleasure unto thee, encounter with him again. Thou hast persuaded thyself that thou shouldst have prevailed somewhat against him, &c. thou didst bite indeed, but it turned worse to thyself, &c. altho' I am a sinner by the law, yet I die not because Christ liveth, who is both his righteousness and everlasting life, in that righteousness and life I have no sin, &c. When he read John xvi. 33. 'But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,' he breaks out into these words: A man could find in his heart to fetch such a sentence upon his knees from Rome or Jerusalem, how was he taken up into admiration with it. Oh! faith he (on Mat. iii. 17) nothing else was heard and seen but love, good will, and the infinite and incredible favour of God towards us; nothing but unmeasurable and bottomless goodness, and gentleness; all the whole vast heaven seemed not to distil drops, put to pour and rain down whole showers and floods of most sweet honey and sugar, &c. for this would God found these words from heaven with his own voice, that he might persuade us certainly, and that we might fix it deeply in our minds, that in Christ, and for Christ his beloved Son, it is his will to load us with his benefits, &c. and embrace us as a Father most lovingly. Truly with no praises could Christ be more glorified, nor extolled more magnificently; for by this voice he is set in a most illustrious dignity, and high glory, he is proclaimed and declared the true King of peace, a true Priest, working perfect atonement, and the Heir and Lord of all things, who alone pacified his Father, and brings to pass, that he is well pleased with us. Moreover in these words, God the Father testifieth that he is of a right fatherly and well pleased mind to them that believe in Christ; to these he declares and opens himself wholly, and leaves it witnessed to our consciences that he is at perfect peace with us, &c. And on Mat. xi. 28. 'Come unto me,' &c. As tho' he said, Run and seek in what place soever ye will, hear and learn whatsoever can be preached unto you, yet shall ye find no quietness of heart, ye shall find no peace but in me alone. Here he

gracious Spirit of Luther. xxiii

B 4
looketh for us, here he will receive us, here is the throne of grace and the true mercy seat, from which none is driven away, which with true faith resort unto it, but, here they that seek shall find, here they that ask shall be heard, here they that knock, the endless treasures of heaven shall be opened. Beware thou presume not to deal with God without me. Oh! creep into me, put on me, and so come and have whatsoever thou desirest, being wrapped, shrouded, and cloathed in the humanity of Christ, and so in Christ only thou hast access to the Father. When he advieth against curious speculations of God, how sweet and safe is his advertisement, on Psalm cxxx. and in many other places. For this cause I so often admonish you, that without Christ you should shut your eyes, and stop your ears, and say you know no God besides him which was in the lap of the virgin Mary, and suckt her breasts. Where this God Christ Jesus is, there is God wholly, there is the whole divinity, there is the Father and the Holy Ghost. Without this Christ there is no God. I have known many in the kingdom of Antichrist, which seeking to comprehend God by man's speculations, have horribly perished. And if God through his inestimable mercy had not delivered me from this temptation, I had also fallen headlong into destruction. The nature of God is higher than that we are able to attain unto it. Wherefore he hath humbled himself to us, and taken upon him that nature which is best known, and most familiar unto us, viz. even our own, here he will receive us, &c. John vi. 'No man cometh to the Father but by me,' &c. Here is the mercy-seat and throne of grace that we may safely and comfortably conceive of God, and come to him, in, and by. For the nature of man is more frail, than that it should once conceive of God out of a Mediator; wherefore he hath given us this new and living way, that through the veil of Christ's flesh we may behold him, and in whom, and by whom, we must have to do with him. Hence it is that Turks, Jews, and others so grossly err, &c. and therefore they also that strive to come directly to God, do profit themselves nothing at all thereby, whilst they come to God in prayer without the Son, they which do here neglect him, as though
though he were made man for nought, and in the mean season do without a Mediator pray unto God, who hath created heaven and earth, they pray indeed, but none shall help them, they shall cry and none shall hear them. Therefore beware that thou presume not to deal with God, not once to conceive of him out of Christ, who is 'God-man, and blessed for ever,' Rom. ix. 5. When he speaks of the great article of Justification, on Psalm cxxx. and in many other places he faith, It is the chiefeft point of our salvation and righteousness before God. The true and sincere knowledge whereof is it which maintaineth and preserveth the Church; for it is the knowledge of truth and life: but on the contrary, where the knowledge of our Justification is lost, there is no life, no church, no Christ, neither is there any judgment left, either of doctrine or of spirit, but all is full of horrible darkness and blindness. And on Gal. ii. 11. for he hath here no trifling matter in hand, but the chiefeft article of all Christian doctrine. The usefulness and majesty whereof, who so rightly esteemeth to him all other things, shall seem but vile and nothing worth. For what is Peter? what is Paul? what is an Angel from heaven? what are all other creatures to the article of Justification? which if we know, then are we in the clear light: but if we be ignorant thereof, then are we in most miserable darkness. Wherefore if ye see this article impunged or defaced, fear not to reftit Peter, or an Angel from heaven, &c. This doctrine bringeth with it all good things, as well spiritual as bodily, namely, forgiveness of sins, true righteousness, peace of conscience, and everlasting life. It approveth and establisitheth civil government, household government, and all kinds of life that are ordained and appointed of God. It rooteth up all doctrines of errors, sedition, confusion, and such like: and putteth away the fear of sin and death, and to be short, it discovereth all the subtil flights and works of the devil, and openeth the benefits and love of God towards us in Christ. What means the world to hate this doctrine, and glad tidings of everlasting comfort, grace, salvation and eternal life, so bitterly, and to persecute it with such divilish outrage? accounting it the greatest plague
plague that can betal them. I know that the devil goeth about nothing more, than that he may take away this knowledge from the sight and minds of men, by busying them with disputes, that this article may be forgotten, or not so effectually be made use of, for he knows the force of it, and it is no wonder that Satan doth stir him. By it he is overthrown, his kingdom is destroyed, the law, sin, and death (wherewith as most mighty and invincible tyrants, he hath brought all mankind in subjection under his dominion) are wrested out of his hands, and his prisoners are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light and liberty. Should the devil suffer all this? should not the father of all lies employ all his force and subtle policies, to darken, to corrupt, and utterly to root out this doctrine of our salvation and eternal life? indeed St. Paul complained, that in his time the devil shewed himself a cunning workman in this business. This passive righteousness, or Christian Righteousness, the righteousness of faith is hidden in a mystery, which the world doth not know, yea Christians themselves do not thoroughly understand it, and can hardly take hold of it in the time of temptation, therefore good Pastors will be daily and continually handling this point, &c. for who so doth not understand and apprehend this righteousness, must needs in afflictions and terrors of conscience be overthrown, for there is no comfort of conscience so firm and so sure as this passive righteousness that is apprehended by faith. And Mr. Fox faith of it, That unless the special grace of Christ do help, hard it is to flesh and blood to comprehend this mystical and joyful doctrine of Justification: so strange it is to carnal reason, so dark to the world, so many enemies it hath, that except the Spirit of God from above do reveal it, learning cannot reach it, wisdom is offended, nature is astonished, devils do not know it, men persecute it, briefly, as there is no way to life so easy, to whom it is given from above, so there is none so hard to the carnal sense not inspired, the ignorance whereof is the root of all the errors, sects, and divisions in the world. When he speaks of the perverse nature of man, he faith, There is nothing else in man but wicked-
gracious Spirit of Luther.

wickedness, delusion, guile, deceits, lying, fraud, and all kind of evil, yea by nature man is but lies and vanity. We must not trust any man, in any thing do not persuade thyself, that any man speaketh the truth unto thee, for whatsoever man speaketh is a lie. Why so? the fountain or spring head, the heart is no more sincere, wherefore neither can the rivers be pure, &c. As soon as thou thinkest in thy mind, he is a good man, and one that will keep his promise, I am sure that he will not deceive me, but will deal faithfully, even then hast thou fallen from God and worshipped an idol, putting thy trust in a liar. Wherefore when thou hast any dealing with man, think boldly: if he doth faithfully it is well, if he do otherwise, in the name of God let him go, and say, I will commit all things to the will of God, he shall prosperously bring them to pass. O how often have we committed idolatry in this kind? When he speaks of faith, and its three arms, how excellent is he in his Christian liberty and elsewhere. He faith through faith every Christian is advanced above all things, and in spiritual power he is even Lord over all, yet faith frees us not from good works, but from the wicked opinion of works, and that by faith we dwell in Christ, and in our neighbour by love, faith killeth reason, that beast and monster in religion, that all the world cannot kill, &c. Faith even laugheth at all the iniquity, rage and fury of the world, and maketh that unto itself matter of spiritual joy, wherewith others are even killed, faith overcomes sin, death and the flesh, the world and the devil. Faith is that noble champion which overcometh and extinguisheth every sin, and if all the sins which the whole world hath committed from the beginning, were laid upon an heap, it would extinguish and abolish them altogether: faith hath to do in great matters, it giveth glory to God, it believeth in him, it counteth him true, wise, righteous, merciful and Almighty, &c. Faith and the life of a Christian is not hypocriy, &c. as their life is, which seek to come to perfection, by certain speculations of spiritual union (as they call it) but altogether in vain, as I have proved by mine own experience, &c. But every Christian
Christian through his faith filleth heaven and earth, heaven with his faith, and earth with his works. Faith doth couple Christ and the Christian more near together, than the husband and his wife are united together. Faith makes us divine people (and as a man would say) it is the Creator of a certain divinity, not in the substance of God, but in us; for without faith, God looketh in us his glory, wisdom, righteousness, and mercy, &c. Faith in Christ is a treasure inestimable, containing in itself all salvation, and preserving from all evil, &c. Believe in Christ, in whom are promised unto thee grace, righteousness, peace, freedom, and in whom thou shalt have all things if thou believe, and without whom, thou shalt take all things if thou dost not believe, for that which is impossible to thee in all the works of the law, thou shalt very easily and brieflv achieve, and bring to pass through faith; because God hath so established all things, in faith, that whosoever hath faith may possess all things, and whatsoever want faith do posses nothing. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' Rom. xi. 32. That so all things may belong unto God only, as well the commandments as also the performance of the same, only God commandeth, only God performeth, therefore God's promises have relation to the New Testament itself. The first arm of faith is this. Forasmuch therefore as the promises of God be holy words, true, just, peaceable, and full of all goodness, it cometh to pass, that the soul which doth cleave steadfastly to the same, with an unshaken faith, is become so united unto them, yea is also swallowed up of them, that it doth not only partake thereof, but is thoroughly satisfied and made drunken with all the power and force of the same; for if the touching of Christ did give health, how much more shall a very tender feeling of the word in the Spirit; nay rather a thorough swallowing down of the word, communicate to the soul all things that appertain to the word. By this means therefore the soul through faith only is justified, sanctified, pacified, delivered and replenished with all goodness, and is truly made the daughter of God, John i. 12. By this it may easily be perceived from whence faith hath
hath received so great force, and why neither any one, nor all good works are comparable unto her, because no work can cleave fast unto God's word, nor be within the soul, wherein faith only, and the word do reign and govern, for such as the word is, such becometh the soul made by force of the word, even as a fiery plate of iron doth glimmer like unto fire, by means of uniting the fire and the plate together, so that it is manifest, that to a Christian man faith only sufficeth to Justification. Now if he needs no works, then also he needs not the law: if he have no need of the law, surely he is then free from the law. So this also is true, the law is not made for the righteous man, and this is that same Christian liberty our faith which doth work in us not to be idle, nor to give ourselves to lust and evil life, but that we be not tied to a necessity of observing the law, or doing words to the end to obtain righteousness or salvation thereby. The second arm of faith, it is to reverence him in whom we do believe, with a most godly and earnest bent affection, viz. that it account him true, and worthy to be believed, for there is no honour like unto the opinion conceived of truth and righteousness, wherewith we do most highly esteem of him we do believe, for what are we able to ascribe to any person, more than truth, righteousness, and goodness, of all parts perfect and absolute? on the contrary it is a detestable reproach to conceive a secret opinion of a man to be false, faithless and wicked. So the soul as long as it stedfastly believeth in God that maketh the promise, doth account him true and righteous, this is the highest honour to God, to ascribe unto him truth, justice, and whatsoever else ought to be yielded to him in whom we believe; this man is ready to execute all his will; this man doth sanctify his name; this man suffreth himself to be exercised according to the will and pleasure of God, because cleaving firmly to his promises, he doubteth not but that he is true, just, wife, and will do, dispose and govern all things for the best: but is not such a soul by the same (his faith) most humbly obedient to God in all things? what commandment remaineth then, that this obedience hath not sufficiently
ciently satisfied? what fulness can be more absolute? than all manner of humble obedience? but this obedience cometh not by works but by faith only, and believing the promises, on the other side, what rebellion? what impiety? what greater reproach can there be unto God, than not to believe him when he promiseth? for what is this else, than either to make God a liar, or be doubtful of his truth? to ascribe truth to himself, and condemn God of vanity and lying? wherein doth he not deny God and make to himself an image of himself in his own heart? what avail works in this unbelief, tho' they see me never so angelical and apostolical? and therefore very well did God conclude all (not in wrath and lust, but) in unbelief, left such as feign that they have fulfilled the law through chaste and meek works of the law, should presume upon their salvation, when as being shut up in the sin of unbelief, they must either seek for mercy, or be damned through justice, &c. The third arm of faith which is a jewel inestimable, is this, That it coupleth the soul with Christ, even as the spouse with her husband. By which sacrament (as Paul teacheth) Christ and the soul are made one flesh. If they be one flesh, then is there a true marriage betwixt them, yea, rather a marriage of all the most perfect, absolutely accomplished betwixt them, for marriages betwixt the man and wife, are but slender figures of this union. Whereupon it followeth, that all things are common betwixt them, as well good as bad, so that whatsoever Christ doth possess, the faithful soul may boldly presume upon the same, and triumph over them, as though they were his own. Likewise, whatsoever appertaineth to the soul, the same may Christ challenge unto himself as his own. Let us compare these two together, and we shall perceive inestimable treasure. Christ is full of all grace, life and saving health, the soul is full of all sin, death and damnation. Now let faith come between these two, and it shall come to pass that Christ shall be loaden with sin, with death and with hell, but unto the soul shall be imputed grace, life and salvation, for it behoveth Christ to accept, and jointly possess the things appertaining to his spouse, and withal to communicate
to his spouse the things that appertain to his possession, for he that giveth to her his body, and himself wholly, how can it be but that he must give her all things else withal; and he that is possessed of the spouse, how doth he not withal possess also the things pertaining to the spouse; here cometh low to the view, a most sweet spectacle, not only of communion, but of a comfortable battle, of victory, of salvation, and redemption. For, inasmuch as Christ is God and man, and such a person as never yet sinned, never dieth, nor is damned: Yea such a one as neither can sin, nor die, nor be damned, and that his justice, his life, his saving health is unvanquishable, everlasting and omnipotent, when as such a person doth communicate to himself, yea rather doth wed the sin, death, and damnation of his spouse, through the union of faith. And that the case now standeth none otherwise, than as if they were his own proper peculiar, even as if himself had sinned, were travelling dying and descending into hell, to bring all things into subjection, and that sin, death, and hell, could not swallow him, being of all necessity, clean swallowed up in him, by a miraculous conflict, for his righteousness is greater than the sins of all men, his life surmounteth in power, all death, his saving health, is more victorious than all hell. Even so, the faithful soul, through the assurance of her faith, in Christ her husband, is delivered from all sins, made safe from death, guarded from hell, and endued with everlasting righteousness, life, and saving health, of her husband Christ; on this wise Christ doth couple her to himself, a glorious spouse without spot or wrinkle, cleansing her with the fountain in the word of life, through faith in the word of life, of righteousness, and of salvation. Even so doth he marry her unto himself, in faith, in mercy and compassion, in justice and judgment, Hos. ii. 19. When his friends persuaded him from going to Worms, lest they should burn him as they did John Hus, how little did he fear the rage of man, so firm was his faith, that he said, That if he knew there were so many devils in Worms as tiles on the houses, (in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ) I will go thither. Neither shall any kind of death
death or persecution shake my confidence. Oh! what
faith and courage had he? when others were almost at
their wits end for fear of the Pope and Emperor's rage,
and threatened wars, Luther was so far from being daunt-
ed, that he brake out to the admiration of them all,
saying, Come let's sing the xlvi. Psalm, and then let
all the devils in hell do their worst,  Jo strong was his
faith in Christ his refuge, rock, and strong tower.
When he speaks of himself, Oh! how disrespectfully it
is, a lack of Worms meat, O wretch that I am! a lump
of earth, a bundle of wickedness, an unworthy mini-
ster of the gospel. When of his marriage so cried
down by Papists, if my marriage be a work of God,
what wonder is it, if the flesh be offended at it? it is
offended even at the flesh which God our Creator took,
and gave to be a ransom and, food for the salvation of the
world, if the world were not offended with me, I
should be offended with it, and should fear that it was
not of God which I have done. Now seeing the
world is vexed and troubled at it, I am confirmed in my
course, and comforted in God. When a prodigious lie
was raised on him by a libel of his death, and how the
devils had carried away his body, &c. with an hypo-
critical admonition to take heed of his doctrine, &c. and
spread abroad two years before his death by the wicked
Papists: Luther read it, and thanked God that the devil
and his instruments were such fools that they could not
stay until he were dead, and subscribed, I Martin Luther
do professt and witness under mine own hand, that I on
the 21st of March 1544, received this figment (so little
did he regard this egregious lie) full of anger and fury;
concerning my death, and that I read it with a joyful
countenance, and that but I detest the blasphemy which
ascribeth an impudent lie to the Divine Majesty. For
the other passages, I cannot but with great joy of heart
laugh at Satan's, the Pope's, and their accomplices ha-
tred against me, God turn their hearts from their dia-
bolical maliciousness. But if God have decreed not to
hear my prayer for their sin unto death, then God grant
that they may fill up the measure of their sins, and sol-
lace themselves to the full with their libels full of such
like
like lies. When he was kept in Coburg-castle, that the Pope and Emperor might not murder him, being banished, he wrote to Melancthon and told him, That if I perceive that the cause goeth not well with you (it was at Augsburg assembly) or be endangered, I shall not contain myself, but shall come with speed unto you, that I may see the ghastly jaws of Satan’s teeth, if the cause be faulty, let us revoke it, and fly back, if it be good, why do we make God a liar, &c. But I am resolute and secure for the public cause, because I am sure that it is just and true, that it is God’s and Christ’s cause, &c. When he spake to God, how confidently was it? I know thou art a father and our God, I know therefore assuredly, that thou wilt destroy the persecutors, &c. Lord God maker of the whole world, I am certain that I am holy before thee, and am thy servant, not for my own sake, who as yet feel sin in myself, but through Christ who hath taken away my sin, and made satisfaction for me, &c. And at his death, what confidence had he in his prayer. O heavenly Father, my gracious God! and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, thou God of all consolation, I give thee hearty thanks that thou hast revealed to me thy Son Jesus Christ, whom I believe, whom I possess, whom I love, whom I glorify, I beseech thee, Lord Jesus Christ to receive my soul. O! my gracious heavenly Father, though I be taken out of this life, though I must lay down this frail body, yet I certainly know that I shall live with thee eternally, and that I cannot be taken out of thy hand. ‘Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord ‘God of truth.’ Farewel.
SERMON I.

On the Nativity of Christ.

Luke ii. 1. to the 14. And it came to pass in those days, &c.

1. As the Evangelist here describeth the time and place of the nativity of Christ, first herein is required faith of us, viz. That we believe this to be the same Christ, of whom these things be recorded. Moreover the house and stock of David is here notified and shewed forth, whereof our Messiah should rise. 2. The shepherds which are here mentioned, are the first fruits of those Jews, which come unto Christ, as the wise men from the East are the first fruits of the Gentiles, and the innocent infants of all them, which must bear the Cross for Christ's sake. 3. Whereas the angel of the Lord appeareth to the shepherds in great glory, it signifieth, that the gospel cometh unto men with the glory of God. First, indeed it maketh us afraid for it condemneth our darkness and whatsoever is in us, until we hear the comfort, which is here declared unto the shepherds in these comfortable words: 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' 4. Also, as one angel first preacheth unto the shepherds, that noteth to us the prince of all preachers Christ himself. Secondly, whereas many angels are gathered together, it signifieth the multitude of preachers, who all say with one mouth, Glory be to God and peace unto men. 5. The fruit and profit wherefore Christ took flesh upon him, is here expressed to be evangelical peace and good will to men, whereof the hymn of the angels makes mention; 'Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men.'
Ye have often times heard this history before, and must hear it still both this year, and every year, though to sluggish and drowsy Christians, that are soon weary and cloyed with good things, the same peradventure may seem tedious. But to them that are endued with true faith, it always cometh again as new. For the holy Ghost can speak so diversely of one thing, that to them which be his, it always seemeth new. Moreover we might speak at large of this history, for it is very full of matter, if we should not want time, and if it were not perilous lest we should somewhere stray from the purposes nevertheless we will speak somewhat thereof, as God shall permit. Ye have already heard in the text, how the angel himself expresseth all this history, giving us to understand, that the same is published for our cause: and that the fruit thereof doth redound and appertain to us only, and is wrought to our salvation. And therefore the angel speaking to the shepherds, faith in these words; 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' Here is declared first, that his nativity doth pertain unto us, when he faith, 'Unto you is born a Saviour.' For the Lord Christ came not for his own cause only, but that he might help and succour us. Wherefore let us diligently endeavour, that we believe the angel, and we shall enjoy the whole benefit. I have heretofore oftentimes said, that the gospel preacheth nothing else but faith, that the angel also here doth, and this must all preachers do, otherwise they be no true ministers. For the angel was here a beginning and example to all preachers. Now we must in this place speak of a double nativity, namely of our own and of Christ's. But before I begin to treat hereof, I will handle the history briefly, that ye may lay it up in your heart, and may be partakers of the joy which the angel here bringeth. First therefore the Evangelist faith, 'And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed every one into his own city.' Ye know
right well, that the Jews had a promise made of the patriarch Jacob, that a prince, lawgiver or ruler, of the house of Judah, should not be wanting in Judea, until the Messias which was promised them did come. For the words of Jacob to Judah are plain after this sort: * The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come;* Gen. xlix. 10. now at this time the case was so that the Romans possessed Judea, and had set a lieutenant over it, whom the Evangelist here calleth Cyrenius. The Jews before for a long time had used priests for kings, when as the Maccabees had obtained the kingdom, so that the dominion of the house of Judah was already taken away and suppressed, neither was there any prince or ruler, of the flock and blood of Judah, governor over the people. But that Christ or the Messias should now come, that was a great sign, that the prophecy at that time especially might be fulfilled. Wherefore the Evangelist faith here, that at the time when Christ was born, Augustus Caesar had set a lieutenant over Judea, under whom the Jews should offer themselves to be taxed. As if he had said, Even at that time at which he should be born, he is born. All that lived under the Roman emperor were compelled to pay tax, for a testimony that they were subject unto him. This the Jews knew, but they did not understand the prophecy. Jacob had said thus, *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come,* that is, a Prince and ruler of the flock of Judah shall not be wanting in Judea, until Christ come. Jacob did sufficiently shew in these words, that he should be wanting at the coming of Christ. Moreover they understood it so, as though such a Shiloh should come, as should bear rule with the sword, it is a false understanding thereof, neither can it be gathered out of that text. For he faith thus, that at the coming of Christ the temporal kingdom of the Jews should end. So Luke also sheweth that every time, when it behoved this to be done. It followeth moreover in the text: *And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem,* (because he was of the house and lineage of David)
On the Nativity of Christ.

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.' Joseph also and Mary obeyed this commandment of Caesar, and submitted themselves as other honest and obedient men, and went to Bethlehem, which was the chief and head city of the house of Judah, and suffered themselves to be taxed. Mary, in as much as she was with child, and near her delivery, might have excused herself, that she should not take this journey upon her, but she doth not so, they will not be an offence to others. Moreover it ought thus to be that they should come to Bethlehem, because of the prophecy of the prophet Micah, chap. v. which foretold that Christ should be born in Bethlehem of Judah. Mark I pray you, how that tax must serve hereunto, which neither Caesar nor his lieutenant did know. Thus God dealeth in his works in which he useth the means of heathen and evil men, whereby he may make us, which are miserable and wretched men and so deeply drowned in flesh and blood, certain of our faith, which the evangelist Luke here specially fetteth forth, inasmuch as he often declareth in the history, the places and times, least that we should be deceived concerning this Christ. The manner of his birth the Evangelist sheweth, saying: 'And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished, that she should be delivered: and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.' Let it nothing move us, or be any offence unto us, that the Lord came into the world in so great poverty and misery. For it ought to be, a great joy and comfort unto us, rather than in any wise to discomfort and discourage us. It may seem a strange thing and hard dealing that a virgin which was new married, and that year joined to her husband, might not be permitted to bring forth her child at Nazareth in her own house, but was forced in poor estate to go almost three days journey being great with child? and when she came at her journey's end, she had not so much room in the inn as that she might be delivered in some parlour or chamber. The inn being full there was none that would vouchsafe to give place to this woman being great with child, that
On the Nativity of Christ.

she might have the use of their chamber, but she was enforced to go into a stable, that there she might bring forth the Creator of all creatures, here may be plainly perceived what is the knowledge and wisdom of the world concerning divine matters, namely, that it is blind, and vain in understanding, that it feeth not the works of God, and if it be so that it feeth them, that it knoweth not what they mean. From hence let us learn, not to be moved or discouraged, if we be poor and miserable, and forsaken of the world, for we have here great comfort. If Christ the maker of all things with his beloved mother, was cast into so great misery and so contemned of the world, why may not the same also come unto us? or why should not we being in misery, and compassed about with all calamities, bear them patiently, yea, if God will at any time kill us with adversity and distress? but this thing is to be lamented, that we exclude such an example from our eyes, but much farther from our heart, we should easily suffer adversity and contempt if it be so that we believed, and had a sure trust and confidence in God, as we see that the Lord Christ suffered this misery, poverty, and calamity. This is therefore first throughly to be marked and considered of us, how Christ came into the world in so great poverty, and found not so much as one in so great a city, which was dutiful and beneficial toward him. Thus this nativity was received in the earth, over which notwithstanding all the heavenly host did exceedingly rejoice, as it followeth: * And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. * And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. * Here is declared, how God in heaven, seteth forth this nativity, which the world contemneth, yea, knoweth not neither seeth. This joy is so great in heaven, that it cannot be contained therein, but bursteth forth, that it may be declared and communicated to the world. For the Angel here bringeth tidings of great joy to the shepherds, which to them is great comfort, which the world notwithstanding contemneth and rejecteth, but is of the Angels had in great admiration, yea and
On the Nativity of Christ.

if they might, they would with greater praises, and
goodly pomp have set forth so wonderful a thing. But
it was not meet it should be so. For God would
set an example in this his Son, than the ostentation and
glorying of the world might at the last be neglected,
and that it might be known what the world is. Man's
reason seemeth always very wise unto itself, it always
looketh unto things that are aloft, it considereth only
high matters, it humbleth not itself to those things that
are below. This now is an excellent comfort, that the
angels and all the heavenly host esteem him so much,
whom the world contemneth, by which we may learn
that altho' we be outcasts in the world, there be not-
withstanding that have regard and care of us. How-
ever we do hardly believe this, we do not fasten our
eyes thereupon, but look unto great precious, and high
things, according to the example of the world, and are
dismayed, as soon as a little misfortune cometh, neither
thinking nor knowing, if any adversity affaileth us, that
it is done by the will of God. Believe thou this un-
doubtedly, if it had not so pleased God, he would not
have suffered this his beloved son to be laid in a manger,
he would not have permitted him to be born in so great
poverty, misery, and contempt. But the poorer and
more despised he is before the world, so much greater
care and regard God and all the heavenly soldiers have
of him, so that we may conceive comfort thereby, and
believe assuredly, that the more we are rejected of the
world, the more we are esteemed before God. Thou
mayest find many which here think thus, and are touch-
ed with such devotion as this: O! if I had been there
then, with how great diligence would I have served this
child, and done for him: yea, I would have washed
even his swaddling clothes. O! if I had been so happy
as the shepherds, that I also might have seen the Lord
lying in a manger. Now, indeed, thou wouldest be
ready to do those duties, when thou knowest Christ to
be so high and noble. Surely thou wouldest have been
as slack in thy duty, at that time, as the citizens of
Bethlehem were. Thou resolveth in thy mind childish
and altogether foolish cogitations. Why dost thou not
per-
perform the like duties now? Behold Christ walking before thee in thy neighbour, do for him, and bestow benefits upon him; whatsoever thou shalt bestow upon thy neighbour, which is needy and destitute of help, that thou shalt bestow upon Christ himself, as he shall say in the last day, to the elect, Mat. xxv. 40. 'In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' Wherefore it is avain and very foolish to admit such childish cogitations. Let us therefore at the last open our eyes, let us not hear examples of so great importance in vain, otherwise the time will come, when we shall be grievously punished. But with what words did the angel speak unto the shepherds? the Evangelist faithafter this sort: 'And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall beto all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in a manger.' Learn by these words of the angel, how to use rightly the nativity of the Lord Christ; neither let it suffice you, to hear them only. A great treasure hidden in the earth, or some other where, is of no use, but if it be opened, and occupied, then it is profitable and precious. Wherefore give heed hereunto, that thou mayest use this nativity; otherwise, it shall be no advantage or comfort unto thee. For as thou knowest the bare history only, viz. what came to pass in his nativity, and that he was born needy and poor, thou shalt learn no greater use hereby, than if thou heard an history written of the king of France, or of some other puissant prince, whereby no advantage or comfort should come unto thee: but how must we use this nativity rightly, and with fruit? Even as I have said, if we be thus persuaded that he was born for us, that his nativity is ours. Our nativity is such, that it altogether aboundeth with sin, as David faith, Psal. li, 'Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' As if he would say, Here is nothing but sin, as well in the conception as in the birth; whatsoever I bring with me from my mother's womb, it is wholly damnable, it is due to death, Satan,
Satan, and hell: Forasmuch then as our nativity, skin and hair, are defiled, What good can come thereof? This is our title which we have received from Adam, in this one thing we may glory, and in nothing else, namely, that every infant that is born into this world, is wholly in the power of sin, death, Satan, hell, and eternal damnation; our nativity is altogether miserable, and on every side to be lamented. To deliver us from this nativity, God sent another nativity, which it behoved to be pure and without spot, that it might make this unclean and sinful nativity pure: This is that nativity of the Lord Christ, his only begotten Son. Wherefore he would not have him born of flesh and blood, infected with sin; but it behoved that he should be born of a pure virgin. He suffered no spot at all nor sin in his flesh, but replenished it with the Holy Ghost; and permitted nothing to stick therein, but those miseries which proceed of flesh and blood, as hunger, thirst, adversity and death, sin excepted, as the epistle to the Heb. chap. iv. witnesseth, that he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. This is that most excellent thing, which the Lord our God hath done for us; whereof none taketh any fruit, but he that believeth. And none will easily believe this, but he that feeleth of what sort his own nativity is: He that hath no feeling of his own misery, tasteth not of this nativity of Christ. But if we feel our misery, it followeth forthwith, that we cry with the prophet David, and say, 'Behold I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.' For we feel our sin, and our evil nativity. When death shall come upon us, and our heart shall be touched with anguish and grief, then at the last, it may be that we would taste of this happy and pure nativity, and will exceedingly thirst after it, to enjoy it. But now when as we feel not our sins, neither do as yet taste of the bitterness of sin, it slideth coldly to the heart, we hear it indeed, but truly it doth not throughly enter unto the heart. For if a man did believe, that this nativity was for his advantage, he would fear neither sin nor death. Wherefore I have said, that a Christian must believe, and doubt nothing that the nativity of Christ is
is as well his, as it is the Lord Christ's: and as he hath of the virgin pure blood and flesh, so that he himself also is pure: and that this virgin is his mother spiritually, as she was the mother of Christ carnally. Let the heart have sure confidence in this persuasion, otherwise it will be in an evil case. This the Angel signifieth in these words, when he sayeth, Unto you he is born; as if he had said, Whatsoever he is and hath, ye may challenge it to yourselves. Also he is your Saviour, not that ye should only look upon him, but which is able to deliver you from the tyranny of sin, death. Satan, and all evil; yea, and how great soever he be, he is 'born unto you,' and is yours, with all that he hath. Now forasmuch as he is mine, and hath changed his nativity into mine, his flesh and blood also is mine, he himself is mine, with all wherewith he is endued, so that I dare lay unto his mother, Behold, that child which thou hast brought forth is mine, his flesh and blood are my flesh and blood, yea, and thou art my mother, and I will be counted of thee for thy son; for whatsoever Christ bringeth with him, it must be mine, even as he himself is mine: if so be that his nativity is mine, being of a virgin, and without sin, replenished with the holy Ghost, my nativity also must be of a virgin, and pure from sin. Here now Eve the first mother is no more my mother, for it must needs be that that nativity utterly die and perish, that there may be no sin remaining. Here this mother Mary is to be set against that mother, of whom I was born in sin. And thus the Angel bringeth with him great joy, for it cannot be, but that the heart should be made glad, when it enjoyeth this Saviour as his own. When we come to hand strokes, that is, when we feel our misery and calamity, there remaineth no comfort or help; then my heart cannot lift itself above the heavy burden, whereby it is pressed down, but it must faint and be discouraged: but if I conceive a trust, and doubt nothing that Christ's nativity is mine, that my sins are taken away by him, I become exceeding joyful, and am confirmed with comfort, whereby all heaviness and sorrow is shaken off. This only is that comfort, and no other which maketh a good conscience; which feareth neither death nor
On the Nativity of Christ.

nor hell, for it always reflecteth upon the word of God, which giveth Christ unto us: wherefore it is a thing altogether miserable and lamentable, if such a good conscience be sought in any other things than here. Thou shalt find no joy, no peace of conscience, neither in heaven, nor in earth, but in this Christ; be thou certain and sure thereof. Wherefore let all other things pass, and cleave unto him only, if thou desirest to be bold and courageous against sin, death, the devil, hell, and all things that are against thee: he is the Lord and Saviour. Ye understand, I trust, this right well, forasmuch as ye have now heard it so often. But I do with so great earnestness, as it were, beat it into your minds, that ye may see, that there is but one thing taught in the whole scripture, which I would have to stick firmly and undoubtedly in you; this is that which I have said, that the use of this nativity be known. They which seek any other thing, and use not this nativity, are in a desperate case, as ye have heard; which ye have very well expressed in this song, the author whereof, whatsoever he was, did nothing err from the purpose, viz. that the only child Christ is our comfort; which words surely are of very great importance, and deserve most diligently to be weighed. For ye sung after this sort; A child, highly to be praised, is born unto you this day, of a chaste virgin, to the comfort of us wretches. If that child had not been born, we had perished all. Is it not said here, that there is no comfort beside only Christ? which indeed is most true. Without doubt the Holy Ghost taught him that made this song, to sing after this sort. If the case stands thus, it followeth that monks, nuns, sacrificing priests, and all which leave this child, and seek to come to heaven by other ways and works, be condemned; for such say, that they need not this child, otherwise they would confess, that their own works are nothing worth. These therefore do nothing but deceive and seduce, by whom men's hearts are procured to depart from Christ, and are led away unto Satan. In the aforesaid song is contained moreover, He is the salvation of us all; oh! sweet Jesus Christ, forasmuch as thou art born man, defend us from hell. I
On the Nativity of Christ.

greatly desire that ye did well understand this; it is sung abroad every where, but there is none that thoroughly believeth it. Whereupon it cometh, that some do oppose these things, especially they, which know, sing and babble very much of them; that truly I fear, that Christ is never more blasphemed, than at this feast of his nativity, and at other great feasts; that it should be no marvel, if, when he is so blasphemed, he should suffer the whole world to be swallowed up: But the last day is at hand. Wherefore endeavour that ye may found this excellent song in your heart; and as ye sing it in mouth, so ye may also believe it. If the case stands thus, that all things without this child are vain, what need is there then of much business? why doth thou run this way and that way, and endeavourest to do works, whereby thou mayest prepare thee a seat in heaven? which they especially do, that murmur over many rosaries, and continually extol the mother of God in mouth only, but in heart think more evil of her than of all others; and not only of her, but of Christ himself also, the Lord and Saviour. Wherefore commit this so to memory that ye may be certainly persuaded, that whatsoever dependeth of any other than of that child, it is all damnable; otherwise the Angel had lied. This must be accounted for most certain, without any addition; neither are these trifles to be weighed, viz. that this sufficeth not that thou dost believe, more things are to be added. Forasmuch then as the Angel faith, that this Child doth all, and that he is the Saviour; and if he be not, that all labour is lost; tell me, how can it follow, that something is to be done of thee, when it is already done before? Doth thou go about to do any thing that thou mayest obtain him? That Child suffereth not himself to be apprehended and obtained by works; for altho' thou heapest together works, notwithstanding thou dost not yet enjoy the Child. Moreover thy works be unclean, by which such great treasure cannot be gotten, no though they were even holy. But he is to be apprehended in heart, so that thou believe, and say to the Angel, I believe that it is true which thou sayest, and nothing at all doubting, I count this Child for a Saviour born
born unto me. And this part, whereof we have now spoken, pertaineth to faith. Now we have here also another part, pertaining to Christian life, namely, charity, that works may not be rejected. If thou wilt do works, do them not in that respect, that thou persuade thyself that thou dost obtain any thing of God by them: But follow this example; such a one as Christ hath showed himself to thee, be thou also toward thy neighbour. If thou more nearly consider the example of Christ, thou shalt find nothing but mean love; whereas he humbled himself, and is born in so great poverty, that declaration nothing but love toward thee, which moved him to become a servant for thy sake, as Paul, Phil. ii. faith, who knew that he might remain in divine glory. Now this he did for thy advantage, he bowed his eyes to thy misery and calamity, which are so miserable a man, wholly damnable, and abounding with sin; thy nativity is unclean, thy misery is on every side most great, thou hast deserved nothing but the wrath of God, and eternal damnation. If thou hadst been a Carthusian monk a thousand years, thou couldst not deliver thyself from this misery and damnation. But Christ is able to help thee, he is rich, and hath strength sufficient; seeing therefore he can do such things, he doth them willingly and with pleasure. Love enforceth him so far, that he employs all things for thy sake, and bestows whatsoever he hath for thee. Forasmuch then as Christ sheweth so great love toward thee, and giveth unto thee whatsoever he is able, do thou likewise to thy neighbour. Wilt thou work works, derive them to thy neighbour, who is compassed with troubles and miseries. Thou must do nothing for this cause, that Christ hath need thereof, whereby thou mayest enrich them; for neither was he bountiful to this end, that he might any thing profit his Father thereby, or that he might receive any benefit of him; but he did it only for this cause, that therein the Father might be well pleased, inasmuch as he submitted himself wholly to his Father's will, and loveth us with so great affection: After the same sort we also must do in our works toward our neighbour, which we ought therefore only to do, that we may give thanks to the Father,
Father, that he sheweth his favour unto us, for that he hath given his beloved Son unto me, to bestow upon me whatsoever he hath. When I believe this undoubtedly, I burst out and say, If God sheweth unto me such benefits and favour in his beloved Son, that he suffereth him to bestow all things upon me, I also will do the like again, and bestow all things whereby I may do good to my neighbour, and love him. And so I do not lift up mine eyes unto heaven, but I go thither, where my neighbour is oppressed with adversity, poverty, sickness, sin or error, and I help him wherein ever I am able. Thus do thou, whatsoever thou art, which mindest to do true good works; as thou wouldst have done to thyself, if thou wert troubled with poverty, so do thou to thy neighbour being poor. Again, if thy neighbour be a sinner, and thou feest it, but thou thyself art without sin, and hast a holy nativity, go preach unto him, whereby he also may be delivered. But thou must do all these things freely in every respect, as Christ hath done for thee without all works and merits of pure grace, love, and mercy. Such work see thou do if thou wilt do good and Christian works indeed. God hath no need of them, nevertheless thou must do them in respect of him, inasmuch as it so pleaseth him, and he will have it to be so. This only is rightly to do good works, which those hypocrites do not, which will merit heaven by their chastity, poverty, and obedience. Unto whom I pray you are such works of theirs good? I myself need them not, neither do they profit my neighbour, wherefore it is mere deceit, whereas a name is given to works as though they did merit heaven; when as they are nothing worth, neither profitable to others. Lay up these things in your hearts, and do also according to them. In all this text being discussed from the beginning to the ending, ye have these two things, namely faith and love. If ye shall keep these, then both the holy nativity of Christ shall be a help, and comfort unto you, and also ye shall be spiritually the children of his mother, as Christ Jesus is her child carnally. [An exposition of the song of the Angels, glory be to God on high, &c.] 'Glory be to God on high, and on earth, peace, good will
On the Nativity of Christ.

will towards men.' Forasmuch as this song is very common, and there be few that rightly understand it, notwithstanding it containeth many things, I think good to handle it somewhat at large. The Angels in this hymn apply three things to three: Glory to God, peace to the earth, and good will unto men. The first is the honour or glory of God, with which we must begin, that in all things praise and glory may be ascribed to God, as to him which doeth, giveth, and hath all things, so that none may challenge any good thing unto himself, neither ought to count it his own. Glory is so so due to God only, that no part thereof may be derived to any other. Adam being persuaded of Satan, went about to take this glory to himself, whereby all men fell into the displeasure of God, and have that vice so thoroughly fixed in their mind, that nothing can be so hardly pluckt away from them. Every man pleaseth himself, no man can bear to seem that he is nothing, or is able to do nothing, whereof come almost all evils, so many contentions, wars, and innumerable other inconveniences. This glory Christ gave to God his Father, teaching that all our things are nothing before God but sin, which deserve his wrath and indignation. Wherefore there is no cause, that we should even never so little please ourselves or glory in them, but rather that we should be ashamed and fear, being set in so great peril and confusion, that so all our glory and pleasing of ourselves may pass away and come to nothing, and we may rejoice being destitute of our own glory, that we may be found and sved in Christ alone. The second is peace in earth; for, as where the glory of God is not, and where every one seeketh his own glory, there cannot be peace, according as Solomon saith Prov.xiii.20. 'Only by pride cometh contention:' on the contrary, where the glory of God is known, there true peace also must needs be. For why should they contend? why should they disagree, which know every one of them, that they have no good thing of their own, but that all things which are, which they have, and which they are able to do, come from God, to whose power also they commit all things, in the mean season
season being very well content, that they have God fa-
vourable unto them? how also can it be, that when
one counteth nothing of himself, and the things that be
his, he should be so careful of himself and his things,
that he should move contention with any because of
them? such believe that Christ only is made all things
unto them, him they think on, and for him alone they
contend. Hereupon it certainly followeth, that there
can be no contention or discord at all among true Chri-
tians; which manner of peace of Christians Isaiah de-
clareth, and faith, ch. xi. 9. 'They shall not hurt nor
'destroy in all my holy mountain;' that is, in the church
of Christ. The cause hereof he addeth next after, 'for
'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,'
that is, for all know God as to whom all good things do
belong, and all their own things they confes to be no-
thing but sin, they may easily therefore have peace among
themselves. Wherefore the same Isaiah faith, chap. ii. 4.
'And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke
'many people: and they shall beat their swords into
'plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: na-
tion shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall
'they learn war any more.' Hereupon Christ is called
the King of peace, or the Prince of peace, of whom So-
lomon was a figure, who is called peaceable. For Chrift
is truly called our King Solomon, that is, peaceable,
which hath restored peace unto us inwardly with God
thro' faith in him, and outwardly with our neighbours
thro' love, whereby we live friendly with all men; and
so by him we have peace every where both inwardly,
and outwardly in the earth.

The third is good will of men. Not that good will,
whereby we work good works, but whereby we take
in good part all things that happen, whether they be
good or evil, sweet or sour, and receive them with a
quiet heart. The Angels knew that the peace which
they sung of, should be only among Christians, which
in all things depend upon Christ, and usurp nothing
themselves as their own. But in the mean season the
world and Satan, which exceedingly envy them, do on
every side procure trouble unto them, and persecute

them even unto death, so that they may look for no peace or quietness at all, for Christ faith, John xvi. 'In me ye shall have peace, but in the world ye shall have tribulation.' Therefore it was not enough for the angels to have sung, Peace on earth, but it was to be added, And good will towards men, that when they, as much as they are able, have peace with all men, and nevertheless are continually hated of all men, and suffer persecution, they may always keep a good will whereby they may take all things in good part, and give thanks to God, however he dealeth with them, or suffereth them to be dealt with, they may not murmur, but resign and commit themselves wholly to the will of God, yea, (forasmuch as they know that God disposes and governs all things, *whom they are sure, that they have a merciful and most favourable Father unto them through Christ), they may even rejoice and be glad in persecution, according to that saying of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans: 'We rejoice in afflictions and persecutions.' For inasmuch as they have a joyful conscience and a sure trust of the favour of God, they cannot but count all things for the best, whatsoever happen. Behold what kind of good will it is in all things, whether they be prosperous or unprosperous, which the angels here with unto men, and sing, to be proper to the believers. Where such good will is wanting, there peace cannot belong. Men take all things in the worse, they take nothing in good part, but always encrease and double the evil. Hereupon howsoever God dealeth with them, they like it not, but require that they may be dealt otherwise with, and so it falleth out, as in Psal. xviii. 'With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward,' that is with him that counteth all things pure to himself, and hath that good will in all things, whereof we have spoken, thou also dost well agree, as he pleaseth thee and all good men. But he that is froward, so that neither thou, nor those things that are thine like him, cannot but displease both thee and all good men. Of this well-pleasing one another Paul speaketh, 1 Cor. x. 'Endeavour to please all men, even as I please all.' By what means shall this be done?
On the Nativity of Christ.

If thou take all things in good part, and suffer others to please thee, thou also shalt please others. The matter may be comprehended in one word: if thou wilt be liked of none, nothing shall be liked of thee: if thou wilt be liked of all, suffer that all things may be also liked of thee, but so, that thou do not neglect the word of the Lord. For that ought to be preferred before all, without any regard had of all men, what pleaseth them, or what displeaseth them. But whatsoever may be done without transgressing the word of God, give place to all, and submit thy judgment to the judgment of others, that thou mayest take every thing in good part, which shall chance unto thee, and so thou shalt have the good will, whereof the Angels sung. By this song may be understood, what nature the Angels have. I omit those things which the Philosophers have dreamed hereof; here is so described what the Angels are, that it cannot be more fully done, their heart and cogitations being declared. First with great joy they sing praises to God, acknowledging all things to be due unto him, and therefore with an ardent mind, sing and glorify him. As therefore thou wouldest think of a right lowly, pure, and obedient heart, praising God, and always enjoying perpetual gladness in him, so think alo of the Angels; and thou hast now the nature of Angels, as much as they have to do with God. The second thing to be considered in them is their love towards us. Think that they are most loving towards us, which desire that it may go as well with us as with themselves, they do no less rejoice for our safety than for their own, and even in this hymn full of love towards us, they declare themselves so affected towards us, that surely, we may think and rejoice of them, as of most loving friends. This is to know the Angels truly, not according to their essence, whereof the Philosophers foolishly and without fruit spake many things, not according to their heart and mind, so that altho' I know not, what their nature is in itself, yet I know what is their chief desire, and their continual work. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning the song of the Angels, and the fruit of the nativity of the child Jesu
Jesus Christ. God grant us his grace, that we may print these things in our heart, and according unto them also amend our life. Amen.

SERMON II.

On the Epiphany, or appearing of Christ.

Matth. ii. 1. to the 11. Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, &c.

We celebrate this day a noble, and most comfortable feast, concerning the appearing of the Lord Jesus, who appeared a special comfort to all them which seek him with a strong faith: First, to the wise men which came from the East: Secondly, to John the Baptist, when being about thirty years of age he was baptized of him in Jordan, and the Holy Ghost and voice of the Father gave testimony of him, that he is the Son of God: Thirdly, when he shewed his glory and power in a miracle, wherein he turned water into wine at a marriage, whereby he would procure reverence and estimation to matrimony, which now, alas, is after a shameful sort torn, contemned, and rejected of the Pope and his adherents as a certain miserable and wretched state. For whatsoever God hath ordained, that of the world is contemned: whereof at convenient time we will speak more, and we have already as I think written sufficient thereof. Now we will speak in few words of the first appearance.

The wise men of Arabia, which were industrious men, and without all doubt governors of that country (as it was that time the manner in those parts) when they had seen the star in the East, breaking off all delay, made haste to Jerusalem, dilligently seeking for the King of the Jews being new born. Where we ought to mark that they could neither seek nor find out this King, the Lord Christ, but by the star going before them, which at the last led them so far, that by the word of God they
On the Epiphany.

were certified, where this king was to be found. So also it is with us: we cannot find Christ without the Gospel, without the word of God; that must shew him unto us, and bring us thither where we may find him; which is only done, when we receive the same Gospel by faith, otherwise, although we have it, hear it, and know it, it profiteth us nothing, we shall not therefore find him, no more than he Scribes found him, who notwithstanding they had the Scriptures readily, and showed the way to others not coming into it themselves, for the thing did not touch their hearts; they did doutrily neglect that King, whom with great sighs they had looked for many ages. Wherefore it is not enough that we have the Gospel, or that we hear it, but we must believe it, and lay it up in the secrets of our heart, otherwise we shall never find Christ. Here also you see, that it doth not skil, whether one be learned or unlearned, instructed in many places of Scripture, or in few, unto whom God giveth grace, he enjoyeth Christ. He respecteth not the person, but whom he draweth he is drawn, although in the mean season he provideth that the Gospel be always preached. After therefore that these wise men had found the child Christ, the King of the Jews at Bethlehem, together with Joseph and Mary, by the shewing of the Scripture and guiding of the star, they were not offended at the poor estate of the Child, but being taught by the word, acknowledged that Child for the Messias and King of the Jews, whom the Jews had looked for so many years, and opened their treasures, before him, offering unto him gold, frankincense and myrrh. Wherein again we ought to mark the nature of faith, that is offended at nothing, but cleaveth to the word only, and not esteem those things that shine outwardly. These wise men did not therefore disdain, neither turned back, because the Child, together with his parents, were without pomp, in poverty and misery, and nothing less than a kingly child appeareth unto them, but they go on, and undoubtedly acknowledge him for a King, as they had learned concerning him out of the Scriptures. Moreover they give unto him the honour meet for a King, they offer most preci-
precious gifts, which they had brought, being even of the best sort, out of their own country. Now the world would have done no such thing, but according to the manner thereof, would have looked for garments of purple, and resort of servants, and handmaidens. In such places it is wont to bestow his gifts, viz. where there is great plenty and abundance before: yet it is of that quality, that it depriveth the poor and afflicted of those things that they have, it taketh bread out of the mouth of the hungry and needy, which have nothing, but as they get it hardly, by labouring all that they are able. Whereof we learn, that if we will honour Christ with these wise men, we must shut our eyes, and turn them from all that which seemeth fair, goodly and noble before the world: neither must thou be offended or abhor it, if any thing seem vile, contemptible and ridiculous unto the world: let this suffice that thou knowest that it pleaseth God, which is in heaven. Take heed unto thyself concerning these things, which shine before the world, exercise thyself in those works, which seemeth unseemly foolish and light, as are, to help the needy, to comfort the afflicted, and to count the calamity of thy neighbour thine own. If thou shalt be diligently exercised in these, and faith being thy guide, shalt endeavour rightly to apply thyself, unto them, then other works which have a fair shew, as to institute masses, to be occupied in vigils, to build temples, and such like follies, shall be pluckt out of thy heart and vanish away, unto which works, almost the whole world is addicted; they are indeed fair in outward shew; and seem to be very precious, notwithstanding they are an abomination unto God. But whatsoever God hath commanded, as to do good to our neighbour, and to be touched with his adversities no less than with our own, to bear a friendly and willing mind toward him, these are neglected, and in the eyes of the world appear trifling and foolish; whereupon we greatly abhor them. How cometh this to pass? even because they have no goodly shew outwardly. And the common people of Germany are wont to say, That which shineth not, nor hath not a fair shew, is nothing set by. Moreover God doth sooner suffer
suffer himself to want his own honour and due service, than he would have us to leave off doing our duty toward our neighbour as Christ witnesseth, Mat. v. 23, 24. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Here you most plainly both here and see, that God will not be served, unless we first go to our neighbour, and be reconciled to him. For the same cause also God rejecteth the sacrifices of the Jews, as it is in the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. i. for they that neglected those things which were more necessary, namely, mercy and faith: for thus he faith: “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? faith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts? 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 meeting. Your new moons, and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow,” &c. as is there rehearsed in Isaiah. By these words you see what God requirith and what he alloweth. When we neglect these works, by which our neighbour is served, he will neglect us. For whatsoever benefit we bestow upon our neighbour, that we bestow upon God and Christ himself, as he shall pronounce in the last judgment; Mat. xxv. 40. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” When thou hearest this, thou wilt not glory much of the temples which thou hast built, or mases which thou hast founded. For then he will say, what have I to
On the Epiphany.

55
to do with thy temples and mafles? what with thine altar and bells? thinkest thou that I am delighted with stones and wood, with bells and banners? are not all things mine first? heaven is my seat, and the earth is my footstool. Who commanded thee to build temples? I have set living temples before thee, these are to be edified, nourished, and relieved, but thou hast been occupied with other trifles, which I have not commanded; I know thee not, away with thy temples and mafles: ye ought to have put your trust in me only, but all your delight consisted in such works, as though it had been your purpose to wrest heaven from me, and that I may comprehend all in a brief sum: whatsoever I have commanded, that have you neglected; and whatsoever I have detested and abhorred, that you have diligently done; this therefore I will requite you with again. I know you not, you may resort unto that God which hath commanded you to do these things. Hence therefore let us learn, how the wise men did not abhor the poor and on every side miserable appearance of this infant and his parents, that we also may be so affected toward the miserable and pitiful estate of our neighbours, and may be persuaded that we find Christ in them, and that whatsoever is bestowed upon them, Christ doth acknowledge it as bestowed upon himself. His Kingdom consists in the poor, despised and abject, yea, in the holy cross, in contempt, in persecution, in affliction and misery, as St. Paul faith out of the Psalms: Psal. xlv. 22. 'Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.' In another place also he faith, 1 Cor. iv. 13. 'We are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things.' Wherefore Christ said to his disciples, when he sent them forth to preach in Judea, 'Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves,' Mat. x. 16. They now that seek Christ any other than in such a contemptible form in the cross, and in persecution, do not find him. The wise men find the King Christ being newly born, not in Herod's court, not among the Princes and Priests, not at Jerusalem, in so noble and famous a city, but at Bethlehem in a stable, with poor and despised creatures,
On the Epiphany.

56

tures, namely Joseph and Mary. In sum Christ will there be found, where a man would least seek for him. We must diligently consider also, what these wise men signified by their gifts. For assuredly they shewed by them, that this child is a King, and not a king only, but also God, and man. In offering gold they acknowledged him for a King, as if they would say, we bring unto thee gold, not that we would thereby enrich thee. For gold, silver, and whatsoever is made is thine before, but hereby we acknowledge thee to be a most mighty King over all things. So we also offer gold unto Christ, when we acknowledge him for our King and Lord: but unto this is required a very strong faith. For if I ought to acknowledge him for my King and Lord, all mine own will must be extinguished, that it reign not in me: for Christ only must reign and rule in me, that he may do whatsoever it pleaseth him in me, and concerning me, all things must be committed unto him. So the leper in Matthew did which said unto Christ: 'Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.' Therefore my will must be utterly extinguished in me, if that I will have Christ to reign in me. Christ also suffered not his own will to rule, but he always submitted himself to the will of his Father, which he testified in the sixth Chapter of the Gospel of St. John ver. 38. 'For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' Yea he obeyed his father even unto death, and submitted himself wholly to his will. We imitating this example, which is written for our singular consolation, ought to submit our will to God and his Christ, and to rest confidently upon him. He knoweth how to bring the matter to pass, as it is said, Psal. xxxvii. 5. 'Commit thy way unto the Lord: trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.' And a little after, 'Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him.' Such sentences ought to provoke us, patiently to suffer the will of God in us, whether sweet things or four, commodities or discommodities come unto us: for he knoweth with what temperance to lay them upon us. Blessed is he that believeth these things from his heart. Who being such an one can be troubled with sorrow?
such a man howsoever he be handled, whether he be burned or drowned, cast into prison, or otherwise grievously dealt with, he taketh all in good part; for he knoweth that these things shall turn to his advantage. After this sort we also offer gold with the wise men, when we take away rule from our own will, and suffer Christ to work in us according to his will and pleasure. Wherefore they are hypocrites which know not to suffer the will of God, but howsoever he dealeth with them, have always complaints. They, forsooth, suppose, that whatsoever they think, it shall have success according to their thinking. If it fall out otherwise, they are angry, they do not patiently suffer persecution and contempt: they murmur, they find fault, and vex when those things happen, like horses stirred up with fury or rage. So therefore by resisting they stay the kingdom of Christ from them, and deprive Christ of gold, which notwithstanding they ought to offer and present unto him, that is, they themselves will bear rule, and do not vouchsafe to acknowledge Christ for their King and Lord. By frankincense they resembled divine honour, which we offer unto him, when we confess, that whatsoever we have, we must acknowledge to have come from God, and that we have it freely, and without any merit of ours; therefore all these things are to be ascribed unto him, as to the true Lord, neither must we glory in the good things received, but his glory is to be sought in them. And if he take them from us again, we ought to suffer him with quiet minds, and to bless him with the beloved Job in those words: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord,' Job i. 21. And so we ought to suffer all misfortunes and adversities, as if God himself cast them upon our neck, so that none shall be able to offend us, unless he take away Christ from us. Not so much as a hair of our head shall perish, as Christ saith to his disciples, Luke xxii. Wherefore whatever shall molest us, what adversity soever shall come unto us, we ought never to seek any other God we ought no where to seek any other help and comfort, than of Christ alone. This is he which is
is made unto us of God the Father, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Then only we offer unto Christ that right frankincense of Arabia, when we fly unto him alone in our calamities, afflictions, and anguish. But they that seek after strange helps and comforts, as of forcerers, witches, and such like, they do not offer frankincense unto Christ, but flinking brimstone, wherein they shall be burned for ever, for that they have not believed and trusted in Christ. By myrrh they signifies a mortal man: for with myrrh dead bodies were anointed, that for certain years they should not putrify. Now myrrh is a strong and bitter juice, which distilleth from the trees of Arabia, like unto gum, or as with us rosin issueth out of the pine tree, and fir tree, &c. But then we offer myrrh unto Christ, when we firmly believe that he by his death hath overcome sin, Satan, and hell. And this is a special faith. If we but a little doubt here, it is not well with us. But if I believe from my heart, that death, sin, the devil, and hell are swallowed up in and by the death of Christ, I shall not be afraid of them all. I shall easily be preferred from rottenness which death bringeth, when I have myrrh, that is, the death of my Lord Christ in my body and soul, this will not suffer me to perish. So strong and vailiant a thing is faith, unto which even all things are possible, as Christ faith, Mark ix. Here must we learn daily with our Lord Christ to bring under our old Adam, and to mortify his concupiscences, by the cross and temptations, not that cross which we choose, but which Christ layeth on us, let us bear it patiently and with a willing mind, that so our body may be subdued, and made subject to the Spirit, that being so buried with Christ through baptism, we may be raised up again with him, and he alone may reign and live in us. Hereunto sighing is required, which the Holy Ghost maketh in us for our sake, as St. Paul faith, Rom. viii. that Christ will help us, to keep under this unruly and obdurate flesh, that it presume not too licentiously, and thrust the noble soul into the mire. This our baptism doth signify, viz. that old and flinking Adam be mortified and buried, which we ought always
On the Epiphany.

ways to revolve in our mind, seeing that as long as we live here, sin doth remain in us. Wherefore always something must be repaired in us without all intermission, thro' the cogitation of baptism, as it were in a house decayed thro' coldness even until such time as we depart this life. Whereof St. Paul treateth in very good words, Rom. vi. 3 which are diligently to be marked of us, he faith thus: "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 death: we shall be also 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: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus much concerning the first appearance. Now we will speak somewhat of the second, that is of the baptism of Christ. In the baptism of Christ three things are to be considered: The first, that the heavens were opened when he was baptized. The second, that the holy Ghost was seen in the likeness of a Dove. The third, that the voice of the Father was heard, which said: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' As Christ vouchsafed to be baptized with water, he hath hallowed baptism, and made the water thereof holy, that he which is baptized in his name, might become likewise holy and clean from sin, and might have the heavens open. Now Christ was not baptized for himself, for he was not infected with the spot of any sin, as St. Peter faith, 1 Pet. ii. He behaved himself like unto a good Physician, which before the sick doth first drink some bitter potion, that the sick may more gladly and boldly do the same afterward.
For we in baptism drink a bitter potion, namely, the mortification of the old Adam, which with the bitterness thereof doth greatly trouble us. For that dipping into the water or sprinkling with it doth signify nothing else, but that that old Adam should perish and die. This is greatly furthered by the cross, which God according to his divine will layeth upon us, which we ought not to call from us, but bear it willingly and with a patient mind. But that this might be easier for us to do, even Christ hath taken it upon himself, he suffered himself to be baptized, and took his cross and carried it not resiling or gainfaying, and so was obedient to his Father unto the death, even the death of the cross, as Paul faith, Phil. ii. that he might deliver us from sin, and might again appeafe his heavenly Father, which he did of his meer grace without any deform of ours: whereof we have baptism a sign and pledge, as Paul faith unto Titus: 'But, after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 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; which he shed on us abundantly, thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.' Secondly, the Holy Ghost appeared here in the likeness of a dove, when Christ is baptized, whereby is signified that we also receive the Holy Ghost in our baptism, which ruleth and guideth us according to the will of God, which is present with us, and helpeth us in bearing the burthen of the holy cross, which exhorteth us, is instant upon us, enforceth us, and when we yield to the burthen of the cross, is present and helpeth us: if we fall, raiseth us up again and is with us as a certain faithful companion in our journey. He also maketh the burthen of the cross light, which we were very unable to bear; if he did not put his help. If so be that thou fall into sin, remember to go back unto thy baptism, for this is the only ship, wherein we pafs over. Wherefore take heed of them which make two tables, whereby we pafs over the sea of sin, namely baptism and repentance, believe them not, whatsoever they handle, it is meer delusion: baptism
baptism is the beginning of repentance. As often the e-
fore as thou fallest into sin, have recourse unto thy 
baptism, there thou shalt again obtain the Holy Ghost,
who may be present with thee: For repentance is no-
thing else, but a displeasing of himself, a detesting of 
his wicked life, and renewing of the man, which is re-
presented in baptism. After such a renewing of the life 
followeth the praise of God and thanksgiving unto him 
for the grace received, then such a man bursts forth, and 
behaveth himself friendly towards his neighbour, and 
doth good to him in all things. This is signified by the 
Holy Ghost appearing upon Christ in the likeness of a 
dove: for a dove wanteth the gall. Such they also be-
come, which receive the Holy Ghost in baptism, viz, 
they are gentle and without all bitterness towards all. 
Thirdly, the voice of the Father is heard, in the baptism 
of Christ: which faith: 'This is my beloved Son in whom 
I am well pleased.' This is that Saviour, which deliver-
eth us from the tyranny of sin, death, Satan and hell. 
Hence we may learn, how we must come unto God. He 
that desireth to be the gracious and dear child of God 
the Father, must attain unto this through Christ, through 
him alone the beloved Son, who sitteth in the bosom 
of his Father: unto whom alone the Father looketh, 
without whom he alloweth nothing, and whatsoever 
pleaseth the Father, it pleaseth him in respect of this 
his Son. Therefore he that desireth to go to the Fa-
ther, must cleave to this beloved Son, must lay himself 
upon his back. For by this voice all titles albeit they 
seem very goodly and holy, are taken away, nothing is 
of value or estimation with the Father but only this his 
beloved Son, he is in his special favour. Now he that 
desireth to be in favour with the Father, and to be belo-
vof him, let him fly into the bosom of the Son, by 
whom he findeth access to the Father, as St. Paul faith 
Ephes. i. that through Christ we are adopted, without 
this Christ we are the enemies of God. Whosoever 
therefore cleaveth to Christ through faith, he abideth in 
the favour of God, he also shall be made beloved and 
acceptable, as Christ is, and shall have fellowship with 
the Father and the Son. But where this is not done,
there is nothing but wrath, there is no honesty, no virtue, no free will, neither prayer, nor fasting, nor other works shall profit, thou shalt but trifle with all these. For this is a most mighty and most excellent voice: This is my beloved Son, in whom all things consist and are comprehended, which are extant in the whole Scripture. Even as all things are delivered into the hands of Christ, and gathered into one, that they may obey him, as St. Paul faith: for when God faith, 'This is my beloved Son,' by shewing Christ only, and shewing and naming no other, he maketh it plain enough, that none is his beloved Son beside him. If so be that others are not beloved Sons, it is certain that they are the children of wrath and indignation. For if there were more beloved Sons, He would not set forth and shew this Son alone, saying: 'This is my beloved Son,' neither would turn his eyes unto him only, and glory of him alone, as though he knew no other. For the words seem to shew, that he diligently looked about, and yet found none, beside him, of whom faith: This is he, as if he had said: Here at the last I have found such a one as pleaseth me, and is my beloved Son, all other generally are not such. Moreover, these words are not so only to be understood, that it is shewed by them that Christ is very God, as the epistle to the Hebrews faith: 'For unto which of the angels said he at anytime, Thouart my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?' &c. For it is most certain that Christ in these words is declared to be the true and natural Son of God, seeing that this word was never said to any creature. Howbeit he had been as well the Son of God, and had so remained for ever, as he hath been from everlasting, although this had not been spoken unto us from heaven, neither is any thing added or taken away from him by this name, but we must thus think and persuade ourselves, that so excellent a praise, and so noble honour of Christ was spoken for our cause. For he himself witnesseth in John, xii. 30. 'This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.' He hath no need that it should be said unto him, that he is the Son of God. He knew this before, and
and hath from everlasting and by his nature, that which he heareth. Wherefore when that is conceived by voice and word, it pertaineth to us and not unto Christ. Christ without the word, is such as he is said to be. We have the word without him, of whom it is spoken. Wherefore we must lay fast hold upon the word without the essence, even as he hath the essence without the word. But what doth this word? it teacheth us to know Christ, in which knowledge our salvation consisteth, as Isaiah, Paul and Peter witness. But how doth it teach us to know him? so, that he is the Son of God, and doth especially please God his Father, by which words God cheereth the hearts of all the faithful, and greatly delighteth them with meer comfort, and heavenly sweetness. How is this done? When I know, and am sure, that this man Christ is the Son of God, and doth in all things please the Father, whereof I must be most fully persuaded: forasmuch as the divine Majesty confirmed this by his voice from heaven, which cannot lie, whereby I am certain, that whatsoever that man doth speak and work, they are the meer words and works of the beloved Son, which are above measure approved of God. This therefore I singularly well mark, and lay up in the bottom of my heart. When I hear Christ speak, or see him do any thing and that for my advantage, which surely he every where doth, (for he faith, that he doth, and suffereth all things for us, that he came to serve and not that he should be served) then I remember these words of the Father, that he is the beloved Son, then I am enforced to think, that all that Christ speaketh doth and suffereth, and that for my sake, doth singularly well please God. Now how can God pour out himself more liberally, or shew himself more lovingly and sweetly than by saying, that it doth please him from the heart, that Christ his Son doth speak so gently with me, doth with so great affection look unto my advantage, and with such universal love, suffer, die and do whatsoever for my sake. Dost thou doubt, that if man's heart did with due sense feel such favour of God in Christ, viz. that he doth so much for our sakes, it would not for joy burst into pieces? for then it would look into the depth of the di-
vine breast, yea, and into the exceeding and eternal goodness and love of God, which he beareth towards us, and hath born towards us from everlasting. But we are too hard-hearted and cold, the flesh doth ly more heavy upon us, than that we are able to comprehend such words, we do not well consider them with ourselves, neither doth our heart come near to feel what marvellous and unspakable love and joy they contain in them, otherwise without doubt we should perceive, that heaven and earth are full of the fire of the divine love, of life and righteousness, full of honour and praise, whereunto the fire of hell, sin and death being compared, are nothing but as it were a thing painted or pictured. But we are cold, sluggisb, and unthankful wretches; for we pass over such precious words, as things of no importance, and as uttered of man, as being contained in a book, or written in paper as things utterly decayed, and now long since grown out of use by long custom, as though they pertain only to Christ, and to us. And being dull and senseless, we do not see that they belong not to Christ, but were committed to writing and are extant only for our sake. Seeing therefore that Christ the beloved Son being in so great favour with God in all things that he doth, is thine, and doth in the same, serve thee, as he himself witnesseth, without doubt thou art in the same favour and love of God that Christ himself is in. And again, the favour and love of God are insinuated to thee as deeply, as to Christ, that now God together with his beloved Son doth wholly possess thee, and thou hast him again wholly, that so God, Christ, and thou dost become as one certain thing. Hereunto make many sentences of the gospel, but especially in John, as this: 'If a man 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. Also, And where I am, there shall also my servant be, John xii. 26. Again, That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; That they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me,' John xvii. 21. But where is Christ? In the favour of God, in the depth of his heart, there also are we, if so be that we know and love
love Christ, there I think we are safe enough, there our refuge is placed high enough, whither no evil can come, as it is in the xci. Psalm. But thou seest that faith is required, and that unto these things no law, no work, no merit doth prevail. Hence it cometh to pass, that so precious words are so abstruse and unknown unto reason. For it hath been governed by Satan from the creation of the world, when as in paradise it would be as God, and presumed after honour, which God here attributed to Christ alone, as he is his Son, whereunto it is yet also prone and inclined, and setteth itself against these words, and the words again are against it. For because Christ is here declared the only Son of God, it is mightily overthrown, whatsoever maketh itself God. But who be they that make themselves God? surely Satan and man, which please themselves, and love themselves, they seek not after God, but strive to attain unto this, that they also may become Gods. But what will God say unto these: truly a certain contrary thing, to that which he said unto Christ. Christ is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, seeing that he glorifieth not himself, and maketh not himself God altho' he is God. But ye are wretches, in whom I allow nothing, seeing that ye glorify yourselves, and make yourselves Gods, altho' ye are creatures and men, and not God. So this sentence given of Christ doth humble the whole world, doth shew them to be all void of divinity, and ascribeth it to Christ, and that all for our use, if we will admit this sentence: or to our condemnation, if we will not; so that I may say at once, without Christ there is no favour, nor any beloved son, but very wrath and sore displeasure of God.

 Certain sentences out of the Scripture, concerning Christ, wherein is declared, that thro' him we are loved of the Father, and without him are refused.

John i. 16, 17. "Of his fulness, (viz. Christ's) have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John iii. 13. No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which
On the Epiphany.

which is in heaven. John iii. 16, 17, 18. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world thro' him might be saved. He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John iii. 35, 36. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 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 vi. 40. This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. John vii. 37, 38. 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. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Titus iii. 4, 5, 6, 7. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 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; which he shed on us abundantly, thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Many other such sentences there be, especially out of the epistles of Paul, which every one may gather by himself.
SERMON III.

On the Genealogy, or Pedigree of Christ.

Matth. i. 1, to the 16. The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, &c.

1. Matthew beginneth his book with a title or inscription, by which the believer is provoked with greater pleasure to hear and read it. For he faith thus much in effect: Whom the law and prophets have hitherto promised and preached, Jesus, that is, a Saviour, and Christ, that is an eternal king; that he, according to the promise of God, should spring and come of the seed of Abraham and David, even him do I describe in this book, viz. that he is now born, and made man, and already come into the world. This I handle thro' this whole book. 2. Three lines or degrees are here rehearsed. In the first is contained the stock of the fathers, in the second of the kings, in the third is contained the decaying stock of David; after the decay whereof, it behoved that Christ should come. For so the goodness of God is wont to do, when all things seem even past hope and recovery, then at the last he cometh. 3. Matthew omitted one in his rehearsal, but that maketh no matter, seeing that he observeth this one thing, that he counteth by the right line from David, by Solomon, to Joseph the husband of Mary. Luke counteth otherwise, and useth another order.

When Adam our first father, having fallen by a great offence, was guilty of death, with all his children, as well in body as in soul, it was notwithstanding promised unto him, although obscurely, that both he and his posterity should be delivered, in those words, which God spake to the serpent, Gen. iii. 15. 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head.' Of these words Adam took
On the Genealogy of Christ.

comfort, that a woman should come, by whose fruit such guile and subtility of the serpent should be amended, and Adam redeemed: this comfort upheld Adam, with his posterity, until Noah; for then the promise was renewed, when God made a covenant with the sons of Noah, and set the rainbow for a sign of the covenant, whereby men might conceive a trust and confidence, that God is yet favourable unto them, and doth not purpose their destruction; whereby mankind was again upheld and comforted, even until Abraham.

In the time of Abraham God did somewhat shew forth his mercy, he declared that he would send a Saviour, who should deliver us again from death, both of body and soul; for altho' the body should die, yet it should not always remain in death, but rise again with the Lord Christ: the words which God spake to Abraham, Gen. xxii. are thus, 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' Here miserable men had a cause to hope and look for a Saviour, which should deliver them. From that time all the prophets did diversely foretell of this above measure flowing fountain of all mercy, that is, of this seed, of the Lord Christ, how that he at the last should come, that all which believed in him, might obtain salvation by that promise which cannot be revoked. If men would now open their eyes, they must needs confess and say, that a strange and incredible thing is done with us; that man being in the state of damnation, cursed, and desperate, should be restored by the nativity of one man. Hereupon the prophets cried out with ardent prayers and unspeakable groaning, that God would vouchsafe to send the Saviour whom he had promised. By faith in this Saviour the Israelites afterward obtained the law, and this honour before all people, that they were called the elect people of God. By which ordinances, written of Moses, the anointed was plainly figured and signified, whom this text which we have now in hand, setteth forth; what he is, from whence he is, and by faith all obtained salvation, from Abraham unto David, even as many as were saved. In the time of David God made the coming of the Messias to be more manifestly declared, that it might be certainly
tainly known of what stock he should come, namely, of the stock of David, as when God said unto David, 2 Sam. vii. 12. 'When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son.' And yet more plainly in Psal. cxxxii. 11. 'The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David, he will not turn from it, of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.' Here Christ is described, that he shall be a king, and an eternal king, as it is mentioned of him in another Psalm; Psal. xlv. 6. 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.' Howbeit he is a spiritual king, which ruleth the world by his word; and whosoever receiveth his word, pertaineth to his kingdom; but he that is not under this scepter, neither heareth his word, is not of God, neither pertaineth to his kingdom, but is subject to the kingdom of Satan, under whose tyranny we all are, until the Lord doth deliver us from it, and defend us with his scepter, which is then done when we believe in him. Forasmuch therefore as our salvation doth come meerly by the promise of God, let every one assuredly persuade himself, that he shall never obtain salvation without this promise; although he should do the works of all saints, yet they should profit him nothing hereunto. On the contrary, if we lay hold on the scepter of this king, that is, of the promise of God, we shall not perish, although the sins of the whole world should lie upon us; they shall be all swallowed up in him, notwithstanding no good work be done of us; as we see in the thief which hung by the Lord on the cross, who laid hold on the word of God, and believed in Christ, and therefore he obtained the promised paradise. Here is no doubt left, let us only believe that it is so, and it is so indeed; all things which men teach, or which we have done or can do, being set aside. Here all things must give place, at the coming of this new King, that he alone may rule and reign in us. Let a man intermeddle with those things
that are written of this King, as being his own matters and as pertaining all unto him; for whatsoever is written any where of Christ, it is written for our comfort, that we may thereby feed and cherish our faith. To the establishing such faith, God hath mercifully left unto us his promise written, and hath suffered to be published, that he will perform that which he hath promised. Whoever apprehendeth this in his heart, it must needs be that with sighing he thirst for such scripture and promise of God, who of his grace being not provoked of us, offereth unto us, and bestoweth upon us such goodness and mercy. But let us now come to our present text, which not with words only, but also with a certain force pierceth the heart, and poureth into it love, pleasure, joy, gladness, &c. as if an Angel should now come from heaven, and say unto us miserable and condemned wretches, after this manner: Behold, O man, thou hast sinned, wherefore thou hast deserved to be condemned for ever: (this being heard, the heart must needs tremble) Now although all this be true, yet nevertheless God of his grace hath mercy upon thee, and sendeth to thee a Saviour, as he promised to Abraham, and his seed; be of good cheer, and give thanks to God, lo! here is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, who is the son of David, the son of Abraham, so that this is not only done, but also written, that thou mayest be certain thereof; neither will he, neither can he deceive, believe only, and thou shalt have all things. Now it is to be noted, that Matthew seteth David before Abraham, although the promise was first made to Abraham, and came afterward to David; which promise made to David, the prophets afterward published more abroad, and did by it comfort the people, as in the 11th chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet faith thus; 'There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.' Jeremiah likewise faith thus, ch. xxiii. 'Behold, the days come, faith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.' And many other such prophesies there are to be found in the writings of the prophets, which foretold
foretold of David, that his kingdom should be raised up; as the Angel also declared unto Mary, when he said, Luke i. 32. 'The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' Wherefore Matthew thought good here to set David first, as the better known, and next unto him, Abraham, unto whom the promise was first made, as Mary in her song faith, Luke i. 54. 'He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.' And that promise is now performed, and in this our text described, as we shall see hereafter. St. Matthew maketh a triple difference of fathers, of whom Christ came, fourteen patriarchs, fourteen kings, and fourteen princes. For it behoved that the scepter and kingdom should be taken from Judah, according to the prophesy of Jacob, which is thus, Gen. xlix. 10. 'The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.' Here all things must be fulfilled; and there are thrice fourteen generations, even as Matthew rehearsed them: From Abraham to David fourteen generations, from David till they were carried away into Babylon, likewise fourteen generations. However, there is a person omitted in Matthew, that is, Jakim; and it ought thus to be written: Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jeconias and his brethren; this the Chronicles witness. And after they were carried away into Babylon, until Christ, fourteen generations. Which triple distinction hath a great mystery, as we shall see. The Jews, among other laws, were commanded to observe these three precepts, namely to worship that God whom their fathers had worshipped; secondly, to choose no priest of any other stock than of their own, that is, of the tribe of Levi; thirdly, to choose no king but of their own people. These three precepts did very well agree in our Lord Christ, viz. that he is that one God, that he is an eternal Priest, of our flesh and blood, and a King, our brother, who hath taken our nature upon him; who by his divine power is able to help and save us, and
being an eternal Priest, continually maketh intercession for us; he is a King also, that he may defend and preserve us, who is not to be feared of us, since he is a man as we are, yea, and was made a most contemptible man, that our heart might be wholly quieted and appeared in him our Saviour, who can never forfake us. Who are able to stand in the sight of God, and not be terrified, if that Priest did not stand before God? Who should defend us, if he were not a King? Who should save us, if he were not God? How should he have care of us, if he were not a man, and our brother? with whom we may speak, as well as we may one with another among ourselves. O most gracious Saviour, how wisely hast thou done all things? I know that thou art my brother, as it is in Psal. xxxii. 22. 'I will declare thy Name unto my brethren, as it is alledged in the epistle to the Hebrews, altho' thou art God, my Lord Christ, and King of heaven and earth, yet I cannot be afraid of thee, for thou art my friend and brother; this is no hindrance unto me, that I am a sinner, and thou holy; for if I had not been a sinner, there had been no need that thou shouldst suffer punishment for me. I see also in thy genealogy, that both good and evil are rehearsed, of whose posterity thou wouldst come, that thou mightest comfort timorous and weak consciences; that they should confidently and cheerfully put their trust in thee, which hast taken away our sin; and that we might be certain hereof, thou hast left us thy word, which assuredly declareth it unto us. Among the kings and princes which Matthew rehearseth, some were exceeding evil, as we may read in the books of the Kings; yet God suffereth them to be mentioned in his genealogy, as if they were worthy, that he should come to them, but he suffered not so much as one honest woman to be named therein. Four women are named, which all had an evil report, and were counted lewd; as Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. of whom Judah, the father of her husband, begat Pharez and Zarah, as in the first book of Moses it is mentioned. Rahab is called an harlot, in the book of Joshua. Ruth was an heathen woman, of whom although we read no evil,
On the Genealogy of Christ.

Jof. ii. 1. yet forasmuch as she was a heathen, she was defpised of the Jews as a dog, and was detested of them. Bathshebah, the wife of Uriah, was an adulteress before she was married to David, and of her he begat Solomon. Which women are undoubtedly thereof rehearsed, that we may see how God hath set forth, as it were a certain glass unto all sinners, wherein they may see, that he would be born of the posterity of sinners, that the greater sinners we are, so much more certain and greater refuge we might have to God, Priest and King, who is our brother; in whom only, and in none other, we are able to fulfill the law, and obtain the grace of God: He came down from heaven therefore, neither doth he require any thing of us, but that we assuredly believe that he is our God, Priest and King, and then all things shall be well with us; by him alone we become the sons of God, and heirs of the heavenly kingdom, as S. Paul faith to the Galatians, 'Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.' Gal. iii. 26. Here the hearts of all sinners may leap for joy, that they are counted worthy of such a Saviour. Must not he needs be regenerate, whose heart understandeth and feeleth this? Yea, he is carried with a most ardent love to lead a new life, for he is inspired with the grace of God, inasmuch as he layeth hold of the promise of remission of all his sins.

If we will count upon our fingers the persons named in this text, we shall find them to be forty two, which were in time past figured by the two and forty mansion places, which the children of Israel had, before they came into the promised land, as it is written in the fourth book of Moses; if we also will come into the promised land, which our Lord Jesus Christ hath prepared for us by his nativity, we must also occupy two and forty mansion places, that is, we must cease from our own purpose, and be regenerate man by man, until we come to Mary and Jesus; there at the last we shall find rest unto our souls. But this nativity is hard, for our evil and corrupt nature is very loth to leave her own will and purpose; and again, the case of nature is such, that no nativity can he without grief, yet one hath more grief, temptation.
temptation and affliction, than another. The thief on the cross leapt at one leap two and forty degrees, and came suddenly to Christ; so did many martyrs also, and other holy men. Notwithstanding none can go so great a journey with small grief, unless he be carried with a great wind, that is, by the Holy Ghost. We must go fair and softly from Abraham to Isaac, from Isaac to Jacob, and so forth. But we must begin at Abraham, that we may be found endued with like faith as he was, and obtain the blessing promised unto him; then we shall more easily and cheerfully go from one patriarch to another. That is, we shall pass over one affliction after another, until we be called out of this travel and journey unto our rest; for a man must be so long exercised with afflictions, and so oft renounce his own will, until at the last he be brought under, and his flesh by this means be subdued, that it may obey the Spirit, and walk joyfully in the will and obedience of God. Wherefore let no man purpose with himself, to come unto heaven by leading a quiet life, and following pleasure; thus Christ faith in Luke, ‘It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.’ Luke xviii. 25. And in the Acts of the Apostles, Paul teacheth, ‘That we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.’ Acts xiv. 22. Again, in Luke Abraham said to the rich glutton, ‘Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,’ Luke xvi. 25. So it behoved Christ also to suffer, and by the cross to enter into his glory. And St. Paul faith, ‘All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution,’ 2 Tim. iii. 12. Hence we may learn, that all is poison which is according to the lust of the flesh; wherefore Paul faith to the Romans, ‘If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live,’ Rom. viii. 13. The Spirit which is of God, is ready to suffer, but the flesh resifieth; this Jesus signified by his answer unto Peter, when he shewed unto his disciples, ‘That he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed.
killed. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men,” Mat. xvi. 21. Here it is manifest, that the reason of man doth flatly strive against the will of God; God will have us enter into glory by the cross and persecution, but the flesh resifieth, and is troubled in affliction. Moreover, they that are endued with the Spirit of God, rejoice, if they be afflicted for God’s sake, as it is written of the apostles? “They departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Acts v. 41. Wherefore James faith in his epistle, James i. 2. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

O how necessary is patience for a Christian man? that In your patience ye may possess your souls, as Christ, faith in Luke xxi. 19. otherwise we shall lose them. Wherefore we must enter into a new kind of life; and if, at any time, calamity cometh, we must not burst forth into evil speeches, and take it impatiently, but we must always lift up our heart to God, and bear his will with a patient mind; he will deliver us in his time, when it seemeth good to him, and we must always think, that he beareth a fatherly affection toward us, even when he sendeth perfections, anguishes, afflictions, and adversities, as the epistle to the Hebrews faith, Heb. xii. 5. “Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you, as unto children, My son, despiseth thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers then are ye bastards and not sons.” God give us his divine grace, that we may courageously pass these two and forty degrees, and with the Lord Christ be regenerate into a new life. Amen.
SERMON IV.

On the Hymn of Zacharias.

Luke i. ver. 68. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

That godly man Zacharias speaketh here of things as already done, when he saith, 'he hath visited and redeemed his people,' &c. For he was certain of them; now the child John was come, being about to begin to preach of our redemption, as the Angel had foretold of him, that he should go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just men, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord: this promise he knew should assuredly come to pass. Wherein this redemption consisteth, I think it is already sufficiently known unto you, namely in this, that God visiteth and delivereth us. Which visitation and deliverance is accomplished neither by sword nor violence, but by the word alone wherein consisteth more, than in the blood and death on the cross. For because of the word Christ shed his blood on the cross. It was the word that John preached, when he shewed the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, that is, when he declared our visitation and redemption, which Christ purchased with his blood. This John was the first messenger which preached the gospel to us, to whom the gospel was not before preached, it is as if John himself did now preach it, for now is first set forth unto us redemption, sweet consolation, deliverance from sin, death, hell and all evil. To visit is to come unto us, to bring and declare unto us the word of salvation, by which we are saved. Zacharias conceived to great joy and pleasure in his heart, that he could not contain himself, but he must needs burst forth into those words in
in this hymn, not only because of the infant newly born, although even this brought great joy unto him, but also for that by the birth of this child he beholdest a far greater joy, forasmuch as he was a messenger sent of God to preach his word to the world. He rejoiceth therefore because of such a word which he should hear, and for that he should be as it were altered from an old man to a young man, and should become the scholar of an infant now lying in the cradle, whom he confesseth to be a prophet better learned than himself. Manifest natural joy is here, for that that infant was born after a marvellous manner. Moreover here is joy of the Spirit, inasmuch as that infant should become a preacher of the word of God. And I am of that mind that I think there was never any father, which conceived so great joy of his child, as this Zacharias did of his son, being so wonderfully born by the power of God, and for that especially in the time of old age, when he was now near unto death, he is made a father of so great a Saint, which should be a master and teacher of the world. It is a delight and pleasure unto us, if we beget a child that is found, fair and well proportioned in body, that I may say nothing, what joy it would bring, if our child should be an Apostle and preacher of the word of God to the world. Whatever ignominy therefore and contempt he suffered before, when he was barren together with his wife Elizabeth, he is now most abundantly recompensed with plentiful honour and joy, such great blessings doth God bestow, if we patiently abide his leisure. For if he at any time come, he cometh very rich and plentiful in gifts, and giveth much more than we ever either wished or hoped for.

Ver. 69. 'And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David.' These words are not spoken of John, for that he is not a horn raised up in the house of David, for he was born of the tribe of Levi; but Christ our Lord is of the house, and of the royal flock and blood of David. Wherefore Zacharias doth not sing here, in the house of Levi, but that in the house of David an horn is raised and lifted up; and when Christ was not yet born, he nevertheless singeth so as
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

as if he were born, neither was the horn of salvation yet come; notwithstanding he knew by the revelation of the Spirit, that it should forthwith come. An horn, among the Hebrews signifieth power, confidence, dominion, and that whatsoever, wherein any man may trust, as we read, Daniel, ch. vii. where the Prophet first seeth kingdoms, then he beholdeth beasts, some having one horn, some two horns. And he afterward interpreting himself, expoundeth them for kingdoms and kings: and this is a phrase and manner of speaking peculiar to this language. Now Zacharias signifieth that Christ is our head, yea, our God, whose kingdom is his horn, thus you have what a horn signifieth among the Hebrews. He addeth, the horn of salvation and blessedness, some kingdoms are famous in name and power, others are large, abounding with plenty of great treasures, much people, honours, and all temporal things; but this is called a kingdom of salvation, grace, life, righteousness, truth, and of every thing that pertaineth to salvation, whereby it differeth from all other kingdoms. For altho' they be large, rich or mighty, yet are they counted the kingdoms of death, for they that govern them must at the last fall, die, perish, and leave their power and riches behind them. Nor was there ever any worldly kingdom, which might be called a kingdom of life, wherein is life, peace, and salvation; for only the kingdom of Christ doth glory, and triumph in this title, as God hath raised it up, that there may be nothing in it but salvation and felicity. I find nothing here spoken of manners and trades of life, or of works: For this kingdom consisteth neither in outward life or works, but in the horn, in Christ and his gospel; this kingdom is ours whereof ye have heard, that it is a kingdom of grace, life, righteousness, salvation and mercy: so that whoever is in it, although he be inferior to John in holiness, and far unlike Christ in perfection, yet he liveth in a kingdom, wherein is nothing but salvation, and blessedness, whereof also it hath and reserveth the name; you see what difference there is betwixt other kingdoms, and the kingdom of salvation, which God hath raised up. It is said moreover, that this kingdom is raised up, in the
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

the house of David: but by what means was it raised up? even by the holy Ghost, and by his word, he faith in the house of David, for it must be a kingdom in the earth, and yet a kingdom of salvation: now confer these two one with another, the house of David is the tribe and stock of David who was a man, as the subjects of this kingdom. So that thou canst not say, that he doth here make mention of an heavenly kingdom among the Angels, when as he doth nothing less; but he speaketh of a certain kingdom which is among men, which live, clothed with flesh. David was a man, the subjects of his kingdom were also men subject to death. For as the scripture witnesseth, 'Man that is born of a woman, 'livelth but a small time,' he cannot pass the bounds appointed him: how is it then, that honour and dishonour come together in this kingdom? what agreement and consent appeareth here, where mortal men are delivered from the power of death; where they that are worthy of death enjoy life, the unhappy are happy, and they that are subjects to Satan, become the sons of God? the reason hereof, I hope you are sufficiently instructed in, yea, I think that you understand it, as well as myself. But because the text requireth it, it must be often repeated: we have affirmed that a Christian which liveth in this kingdom, shall never die, forasmuch as he cannot die, for Christ had therefore suffered death, that he might therefore overcome death, and deliver us from it. He took our sins also upon himself, that we might not need to bear them. Moreover he subdued, and overthrew Satan, that we might not be subject unto him. Wherefore it is given to a Christian, that he can never die, he can never be subject to sin and the devil, for that must needs be true which he faith, that he hath raised up a horn of blessedness or salvation. And in whatsoever place that horn shall be, there is no access, neither of death, neither for sin, nor the devil, and that in the house of David. Wherefore a Christian, is both defiled, and yet without sin, and free from Satan. How cometh this to pass? after this manner: Your brotherly charity, hath oftentimes heard heretofore, that God leaveth in us an appearance and feeling of death and the devil.
devil. So that my sin disquieteth me, and troubleth my conscience, and would drive me into despair. Moreover the judgment of God terrifieth me, death assai leth me, as if it would devour me. Satan is at hand and feeketh to suppress me, God suffereth these to remain, and taketh them not quite away. For this appearance must continue, that we may perceive and feel that we are nothing of ourselves but sinners, subject to sin and Satan. And yet under this appearance lyeth hid, life, innocency, dominion and victory over sin, Satan, hell, &c. as Christ himself faith, Mat. xvi. 18. 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;' he faith not, they shall not assail it, nor fight against it, for these two remain to sin and death. Now it is also expedient that I feel the biting of sin, the terror of the wrath of God, the horror of death, yea, and death itself. But all this is certain outward appearance before my sight and the sight of the world, which know and judge no otherwise, but that sin, death and Satan are present. Notwithstanding in the mean time under that assault and terror the word and spirit are encouraging, preserving and affuring me, that God is not angry with me, that my sin is forgiven me, that I shall never die, nor be forlorn: upon this foundation and hope my heart doth wholly rest. And no man having such a confidence in God, remaineth under sin, neither is drowned in death, but is made a conqueror of sin and death. This is, not to prevail or overcome, for that altho' Satan attempteth, yet he doth not get the victory. We call the house of David, a mortal house, sinful and subject to the devil, according to the manner of all flesh and blood, and yet notwithstanding the horn of salvation is raised up in the same, that men of that kingdom may enjoy salvation and felicity. Hence ye see that this kingdom is the kingdom of faith, which cannot be touched nor outwardly perceived of any, which one cannot shew to another, but every one must have it in himself, that when he shall draw near unto death, shall feel sin, or even feel death before him, he may then in faith, lay hold on this kingdom, and believe that his sins are forgiven him. For Christ therefore
Before died, that thou mightest be in this kingdom of faith. Therefore sin shall encounter with thee in vain, death is taken away, Christ is with thee, who can hurt thee, who can do any evil unto thee? Here life and death, sin and innocency, Christ and Satan, fight one with another; but Christ, life and innocency, do overcome and conquer. This is soon spoken, but not so easily felt, yea, the contrary surely is rather felt; therefore if thou wilt esteem, and consider this kingdom according to the judgment of the world, thou shalt utterly err and be deceived. The world calleth that a good and peaceable kingdom, where all things are quiet, prosperous, and go well forward, where is safety, peace and innocency, outwardly. But here is the kingdom of salvation and grace, although it always appear otherwise; wherefore all these things are to be understood in spirit and faith, and not to be judged according to the person or outward appearance. Neither ought it to seem strange that this kingdom doth flourish in the midst of sins, the force of Satan and death, whereof Zacharias here singeth even from the bottom of his heart, and knoweth well how it cometh to pass, faith and the spirit revealing it. Concern'ng sin, I have seen or known none in whom it is not; whomsoever thou settest before thee, sin will by and by appear: Paul, a most holy apostle, affirmeth of himself, that he feeleth sin in his members. Rom. vii. 18. 'Will (faith he) is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.' He wished, indeed, to be free from sins, but yet he could not but live in them: and I, such like also, am also desirous to be exempted from sin, but that can by no means be brought to pass; we do only repress and keep them under; when we have fallen into sin, we rise again: but as long as we are clothed with this flesh, and bear the burden about us, so long sin is not extinguished, nor can be wholly subdued. We may well go about, and endeavour to subdue it; notwithstanding old Adam will lead his life also, until he shall die, and come unto the grave. What shall I need to lay any more? The kingdom of Christ is a certain spe-
cial kingdom, wherein every one of the saints is compelled to make this confession: Almighty God, unto whose power all things acknowledge themselves subject, I confess myself to be a miserable sinner; revenge not, I beseech thee, my old iniquities. All also must sing this song: ‘Our father, &c. forgive us our trespasses, as ‘we forgive them that trespass against us.’ Other righteous and holy ones, which know no measure or end of their righteousness and holiness, do understand nothing hereof; and therefore this gospel is not preached unto them, seeing that they think the kingdom of Christ to be such that there is no sin in it, but that all things in it are clean and pure: they require such a Christian as is wholly clean from all filth of sin, and without sin, as Christ himself; such a one they shall never be able to find. Now he is a Christian, who being a sinner, confesseth himself a sinner; who hateth the feeling of sin, striving against it from his heart. He is not a Christian, which thinketh that he hath no sin, neither teeleth any; but if thou knowest any such, he is an Antichristian, and not a true Christian. The kingdom of Christ therefore consisteth among sins, it is established there where he hath set it; that is, in the house of David: yea, let David himself before your eyes, and ye shall find him to have been a sinner; who notwithstanding, is bold to glory, that he is a servant acceptable to his Lord. There is none of the faithful which ought to be ashamed of this manner of praying unto God, or of any other, not much unlike to it: Lord, forgive us our sins. Is it therefore true, that they have sin, because they say so? Yea, truly, for if they should lie, they should be the children of Satan. But godly Christians are weary of this life, greatly desiring the life to come; for it is not given unto them, in this earth, to go so far, that they may say, We are subject to no vices, we are clean from all sin: if they should go so far, it is Satan that deceiveth them. Notwithstanding they are sorry for their sins, and do lament them; yet it grieveth them to the heart, that they must bear the miserable burthen of this flesh; and they cry out, together with St. Paul, Rom. vii. 24. ‘O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from...
from the body of this death! This loud cry all the faithful give; for, feeling sin, they most earnestly desire to be delivered from it: and in this feeling, and knowledge of sin, the kingdom of Christ consists: so that, even in sin, there is no sin; that is, altho' I do acknowledge and feel sin, yet salvation, and the kingdom, do so firmly abide in my conscience, that God faith unto me, I will forgive thee thy sin, for thou haft faith, and believest in Christ my beloved Son, who was delivered to death for thee; neither shall thy sin hurt thee. Others, who feel not their sin, but trust in their works, and complain not of their faults and offences, thinking themselves clean; such are given to Satan, and not received or admitted into the kingdom of Christ: for they which are partakers of this kingdom, cannot be without conflicts and tribulation.

And that I may speak more plainly, reckon, I pray thee, any of the saints, whom death doth not trouble; yea, I know thou shalt not find one, who is not afraid, and trembleth not at the horrible sight of death: but the conscience taketh comfort; hence the Prophet David faith, 'The Lord hath chastened me sore; but he hath not given me over unto death,' Psal. cxviii. 18. It fighteth against us indeed, but prevaleth not; thus a Christian, wrapped in sin, is both under sin and above sin, and at the last, notwithstanding, obtaineth the victory. After the same manner, also, must he have to do with Satan, with whom he must wrestle all his life, and at the last, overcome him. So in the world also, he must suffer many conflicts and troubles, and yet, at length, become victor. For altho' it be a kingdom of Salvation, which hath neither rest nor quietness, but suffereth the force of hell, death, the devil, sin, and all manner of adversity and tribulation, yet they which be in it, do with an invincible courage endure, and at length overcome all evils. But God therefore permitteth these things, that our faith may be exercised, and shew forth itself. Moreover, that is a pleasure to the conscience, and bringeth unto it comfort and joy it hath such a kingdom, that it may say: Blessed be the Lord God, who hath visited and redeemed us, and hath raised up a kingdom in the house of David.
That is, for he visiteth us by his word, delivereth us from sins, and maketh us conquerors over death and Satan. Thus ye have heard both that a kingdom is raised up in the house of David, and also that a Christian is both dead and yet alive, is innocent in the midst of sins, and although he is subject to Satan, yet notwithstanding hath dominion over Satan. For both are true, for that sin, death and hell assail the flesh, but do not overcome, forasmuch as this kingdom of salvation triumpeth over them all. Therefore with a certain great boldness or confidence he calleth it an horn, that is, a strong and puissant kingdom, which hath no rest or truce; but being assailed of many and strong enemies, is always diligently occupied in defence of itself, and doth notably repel the force of the enemy. So a Christian laying hold on this horn, overthroweth sin, death and Satan. Neither consisteth this horn in our strength, neither are we makers thereof; for God hath made and raised it up by the ministry of his word, whereby we are saved. Therefore Zacharias singeth, that his song hath respect not to his own son, but to Christ. Yea, he celebrateth this kingdom as pertaining to the Jews only, and declareth that it shall be glorious, and maketh no mention of the Gentiles, how they also should come unto it; as beside others, Simeon in his song, the beginning whereof is, 'Lord now lettest thou,' &c. prophesied that we Gentiles also are chosen into that kingdom. But here he fortelleth of a kingdom raised up of God to the Jews, even a kingdom of salvation and blessedness, and that in the house of his servant David. Wherefore he saith, verse 70. 'As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.' Therefore he hath raised up this kingdom, that he might confirm his promise, whereby he had foretold, that he would sometime raise up a kingdom, &c. And now that time is come, wherein he will fulfil that his promise: so Zacharias reduceth the horn of salvation, the kingdom of Christ, to the old Testament, that out of it he may bring witnesses of so strong and puissant a kingdom; for the prophets, from the time of David, all prophesied, that the seed of David should have a kingdom in the earth,
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

earth, yet a spiritual kingdom; and, above the rest Isaiah and Jeremiah foretold, that it should be such a kingdom, that the government thereof should consist in the spirit and word; to these especially Zachariah hath here respect. The other, as Hosea, Micah, and the rest, speak of the same kingdom, but not so manifestly. Verse 71. 'That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.' The Evangelist hath hitherto generally rehearsed, what that kingdom of Christ is, whereof the prophets prophesied; now he speaketh of it also, particularly declaring wherein it consists: First, in this, that he delivereth us from the hands of our enemies, and from all them that hate us. Ye see here and understand, most dearly beloved, that this verse doth witness, and most plainly declare, that we, which are his people and kingdom, live amongst enemies, and that no other is to be looked for of us, but to be hated of them; that also the force, quality, and nature of this kingdom, consisteth in this, that it delivereth us out of the hands of all them that hate us, as the prophet David faith, Psal. cx. 2. 'The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.' And Psal. xlv. 5. 'Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies.' It is a delight unto Christ, that his kingdom is set in the midst of the fight, and in the midst of the haters thereof. These things are written for our comfort, that we which mind to serve under the Prince of this kingdom, be so instructed, that we look for no other than is here prescribed, and set forth unto us; that we seek not here to get the favour of the world, neither that we serve the world, and labour to have no enemies therein; for the words of Zacharias declare, that it is the quality of this kingdom to deliver from enemies. Now if it delivereth us from enemies, and draweth us out of the hands of them that hate us, surely it cannot be a kingdom of peace, but such a kingdom as is subject to the hatred and malice of the world; as ye see at this day, that our enemies bear a deadly hatred unto the light, which hath a little shined forth, thanks be to Christ therefore. No man is any where so hated
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

as a Christian; both the Pope, and the furious Bishops, with their false apostles, also the raging princes, more-over the holy, learned, and wise of the world, all at this day most bitterly hate Christians; neither are they content, that they be killed and slain, but they would have them extinguished and utterly rooted out, that there may be no memory of them, as they think, left among men. And this is the state, these are the badges, and cognizances of Christians; that when Satan by his ministers persecuteth us, he thinketh quite to root us out. This verse giveth us to understand, that Christ is our King, that he may save and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies; which he notably performs, and shews his power in the midst of the world, in the midst of the force of flesh and Satan; as peace and quietness is not left to a Christian but in Christ alone. This also we must mark, that there is not one, but many, which assault and persecute Christians; but yet, that we shall not therefore be destroyed, forasmuch as we have one which is stronger than both the world and the prince thereof, as John faith. Now as he promiseth us, we know certainly, that he doth will and is able to perform; we shall indeed feel the assault, but he will not suffer us to be destroyed or overcome, so that we hope and trust in him. It followeth, Verse 72. "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant."

Verse 73. "The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us." He will deliver us, not only from all evil both of body, and especially of soul; but also from our enemies, Satan and men; and as a Christian must be overwhelmed with all evils together, so also he shall be again wholly delivered from all evils. And he sheweth this grace and blessing was promised to their fathers; such is the manner of the apostles also, that they oftentimes have recourse to the old Testament, as I have said before, that God spake and promised by the mouth of the prophets, &c. even as Zacharias in this place. Some men may now say, They are dead, how therefore will he shew mercy unto them? Again, what need is there to rehearse, that he would shew mercy to the fathers, when it is declared in the
Prophets? But this is done, that the truth of God may be shewed forth, and may be approved unto us; that we should not be ignorant, that those things are not due to our merits. In the first book of Moses is mentioned, Gen. xxii. 18. how God promised to Abraham, That in his ‘Seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;' that is, that by Christ should come peace, grace and blessing, to all nations: Which promise was deferred so long a time, that it appeared, that it was in vain and abolished. So unwise, as it seemeth to the world, doth God shew himself in his matters, as though all things went backward; notwithstanding howsoever it was delayed and seemed, yet it is fulfilled and performed, whatsoever was promised to Abraham; and God hath not only delivered him from his enemies, but hath bestowed upon him all good things, and hath given himself unto him, and all that he hath: And all this is therefore done, because (as Zacharias here faith) this mercy and goodness was before promised, and confirmed by an oath unto them, which are long since dead, when as yet we were not. He is merciful therefore and favourable, not because of our merits, as though he owed it unto our righteousness, but of his only grace, favour, and mercy. These are horrible thunderings against our merits and works, that we cannot glory, that we have delivered ourselves from sin, or that we have deserved his goodness, and the preaching of the gospel; no, it is not so. Here is no place for boasting; but this text faith, that thou, O Lord, didst promise certain thousands of years before I was born, that thou wouldest do it. Who did then desire him, that he would give us those things, when he had determined with himself to give them? And upon this promise the prophets are bold, and stay themselves; for by it we attain unto true goodness, that the mouth of every one may be stopped; that he that will glory, may glory in the Lord. For thus the Lord may say; that thou livest in my kingdom, that thou enjoyest my goodness and grace, it is not to be imputed to thee, but unto me; I promised, and determined with myself to fulfil my promises, thou being ignorant thereof. And here the mouth of every
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

one is stopped; so at this day also, none of us unto whom, thanks be to God, the gospel hath shined, can glory that we obtained it by our own means, labour, or good conversation; for those which are counted the best works, and the most excellent studies, are disallowed and overthrown, as to celebrate mass, to join himself to this or that hypocritical sect, which they call an Order, &c. These the gospel condemn and reject; And how can I attain to the gospel, by that which it rejecteth? Wherefore this standeth sure and certain, that all that we have, is of the mere grace and goodness of God; so that with this honour and praise we may confess, that we have deserved far otherwise, namely, hell-fire; if besides this he bestoweth any thing upon us, it is the gift of his grace and goodness. And this is that which Zacharias faith, that is, was foretold by the prophets, and both promised and confirmed by an oath to the fathers, that he would perform unto us the covenant made to Abraham. Thus he faith to Abraham, Gen.xxii. 16. 'By myself have I sworn, faith the Lord, that in 'blessing I will bless thee. And in thy seed,' &c. Which words the prophets diligently held, marked, handled, and always trusted unto them; for he doth here solemnly swear, that he might wholly assure us, that he would pour forth his blessing upon us. And now the time is present, the hour is come, wherein he hath sworn, that salvation shall come unto us, as it is declared, Mark xvi. 15. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel 'to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, 'shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.' Men surely have not merited it, no not Abraham himself, who was not made partaker of the promise, seeing that he died long before the fulfilling thereof; in spirit, in deed and faith, he was partaker of it, but he lived not so long, till the gospel was revealed to the whole world. The promise therefore was made unto him, although, as I said, he looked not for the fulfilling thereof in this life; that is, his life was not prolonged until the preaching of the gospel in the whole world, although in faith he obtained the gospel for himself. Therefore it cannot be said, that that promise was due to his
merits, otherwise, he must have lived in the earth until the fulfilling thereof, and a due price or reward must have been paid unto him. But now the performing of the promise was after his death; so that every one must needs confess, that that promise was not made to Abraham, because of his merits. Again, it cannot be said, that the Gentiles which enjoy this promise, have obtained it by their merits, which then were not; God promised to the fathers and performeth not, he performeth to the Gentiles, to whom notwithstanding no promise was made, who all at that time were not. God will always retain to himself his honour, and be the same God, although the wicked world cannot be so persuaded; he chasteth, reproveth, rebuketh, provoketh, stirreth, allureth, doth whatsoever is to be done; but the worldings rob him of his honour, and attribute it to themselves, that is, they will not acknowledge, that whatsoever they possess or have, it cometh unto them by the only grace of God. When therefore we glory of such good things, and acknowledge not God to be the author and giver of them, we make ourselves as God and him as our servant; so he is dishonoured, and the honour attributed unto us. But altho' we make merchandize of his honour, yet he hath affirmed in the scriptures, that he will keep his honour and glory only to himself; that so he may be acknowledged to give all things of his meer grace. These things he that believeth, doth also receive them: he that doth not believe, shall at length receive his due reward. Zacharias faith moreover,

Verse 74. "That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear. Verse 75. In holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." He hath defined the nature and property of this kingdom; that is, the covenant made with Abraham, that in his 'Seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed,' &c. Which blessing, faith he, I will interpret unto you, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, ye may serve him without fear all our life long in holiness and righteousness, before him; which to the world and our flesh favoureth not well; for the world thus
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

thus murmureth: I thought that he would have given us some precious thing, as a purse well stuffed with money, a rich wife, fair and beautiful children, fine houses, and whatsoever the world is delighted in; but I perceive it to be otherwise, I hear that we must without fear serve him in holiness and righteousness, and so please him. Wherefore it shall be meet that we apply spiritual eyes and ears, that we may rightly consider and understand the words: Whereas he faith, that he will deliver us from all our enemies, it is thus to be understood; that this kingdom is placed in the midst of enemies, and yet is not therefore destroyed, but always all its enemies, and adversaries are overcome. We must understand also, that the deliverance from our enemies tendeth hereunto; that we should always obey him that delivereth us, without any fear. This is a Christian and an amiable kingdom, that a Christian shall lead his life without fear; God hath bestowed this upon us, that we should serve him alone. The words without fear, include in them, that we shall quietly enjoy the good things of this present world, and of the world to come; for a Christian is sure and certain of the forgiveness of his sins, although as yet he feeleth them. He is certain that death hath no power in him; that Satan doth not overcome him; that the world cannot prevail against him. Such a heart is without peril and fear, and plainly free from them; which is not so to be understood, as though we do not feel sin at all, but that we are greatly grieved when sins trouble us, when the image or sight of death testify us, when, being reproached and slandered of the world, we stand as destitute, and have none to whom we may turn or resort for succour, but God alone. These things indeed are felt, but they do not prevail, nor overcome us: for the heart notwithstanding, remaineth safe and quiet in God: So poverty also is felt, when thou art pinched with hunger, and hast not wherewithal to fill thy belly, to maintain thy wife, and bring up thy children, nor any certain place where to dwell and abide, but all these things shall not hurt thee; thou must ask of God whatsoever thou needest, and serve him
him without fear, as our present text declareth. But herein we for the most part behave ourselves not as Christians, we judge after our own affection and sense, according as the world blame us, or report evil of us. Also when our fields have no corn, no money is in our purse, we think ourselves utterly desolate and forsaken; but a true Christian, with shut eyes and ears, faith with Paul, speaking to the Galatians, Gal. ii. and vi.

O flesh, sin, death, ye are dead unto me: and I again am dead unto you, that Christ may live in me. The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world, that is, the world hath no care or regard of me, and my preaching and life is mocked and scorned of it. But with the same measure that thou measurest unto me, I will measure to thee again; if thou despisest me, I also will despise thee; if thou makest no account of me, I will make small account of thee. What care I, if the world hate me, when I displease not him that dwellcth in heaven? If this hatred continue even daily, if sin rage, and the world talk and prate many things, what then? Let it do so until it be weary, I will pass over these things as if I heard them not. This is indeed to forfake the world, and die unto it; to live without fear; to be occupied about nothing, but that which is according to God’s will; to speak nothing at all but that which shall please him, and which I shall know to be agreeable to his word; that I may live so, and do those works, which I know certainly are acceptable before him; that in my whole life whatsoever I do, either outwardly or inwardly, I may be certain that I seek his glory, and endeavour to fulfil his will: So I am separated from the world, and notwithstanding do still live in the world. No man is less in the world than a sincere Christian; and again, no man is more occupied, and hath to do with the world than an entire Christian; that is, the world doth more attentively look unto him, and Satan more often and vehemently assaileth him, than him that is ignorant of Christ, of grace and of faith: Christ and Paul had experience hereof; they had combats and conflicts with the world; they were troubled and molested, yea, the whole world was against them. Again, a true
a true Christian is not in the world, altho' the world rage and fret cruelly against him; for he always trusteth in God, and faith, Lord, I am thine, deal well with me, according to thy will; only be thou on my side, and I shall be in safety.

'All the days of our life.' All our life long; that is, continually, without ceasing. 'In holiness and righteousness before him.' Here St. Luke divideth righteousness and holiness into two sorts; of which, one is acceptable before God, the other, before him, is of no value: Hence we understand, that the righteousness and holiness of God are of no estimation, before the world, even as the world is in no esteem with God; for that which God calleth just, the world calleth unjust; and that which it calleth right, God calleth crooked; and so these two champions are continually at variance between themselves. That which God calleth holy, seemeth to the world devilish and unrighteous; therefore he cometheth us here, declaring there be two sorts of righteousness and holiness; one, which we ought to observe diligently, another, which we ought to avoid. Hitherto, it hath been the chief holiness and righteousness of all which could be invented, to run into monasteries, to put on monkish apparel, to be haven, to wear a hempen girdle, to give himself to fasting and prayer, to be clothed with hair-cloth, to lie in wollen garments, to observe an austere manner of living, and in fine, to take upon him monkish holiness and religion; and thus, resting in a shew of good works, we knew not but we were holy from top to toe, having regard only to works and the body, and not to the heart, where we were full of hatred, fear and incredulity, troubled with an evil conscience, knowing almost nothing rightly of God. Then the world cries openly, O that holy man, O holy and chaste woman, which have shut themselves up within the walls of monasteries, day and night kneeling and saying rofaries; O what holiness is there, where even God himself dwelleth, where the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, abideth present? These things the world boast of, and greatly esteem; but they mark not, how they pray with no earnestness of heart, how they teach and instruct
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

instruct no man, how they give nothig to any, but catch unto themselves both the blood and sweat of the poor, and leave true sincere works undone. This righteousness and holiness the world extolleth, which notwithstanding stinketh, and is wholly unclean before God; which he will have even to be unknown to us, yet the world refuse to admit any other. But there is another righteousness which God esteemeth and accepteth, which also we must consider; it consists not in a grey garment, not in a black or white cowl, but in a pure conscience; viz. when I believe, that Christ is my salvation, and that my works can prevail nothing hereeto but he doth all things which God hath regard unto. Then I say no more; a grey garment is holy, a red garment is prophane, forasmuch as I know, that not in a grey or any other garment, but in Christ all things consist: For no man can attain unto this, that a grey garment may cleanse his heart from filth, or that a monastery may purify it; for it is necessary that God only purify the heart by faith, and the holy Ghost, as Peter witnesseth, Acts xv. When the heart is pure, the house is unto it as the field, and the field as the house; the market is as much esteemed as the monastery; and on the contrary, neither remaineth unto me any work, place or garment, which I count prophane; for all things are alike unto me, after that holiness hath fully possessed my heart: That even God faith unto me, Thou art godly, I am thy father, thou art my son. And herein we ought to persist, that we, being holy and without fear, obey and serve him. Here the titles and badges of a Christian are seen; and this is his cognizance, viz. that being holy, he is the minister of God, without fear. But what sinner is there which dare challenge to himself this title? Let one come forth, which dare avouch himself to be godly, righteous, holy, and the servant of God; destitute of no good things, either of men or body: Now he that cannot glory of these things, is not a Christian; for of these things must a sincere Christian be partaker. But what letteth that one dare not challenge to himself this title? Even a timorous conscience; for we always feel sin, and
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

our life is ever frail. I see nothing but an honest life; although God require this also of us, yet he will not be content therewith, but there is need that there be a certain higher thing, that I dare be bold to say, Lord God, maker of the whole world, I am certain that I am holy before thee, and am thy servant; not for my own sake, who do as yet feel sins in myself, but through Christ who hath taken away my sin, and made satisfaction for me. These things surely I ought to glory of if I am a true Christian: But this seems difficult and hard; God admits no sin, my fearful and weak conscience is against me. How am I his servant, when I feel in myself, that I serve the devil, and know not that I am holy? I speak not here of the common sort of Christians, such as I, and such like, are; but of sincere Christians, which have a good conscience, and in whose heart the Spirit of God abideth, whose conscience, although frail and weak, and though they feel their sins, yet they are forced to say, However sin is, yet I know no sin by myself, neither am I subject to death and hell; and for this cause they strive, and at last overcome, and therefore they would even die in that confidence. But I find it far otherwise, if I set my life before my sight. Here life and the word must be separated far asunder. If thou wilt consider life, I will set also before thee the lives of St. Peter, Paul or John; thou shalt find even them not to have lived without sin. When thou desirest to be holy before God, trust not to thy life, unless thou wilt perish for ever; for thou must trust only to mercy and grace, and not to life or works otherwise thy case will be very ill: Wherefore our heart must be so affected that it say, Lord if thou shouldest call me to an account, I should not be able either by life or works to stand in thy sight, no, although I were even John the Baptist. Nevertheless therefore I glory that I am godly, and thy servant, for that thou givest me continually; and also, as thou hast promised to Abraham, thou dost, for thy Christ's sake, vouchsafe to shew thy mercy unto me: If I of myself am not godly and righteous, yet he is godly and righteous for me; if I am prophane, he is holy; if I am not the servant of God, he is the servant
servant of God; if I am not without fear and carefulness, he is void of all fear and carefulness; that so, I may transfer myself from myself, and pierce into him, and glory, that in Christ and by Christ I am good. Thus he will have us glory, that we are godly and holy, but not by our own merit; for we must glory of ourselves, as of most desperate wretches. And that this may be plain, mark our life, consider our good conversation, and manners, weigh how foolishly men apply themselves to the gospel, that I am almost in doubt, whether I should preach any more; for as soon as these things are taught in a sermon, that salvation consists not in our works or life, but in the gifts of God, every one is slow to do good, no man will live an honest life, and be obedient; they falsely affirm every where, that good works are inhibited. Nevertheless God requireth of us, that we lead an honest life outwardly; and he that doth not so, shall at length find his due punishment. Now if it happen that we live godly and honestly outwardly, Satan frameth his wickedness: Neither do I know, at this day, how to order myself in this matter, not because of my own person, but because of life; for if we preach of an honest and godly life, the world furiously attempts, without judgment, to build ladders to heaven; which God neither can, neither will by any means suffer: Again, a dishonest and ignominious life doth not become Christians, neither doth a delicate life become them. What therefore must we then do? They which have respect only to an honest and fair life, it were better for them to be adulterers and adulteresses, and altogether to wallow in the mire; and yet, notwithstanding, God will not have us to lead our lives filthy and dishonestly, adjudging thee even unto hell therefore, if thou so do. And if thou lead an honest life, thou wilt rest in it, and arrogate unto thyself; which he cannot suffer. Thou must therefore remain in the middle path, declining neither to the right-hand, nor to the left; and lead a quiet, fair and amiable life, in the sight of the world, which also may be acceptable before God; and yet do not therefore so greatly esteem it, nor count so
of it, as though thou dost merit any thing of God thereby. Thus a Christian continueth the holy servant of God without fear, not by his good works and holy life, but by the grace of Christ. But he that affirmeth that he is holy by his works, is blasphemous against God robbeth God of his honour, and denieth Christ; for whom it were better, that he were ten times an homicide, or an adulterer, than that he should thereby affirm himself to be a Christian, or godly and holy; for he doth plainly dishonour Christ, and it is as much as to affirm that there is no Christ; for he is therefore called Christ, for that he is our grace, mercy, redemption and holiness. If I should not attribute to the divine mercy, that God himself saves me, what less should this be but to say, that he is neither holy nor blessed? Therefore if I am a Christian, I must confess, that I am holy and a Christian for this cause that Christ himself is holy: And altho' my conscience reproves me of sin, yet I must still persevere in this, that his holiness is greater than my sins. This I must live honestly outwardly, but inwardly rest and trust in him alone. It followeth, how Zacharias turneth his speech to the child, and faith, Verse 76. 'And thou child shalt be called the prophet of the most High: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways.' This shall be thy office; thou shalt be the first, that is, thou shalt be the prophet of the most High; thou shalt be the forerunner of the Lord, and shalt prepare his ways. When any prince cometh, certain go before him, to prepare way and place for him, saying, Give place, depart out of the way. John, in like manner, runneth before, crying unto the People, Go aside, turn out of the way, give place, the Lord himself cometh. Such a servant is John, whom the Lord followeth. Such things no prophet at any time hath spoken, but they have prophesied of these things, that a prophet should sometime come, which should erect a kingdom that should continue for ever, &c. But all died, not one remained, which beheld this being alive. But this prophet lived even at that time, when the Lord himself came, and followeth him; for the gospel was begun to be preached, and baptism to be ministered, by the
the coming and ministry of John, who ceasing, Christ began, almost in the same year. Now what shall be his office? This truly, to prepare a way for the Lord. Which preparation is to bring people to the Lord the Saviour; Christ is the grace, gift, King and horn of our salvation. This Lord and King no man receives, unless he be first humbled, that he think nothing of himself; for he cannot otherwise attain unto Christ, neither can stand together, to receive the grace of God by gift, and also to merit the same. John therefore in this part teacheth men they are sinners, and altogether nothing. He which acknowledgeth himself, and seeth himself a sinner before, and to be nothing, well understandeth the voice of John, which is, prepare ye the way of the Lord; give peace to him: he is at hand, who is greater than I; him ye shall hear, him ye shall obey. The other office of John which followeth, is, that he brought men to the knowledge of salvation, and sheweth with his finger that paschal Lamb, who taketh away our sins, that he may fasten them to the cross with himself, and abolish them, as Zacharias speaks, verse 77. To give 'knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins;' that is, thou shalt begin the office, and minister the word, whereby is taught and learned how we are saved: which salvation consists in this, not how we may be famous through abundance of riches, glory and power, in earth, as the Jews have hitherto understood it; but that we may obtain remission of sins, and be made partakers of the grace of God. Now where remission of sins is, there is no merit, no reward or satisfaction; otherwise it could not be called remission of sins. So that this knowledge is, to understand how God forgiveth us our sins without works and merits, and faveth us by meer grace and mercy, as it followeth, verse 78. Thro' the tender mercy of our God; where-'by the day spring from on high hath visited us.' Here it appeareth that they which teach and observe laws, works and merits, strive both against the mercy of God and knowledge of salvation; for he faith not, that forgiveness of sins came by the prayers and works of the fathers, or of any of the saints, but thro' the bound-
On the Hymn of Zacharias.

less mercy of God, which Luke calleth the tender mercy, and such mercy as cometh from the most inward affection and bowels. Notwithstanding this forgiveness of sin, which cometh unto us by mercy, is not without merit, although it cometh to pass without our merit; but a Mediator cometh between, who hath in our stead deserved it for us, which is Christ our Lord; for God would that satisfaction should be made for our sins, and that his honour and law should be performed; here we were able to do nothing. But Christ alone was able, and satisfied for us, who of the infinite mercy of the Father was sent for the same cause, and that to us, that he might dispatch it; therefore he faith, through which infinite and boundless mercy 'the day-spring from on high hath visited us.' Without all doubt it was no merit, but only boundless mercy, that Christ came to us, and merited and obtained for us remission of sins unto eternal salvation. Now he calls him, 'the day-spring from on high,' which signifies unto us his divinity. And this is his meaning, 'on high,' that is, above all creatures; where nothing is higher, but height alone, there is Christ in his divinity, as the morning or day-spring: For he proceedeth from the Father, as the beams do from the sun; whereof we have elsewhere spoken at large. Verse 79. 'To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace,' Many of the fathers understood this of Lymbus, as they call it; but Luke agreeeth here with Isaiah, where he faith, 'The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light, &c.' His meaning is this; Christ therefore came, that he might be the light of the world, and by the gospel might enlighten men's hearts, and allure them to himself, which were held captive unto Satan, in blindness and darkness of incredulity; that so he might guide our feet in the way of peace, that is, he might govern our conscience well, quietly and cheerfully in the kingdom of grace; that we may be afraid neither of Satan nor of sin, death, hell, nor of any adversity, who before have rested, part of us in filthy vices, part in good works, notwithstanding we could on neither side enjoy any quietness or peace, but were compelled
On Christ's Passion.

Pellet to despair under Satan, and the fear of death; nor did we know how to find that way which leadeth unto peace, according to the fourteenth Psalm, 'The way of peace have they not known, &c.' Thus ye have heard Zacharias, in most goodly and fit words, most lively paint out the gospel and kingdom of Christ, with all the fruits, colours and conditions thereof; that it is a word and kingdom of grace, of forgiveness of sins, also a kingdom of peace, joy, quietness, salvation and all goodness. God grant that we may throughly know and feel the same. Amen.

SERMON V.

On Christ's Passion.

1. SOME think so upon the passion of Christ, that they are incensed with anger against the Jews, and envy against wretched Judas, which they vent in songs and reproachful words; and thus they are content, and think this to be sufficient, even as they are wont in lamenting the case of others, to take pity on them, and to accuse and condemn their adversaries. But that cannot be called a remembrance of the passion of Christ, but rather of Judas and his wickedness. 2dly, Some have noted in their minds divers advantages, and fruits proceeding from the meditation of Christ's passion, that saying which is ascribed to Albericus being commonly in their remembrance, That it is better to think upon the passion of Christ superficially or once, than if one should fast the space of a whole year, and daily in praying go over the whole Psalter, &c. This they fellow hitherto, being blind and justly stumbling, contrary to the true fruit of the Lord's passion; such seek their own things therein, and therefore they bring with them images, books, letters and crosses. Some also go so far, that they think they shall make themselves safe from waters, terrors, fire, and from all danger, as though the Lord's suffering should be without suffering in them, contrary
to the quality and nature thereof. 3dly, Some have compassion on Christ, lamenting and weeping for him as being an innocent man, like unto the women which followed Christ from Jerusalem, who were reprehended and admonished by him, that they should weep for themselves and for their children. 4thly, Some so call to mind the passion of the Lord, and so consider Christ, that inwardly they are sore afraid, their reason or understanding is turned into a certain astonishment or bashfulness; which fear ought to proceed from hence, that we should be put in mind thereby of the wrath and immutable severity of God prepared for sin and sinners, forasmuch as he would not grant to his only begotten and beloved son, that sinners should be absolved and pardoned, unless he did make so great a satisfaction for them as he speaketh by Isaiah, chap. liii. 8. 'For the transgression of my people was he smitten.' What shall come unto the sinner, when a son so exceedingly beloved is smitten? It must needs be, that there is an unspeakable and a most serious and earnest matter, where so great and excellent a person doth descend to do good unto him, and suffer and die for him. 5thly, Resolve deeply in they mind, and doubt not a whit, that thou art he which so tormented Christ, forasmuch as thy sins were most certainly the cause thereof. Thus St. Peter, in the 2d of the Acts, did strike and terrify the Jews, as it were with lightning, when he said unto them, whom ye have crucified; so that the very same day three thousand men were greatly terrified, and being pricked in their hearts, said unto the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Wherefore when thou considerest that his hands were pierced with nails, think that it was thy work; when thou rememberest his crown of thorns. persuade thyself that it was thy wicked cogitations which caused it, &c. 6thly, Think with thyself, that whereas one thorn pricked Christ, thou oughtest worthily to be pricked with an hundred thousand thorns, and that without intermission, and much more grievously; and that whereas one nail pierced the hands and feet of Christ thou oughtest to be grieved and molested with many, and far more sharp nails continually,
On Christ's Passion.

tinually, even as it shall come at the last unto those, in whom the passion of Christ hath not been effectual, but frustrate; for Christ who is the truth itself, will lie to no man; will delude no man; and that which he attempteth must needs be a matter of exceeding great importance and wonderful high. 7thly, Such fear Bernard had conceived hereof, when he said, I play'd abroad in the stree, and in the king's privy chamber sentence of death was given upon me. The King's only begotten son hearing this, laid of his diadem and came forth, cloathed in sackcloth, his head sprinkled with ashes, and bare-foot, weeping and crying out, that his servant was condemned to death. I beholding him suddenly coming forth, am amazed at the strangeness thereof, I ask and hearken after the cause. What shall I do? Shall I play still, and delude his tears? Alas, faith he, it is no time now to play, it is no time to be secure, when so weighty a matter is in hand. So he bid the women that they should not weep for him, but for themselves and for their children; and he adjoneth the cause, 'For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?' As if he said, Learn what ye obtain by my passion, and howsoever things fail out, yet this is true and known among you, that the whelp is sometimes smitten, that the malleive may be terrified. So also the Prophet hath spoken: 'All kindreds of the earth shall wail before him.' He faith not, they shall bewail him, but, they shall wail before him. Moreover they were fore afraid, of whom it is before spoken, so that they said unto the apostles, Acts ii. 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' 8thly, That this affection may be wrought in us, the Lord's passion is very diligently to be considered of, and meditated upon, as the most certain profit thereof doth much consist herein, that a man may come to the knowledge of himself, and tremble and be troubled before himself; whereunto he that doth not come, hath not yet attained unto the due profit of the Lord's passion; for the passion of Christ hath this proper and natural virtue, to make a man like unto him; that even as he was grievously tormented both in body and mind for our sins, so we also, to imitate him, must be afflicted in the

know-
knowledge of our sins. The matter is not done in many words, but in deep cogitation, and earnest weighing of sins. Take a similitude: As thou hast great cause to fear and tremble, if, when some malefactor is condemned for that he hath killed the son of a king or prince, thou in the mean season, singing and playing securely as being innocent, art terribly apprehended and convicted, that thou didst subborn the homicide; so thou oughtest to become much more fearful when thou dost resolve in thy mind the passion of Christ. For altho' the wicked Jews be now judged of God, and dispersed yet were they ministers of thy transgression, and thou for a certain art he, which with thy sins hast crucified and slain the son of God, as it hath been said. 9thly, He that feeleth himself so hardened and dull, that the passion of Christ doth not terrify him, nor bring him unto the knowledge of himself, is in a lamentable case; for Christ's passion is not effectual in him. But it is a hard thing for thee to be occupied in these things, and earnestly bent to the meditation of them; therefore pray God that he will mollify thy heart, and give thee grace profitable to meditate upon the passion of Christ, because it cannot in any wise, be, that the passion of Christ should be inwardly and rightly thought upon and considered of us, unless God inspire it into our hearts. Neither this meditation, nor any other doctrine, is therefore set forth unto thee, that thou shouldst boldly rush upon it of thyself to fulfil it, but that thou shouldst first ask and desire the grace of God, that thou mayest fulfil it, not by thine own strength but by God's grace; for herof it cometh, that they of whom it is spoken, do not meditate on the passion of Christ aright, because they desire not help of God, thereunto, but rather treating unto their own strength, and following their own invention, meditate upon it after the fashion of men, and after a slender and unfruitful manner. 10thly, If one should through the grace of God meditate rightly upon the passion of Christ, but the space of one day, or of one hour, nay, or the space of a quarter of an hour we would faithfully pronounce of him, that he hath done better than if he had pined himself with fasting the
the space of a whole year, or had run over the Psalter every day; for this manner of meditation doth change a man, and almost regenerate him a-new, like unto baptism. Then indeed the Lord's passion doth its natural, due and noble office; it killeth the old Adam, it driveth away all pleasure, joy and confidence, which may be had of creatures, even as Christ was forsaken of all, even of his father. 11thly, Since such a thing is not in our own power, we oftentimes ask it, and yet do not obtain it; notwithstanding we must not therefore despair or cease: For that is sometimes given for which we have not prayed, and that sometimes is not granted for which we have prayed, even as it is the pleasure of God, and as he knoweth to be best for us, for God will have this gift to be free and without constraint. 12thly, When a man, thus knowing his sin, doth wholly tremble in himself, he must endeavour, that sin do not still remain in his conscience, otherwise meer despair will come upon him; but he must shake them off, and cast them upon Christ, and so unburthen his conscience. Therefore see again and again, that thou do not that which perverse men do, which, within the secrets of their hearts, do vex and disquiet themselves because of their sins; and strive with them, that by good works or satisfactions, by going far on pilgrimage, or else by pardons they may become safe, and may be made free from sin, which cannot be. And, alas, such a false confidence in satisfactions and pardons hath prevailed very far. Moreover thou castest thy sins from thee upon Christ, when thou firmly believest that he suffered and was wounded for thy sins, and that he hath paid the full ransom and satisfaction for them, as Isaiah faith, chap. liii. 'The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. And St. Peter faith, Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,' 1 Pet. ii. 24. St. Paul faith, 'He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' In these, and such like authorities, thou must repose thy hope with all boldness, and that so much the more, as thy conscience doth more grievously vex and trouble thee; but if thou shalt not do this, but presumest that thou shalt be quiet by
by thy contrition and satisfaction, then thou shalt never come unto quietness, but at the last shalt fall even into despair: for our sins kept and medled within our conscience, and yet before the eyes of our heart, are far stronger than we, and live immortally. But when we see them laid upon Christ, and to be victoriously conquered of him by his resurrection, and confidently believe this, then they are dead and brought unto nothing; and yet being laid upon Christ, they must not remain so, for they are swallowed up in the triumph of his resurrection; so faith St. Paul, 'Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification;' that is, he hath taken upon him our sins in his passion, and hath thereby paid the ransom for them; but by his resurrection he justifieth us, and maketh us free from all sin, if so be that we believe this. If thou canst not attain unto this faith, thou must, as is before said, resort unto God by prayer, forasmuch as this gift is in the hand of God only, who bestoweth it when and upon whom it pleaseth him. Thou mayest also stir up thyself hereunto; first, not now considering the passion of Christ outwardly, (for that hath now fulfilled its function and hath terrified thee) but rather by piercing inwardly, and contemplating his most loving heart, with how great love towards thee it is replenished, which brought him hereunto, that he bears thy conscience, together with thy sins, with so great and painful difficulty. So thy heart shall wax sweet towards him, and the strength and boldness of thy faith shall be increased. Then having entered unto the heart of Christ, ascended higher even unto the heart of God, and consider that the love of Christ could not have been shewed unto thee, except the will of God by his eternal love had so appointed, whereunto Christ by his love toward thee did obey; there thou shalt find a divine heart, a good heart, a fatherly heart, and, as Christ faith, thou shalt be drawn unto the Father by Christ; there thou shalt understand this saying of Christ, '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.' For this is to know God aright, when he is understood of us, not
under the name of power or wisdom (which is a terror unto us) but under the name of goodness and love, Then faith and confidence may stand constantly, and man himself is regenerate a-new in God. When thy heart is thus established in Christ, so that thou art now become an enemy of sin, and that by love, and not through fear of punishment; afterwards the passion of Christ ought to be an example unto thee, in thy whole life, and is now to be considered, in thy mind, after a far other manner than before; for hitherto we have considered it as an outward thing, which should work in us, but now we will weigh it so, that something is to be done of us also: For example; when grief or infirmity molest thee, think how light these are, being compared to the crown of thorns, and the nails of Christ. When thou must either do or leave that which is grievous unto thee, think how Christ was taken and bound, and led up and down. When pride tempteth thee, consider with thyself how thy Lord was mocked and reputed among thieves. When lust and pleasure prick thee, think with what sharpness the tender flesh of Christ was torn with whips, and pierced through. When anger, envy, or desire of revenge, move thee, think with what tears and cries Christ prayed, even for his enemies; towards whom he might more justly have shewed himself sharp and rigorous. When sadness, or any adversity whatsoever, either corporal or spiritual, trouble thee, strengthen thy heart and say, Well, why should I not also suffer a little sorrowfulness, when my Lord sweat blood in the garden, for anguish and heaviness. Surely he we were a sluggish and ignominious servant, who, his master lying at the point of death would be held from him with a soft and easy bed. Lo! thus a man may find strength and remedy in Christ, against all crimes and offences. This is truly, indeed, to meditate upon the passion of Christ; these are the fruits of the Lord's passion, in which, he that doth after this manner exercise himself, doth surely without comparison, better, than if he heard all passions, or all superstitious masses. Such also are called true Christians, which do so represent the life and name of Christ in their life,
On Christ's Resurrection.

We have heard in the treatise of the Lord's passion, that it is not sufficient to know only the bare history thereof. After the same manner it is not enough here to know, how and when Christ rose again, but both the use and the profit as well of his passion as of his resurrection must be preached and known, viz. what Christ obtained for us by them. For where only the history is preached, it is a frivolous preaching and without fruit, which both Satan and the wicked as well know, read, and understand, as we do. But when the use of them is preached, and whereunto they profit, that indeed is a fruitful and wholesome sermon, and full of sweet consolation. Wherefore Christ hath declared the use and profit of his passion and resurrection, when he thus talked with the women, Mat. xxviii. 10. 'Be not afraid: go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee. and there shall they see me.' And this is the first word, which they hear of Christ after his resurrection from the dead, whereby he confirmeth all his sayings, and all his benefits shewed unto them before, viz. that they should come unto us also that should believe in him, and belong only to the believers, for here he calleth not only the Apostles his brethren, but also all them which believe.
On the Resurrection of Christ.

believe in him, although they do not see him visibly as the Apostles did. He doth not defer until we pray unto him and call upon, that we be made his brethren. Let any of us now come forth, and boast of his merit, or of the strength, whereby he is able to merit any thing. What had the Apostles merited? Peter denied Christ thrice. All the rest of the disciples fled away from him, they persevere and stand by him, even as the hare tarrieth with her young ones; he might have called them run-aways, and forfakers of their post in the midst of their conflict, yea traitors and wicked men rather than brethren. Wherefore of meer grace and mercy this word was brought unto them of the matrons, which the apostles themselves then well perceived, and we also thorougly feel, when we are set in the midst of sins, and are overcome of damnation. This word therefore is full of all consolation and comfort, that Christ careth for such wretched men as we are, yea and that he calls us his brethren. If so be that Christ be our brother, surely I would fain know what good things we shall want. As therefore the case stands among carnal brethren, so doth it stand here. They that are german brethren by consanguinity, use their goods in common among themselves, having the same father, the same inheritance, otherwise they were not brethren; so we posses in common good things with Christ, enjoying the same father, the same inheritance, which inheritance is not diminished, by parting it, as worldly inheritances are but is always made more abundant; for it is a spiritual inheritance, a corporal inheritance, when it is distributed into divers parts, is made smaller, but in this portion of the spirit, the case is such, that he that hath gotten part thereof, hath obtained the whole. What is therefore the inheritance of Christ? In his power are life and death, sin and grace, and whatsoever is contained in heaven and in earth, his are eternal verity, strength, wisdom, righteousness. All power is given unto him, he hath rule over all things, over hunger and thirst, prosperity and adversity, &c. he reigneth over all things that can be thought whether they be in heaven or in earth; and that I may speak at once all things are in
his power, as well eternal things as temporal. Now if I cleave unto him by faith, I shall be made a partaker of all his good things, and shall not obtain a part of the inheritance only, but I shall possess even with him everlasting wisdom, eternal strength. My belly shall not be grieved with hunger, I shall not oppress me, neither shall I be afraid of the face of death, neither shall I dread the sight of Satan, nor shall I want plenty of any thing that is good, even as he wanteth it not. Hence we may easily understand the sayings uttered commonly in the prophets, and especially in the Psalms, as where David saith, Psal. xxxiv. 10. "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing: and in another place: The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil times: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. And again; I have been young, and now am old: yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." All which things Christ bringeth with him, for that we are, and are called his brethren, not because of any merit, but of mere grace. If we would print these things in our heart, that we might thoroughly feel them, it should go well with us, but they go in at one ear and out at another. This is that in which St. Paul so greatly glorifieth, Rom. viii. 14. "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, than heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Moreover this title ascendeth so high that man's thoughts is not able to comprehend it; for unless the spirit the comforter impart this grace unto us, no man shall ever be able to say, Christ is my brother. For reason cannot be bold to say, altho' one repeat it in words very often, as the new spirits do. It is a higher thing then that it can be so spoken, for except the heart feel it, as it is requir-
On Christ's Resurrection.

It shall be nothing but only flattery. But if thou feel it inwardly in thy heart, it will be so excellent a thing unto thee, that thou wilt much rather say nothing of it, than speak and talk of it, yea by reason of the greatness of so good a thing, thou wilt perhaps doubt as yet and be in an uncertainty whether it be so or not. They which only cry out thus: Christ is my brother, are fanatical spirits, who vainly pronounce words without any fruit. The case standeth far otherwise and far more marvellously with a true Christian, so that he is thereby enforced to be amazed, neither darest he say or confess any thing sufficiently thereof. Therefore we must endeavour, that we do not hear this only with fleshly ears, but that we feel it in our heart, then we will not be so rash, but we shall be forthwith carried into an admiration thereof. True and sincere Christians enter into the viewing and fear of themselves, thinking thus: O wretched and defiled creature, which am drowned in sins, am I now made worthy, that the Son of God should be my brother? how do I miserable wretch attain to such a thing? thus he is astonished, and doth not well understand the thing. But great study and endeavour surely is required, that a man may believe this, yea if it were felt, as it ought in very deed, a man should forthwith die thereupon; for he cannot understand it according to his flesh and blood, and the heart of man in this life is more narrow and straight, than that it is able to comprehend so great things; but in death, when the heart shall be stretched out, then I say we shall try what we have heard by the word. In the gospel of St. John chap. xx. Christ doth far more plainly declare unto Mary Magdalen this use and fruit both of his death and resurrection, when he faith, 'Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God;' this is one of the most comfortable places whereof we may glory and boast. As though Christ should say, Mary, get thee hence and declare unto my disciples, which fled from me, which have throughly deserved punishment and eternal condemnation, that this resurrection of mine is for their good, that is, that I have by my resurrection brought the
the matter to that passes, that my Father is their Father, and my God is their God. They are but few and very short words indeed, but they contain great matter in them, namely, that we have as great hope and confidence reposed in God, as his own Son himself. Who can comprehend such exceeding joy, I will not say, utter it? that a wretched and defiled sinner may be bold to call God his Father, and his God even as Christ himself? The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ii. did well remember the words of the Psalm, and weighed with himself how it speaketh of Christ, who, as he faith, is not ashamed to call the believers, brethren, saying: 'I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praises unto thee.' If any worldly Prince or nobleman should humble himself so low, that he would say to a thief or robber, or to one that is infected with some loathsome disease: thou art my brother, it would be a thing which every one would marvel at. But as this King which sitteth in glory at the right-hand of his father, faith of some poor man, this is my brother, that no man layeth up in the bosom of his breast, neither doth any man consider of it in his mind, wherein notwithstanding our chief comfort and confidence consisteth against sin, death, the devil, hell, the law, and against all finister success of things as well of the body as of the mind. Moreover, forasmuch as we are flesh and blood, and therefore subject to all kinds of adversity, it followeth, that the case should stand so also with our brother, otherwise he should not be like unto us in all things. Wherefore, that he might be made conformable and like unto us, he tasted and had experience of all things even as we have, sin only excepted, that he might be our true brother, and exhibit himself openly unto us; which the epistle to the Hebrews lively set forth, chap. ii. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that thro' 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 lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Where-
On the good Shepherd.

Wherefore 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 pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people: for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” The profit, use and fruit of the Lord’s passion and resurrection, St. Paul hath gathered very briefly, and as it were into one short sum, when he faith, Rom. iv. 25. ‘Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.’ Whereof thus much at this time shall suffice.

SERMON VII.

On the good Shepherd.

John x. 11. to the 16. I am the good Shepherd, &c.

This text is full of consolation, which in a goodly parable sets forth Christ our Lord, and teacheth what manner of person he is, what are his works and how great his affection is towards men; nevertheless it cannot be understood, but by comparing together light and darkness, day and night, that is, a good and evil shepherd, as the Lord also in that place. Ye have now oftentimes heard, that God hath instituted and ordained, in the world, two manner of preachings: One is, when the word of God is preached, which faith, Exod. xx. ‘Thou shalt have no other Gods before me; also ‘Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal;’ and doth also threaten, that he which doth not keep those precepts, shall die. But that preaching doth justify no man; for although a man be thereby compelled to shew himself godly outwardly, before men, notwithstanding inwardly, his heart is offended at the law, and had rather there were no law. The other ministry of the word is the gospel, which sheweth where that is to be received, which the law requireth; it neith
ther urgeth nor threateneth, but allureth men gently; it faith not. Do this or that; but it faith thus, Go to, I will shew where thou mayest receive and take, whereby thou mayest become righteous; behold, here is Jesus Christ he will give it thee. Wherefore, these two disagree one with another, as much as to receive and give, to exact and reward: And this difference is to be well understood and marked. To hardned and untractable men, which feel not the gospel, the law is to be preached; and they are so long to be urged, till they begin to be mollified and humbled, and do acknowledge their disease; which when it is done, there is then place to begin to preach the gospel. These two sorts of preachings were instituted and ordained of God, beside these there are other, which were not ordained of God, but are traditions invented by men, ordained of the Pope and his Prelates, wherewith they have perverted the gospel; these are not worthy to be called either shepherds or hirelings, but they are those which Christ calleth thieves, robbers and wolves: For if we will rule and guide men right and well, that must be done by the word of God; by which if it be not done, we surely labour in vain. Further, Christ treateth here of that second ministry of the word, and describes of what sort it is; he makes himself the chief, yea the only shepherd, for that which he doth not feed, surely remains unfed. Ye have heard that our Lord Jesus Christ, after his passion, and death, was raised from the dead, is entred and placed in immortality, not that he might sit in heaven, and rejoice with himself, but that he might receive a kingdom, might execute the function of a governor and king, of whom all the prophets, and the whole scripture, speaks very much. Wherefore he is to be acknowledged to be unto us, continually, a present governor and ruler; neither must we think that he is idle in heaven, but that he doth, from above, both fill and govern all things, as Paul faith, Eph. iv. who hath an especial care of his kingdom, which is the Christian faith; therefore it must needs be, that his kingdom flourish among us here in earth. Of this kingdom we have elsewhere said, that it is so ordained, that we all increase every day, and become
come purer, and that it is not governed by any force or power, but by outward preaching alone, that is by the gospel. And this gospel comes not from man, but Jesus Christ himself brought it, and put it into the hearts of the apostles, and their successors, that they might comprehend it, and into their mouths, that they might speak and publish it. Hereby in his kingdom governed, wherein he so reigneth, that all the power thereof consisteth in the word of God; now whosoever shall hear and believe this, do pertain to this kingdom. Moreover, this word is afterwards made so effectual, that it giveth all things which are necessary to man, and bringeth a certain abundance of all good things; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth,' as Paul witnesseth, Rom. i. 16. When thou believeth that Christ died for thee, to deliver thee from all evil, and so cleavest unto the word, it is sure and certain that no creature is able to overthrow thee; for as none is able to overthrow the word, so none is able to hurt thee, when thou stickest unto it. By the word therefore thou dost overcome sin, death, Satan, hell; and thither thou must resort and fly, where the word is, that is, to eternal peace, joy and life; and briefly, thou shalt be made partaker of all such good things as are promised in the word. Wherefore the government of this kingdom is marvellous; the word is published and preached through the whole world, but the power thereof is very secret, neither doth any man mark that it is so effectual, and that it so much profiteth them that believe; howbeit, it must be felt and tasted in the heart. We therefore of the ministry are able to perform no more, than that we are the mouth of our Lord Christ, and the instrument whereby he openly preacheth the word; for he suffereth the word to be published abroad, that every one may hear it. But faith maketh that it is felt inwardly in the heart, yea, and it is the secret work of Christ, whencesoever any knoweth that it is his duty, and is also willing to do according to his divine will and pleasure. That this may be the better perceived, we will now treat of our text, wherein Christ first saith, 'I am the good shepherd.' And what is a good shepherd? A good shepherd, faith Christ, giveth his life for his sheep.
And I lay down my life for the sheep. Here the Lord declareth what his kingdom is, in the goodly parable of the sheep. Ye know that it is a beast of all living creatures most foolish and simple, so that it is commonly spoken as a proverb, if we have to speak of a simple one, he is a sheep; nevertheless, it is of that nature, more than other living creatures, that it quickly knoweth the voice of his shepherd, neither followeth it any beside his own shepherd, being always of that quality that it cleaveth to him, and seeketh for help of him alone, being not able to help itself, neither to feed itself, neither to heal itself, nor keep itself from the wolves, but relies in the help of another; Christ therefore brings the quality and nature of the sheep in a parable, and transformeth himself into a shepherd, whereby he shews what his kingdom is, and wherein it consists, and his meaning is this: My kingdom is, that I may feed sheep, that is, miserable, needy and wretched men, which well perceive and feel, that they have no help or counsel, but in me alone. But that we may declare this more plainly, we will add a passage out of Ezekiel, chap. xxxiv. 2. which speaketh of evil shepherds: "Wo be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves: should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye cloth you with the wool: ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered because there is no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered thro' all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." This is well to be marked; his meaning in this place is, that he will have the weak, sick, broken, abject and lost, to be strengthened, healed, cured, sought, not spoil ed and destroyed: these things ye ought to do, faith he to the shepherds, but ye have not. Wherefore I myself,
On the good Shepherd.

as he afterwards faith, will deal thus with my sheep:
' I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that
which was driven away, and will bind up that which
was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.'

Here thou seest that the kingdom of Christ is such as
hath to do with those that be weak, diseased and broken,
and hath care of them to help them: The preaching
whereof, indeed, is very full of comfort, but this is
wanting in us, that we do not thoroughly feel our misery
and weaknefs, which if we felt, we would forthwith
run unto him. But how did those shepherds behave
themselves? They ruled in rigour, and exacted obedience
of the law; moreover, they added their own traditions,
as they do also at this day, which if they be not kept,
they cry out, and condemn him that transgresseth them,
so that they urge more and more, and command their
own inventions. But this is not to feed well, or to
govern a soul, as Christ faith, who himfelf is not such a
shepherd, for by such manner of feeding, none is help'd,
but the sheep are utterly lost. Now we will speak of
this place of the Prophet in order: First he faith, that
the weak sheep are to be strengthened; that is, the
consciences which are weak in faith, ad have a sorrow-
ful spirit, and are of a faint courage, are not to be
forced, that it should be said unto them, This thou must
do, thou must be strong, for if thou be fo weak, thou
art ordained to eternal punishment: this is not the
way to strengthen the weak. Thus faith Paul, Rom.
xiv. 1. 'Him that is weak in the faith receive you, but
not to doubtful disputation.' And he addeth, Rom. xv.
1. 'We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities
of the weak.' Wherefore they are not to be severely com-
pelled, but to be comforted, that although they be weak
they may not despair, for they shall become stronger.
Isaiah the Prophet thus foretold of Christ, chap. xlii. 3.
'A bruised reed shall he not break: and the smoking flax
shall he not quench.' The bruised reed signifies miserable,
weak and bruised consciences, which are so easily
shaken, that they tremble, and lose hope and trust in
God. With these God doth not deal rigorously, and
after a violent manner, but he dealeth gently with them,
left he break them. The smoking flax, which as yet burn a little, and nourish more smoke than fire, are the same consciences, which ought not to despair, for he will not utterly extinguish them, but always kindle them, and more and more strengthen them; which truly to him that knoweth it, is a great comfort. Wherefore he which doth not gently handle weak consciences, doth not execute the office of a true shepherd. Afterwards the Prophet saith, ' The diseased ye ought to have strengthened.' Who are those diseased ones? They which in their manner of living, and in their outward works, have certain diseases and vices. The first belongs to the conscience, when it is weak; the other to the manners or conditions of life, when any, being carried with a wilful mind and wayward brain, doth offend, by wrath and other foolisli doings, as even the apostles fell sometimes grievously. Such as are so vicious in the sight of men, that they are an offence to others, and are judged obstinate and wayward, God will not have to be rejected and despained of; for his kingdom is not ordered after such a manner, that the strong and whole should only live therein (which pertaineth to the life to come) but Christ is therefore set in it that he may take care of such and help them. Wherefore, altho' we are so weak and sick, we must not so despair, that we should say, that we are not in the kingdom of Christ; but the more we feel our disease, so much the more we must come unto him, for he is at hand, that he may remedy and heal us. Now if thou be weak and oppressed with unfairness, feeling great affliction, here thou hast greater occasion to go unto him, and say, Most sweet Christ, I come unto thee because I am a sinner, that thou mayest help and justify me: Necessity compels thee hereunto; for the greater thy disease is, the more needful is it for thee to be healed. And Christ himself requireth the fame of us and allures us to come unto him boldly and cheerfully; but others, which are not such shepherds, think that they shall make men righteous, if they exact much of them and urge them much whereby they only make that which is evil worse, as we see done at this day; whereas it is come to that disorder, that all things
are most miserably brought out of course, as in this place the prophet faith, 'Neither have ye bound up that which was broken.' To be broken is, as when one's leg is broken, or a wound some where given; that is, when a christian is not only weak and diseased, that he stumbleth sometime, but also runneth into great temptations, and so is brought to that pass, that he falleth and denieth the gospel, after the manner of Peter, who forswear Christ. Now if any should so stumble, and be utterly cast down in mind, nevertheless we must not as yet cast him of, as though he did never any more pertain to the kingdom of Christ; for we must leave Christ's property to himself, that his kingdom may remain unto himself, meer grace and mercy, whose desire is to help them only, which are grieved with their calamity and misery, and do greatly desire to be delivered from it; that his kingdom may altogether abound with comfort, and he himself be the comfortable and gentle shepherd, which allureth every one to come unto him. And all this is done by the gospel, whereby the weak are to be strengthened, the sick to be healed; for it is such a word as is fit for all distresses of consciences, giving comfort to all, that none despair, although he be a great sinner. Christ therefore alone is the good shepherd, which healeth all sorts of diseases, and helpeth them that are fallen; which he that doth not, is not a shepherd. The Prophet thus goeth forward: 'Neither have ye brought again that which was driven away.' What is that that is driven away? The despised soul, which is so scorned and contemned, that it is thought in vain, whatsoever christian doctrine is bestowed upon it; notwithstanding Christ doth not yet suffer, that it should be dealt roughly with. His kingdom is not so straight bound, that only the strong, whole and perfect flourish therein, for this pertaineth to the heavenly life to come; now in this kingdom only grace and sweetness abound. As God promised to the children of Israel, Exod. iii. 17. that that appointed land of Canaan should flow only with milk and honey; even as Paul, 1 Cor. xii. 23. affirmeth, that 'those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon thee we bestow more abundant honour.'
On the good Shepherd.

' honour.' He concludes, 'Neither have ye sought that which was lost.' That is lost which seemeth to be condemned, of whose return there is scarce any hope; of which sort in the gospel were publicans and harlots, and at this day, they who have not so much as a spark of godliness, but are untractable and unruly. Nor are they to be left, but all means are to be attempted, that at the last they may be reclaimed and brought into the right way; which St. Paul often did, as when he delivered two of this sort unto Satan, 1 Tim. i. 20. 'Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.' And 1 Cor. v. 5. 'Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.' Them he cast off as condemned, and yet did not despair of them. Christ therefore is so to be preached, that he rejects no man altho' he be weak, but that he willingly receives, comforts and strengthens every man, so that he always appeareth to be the good shepherd; hence it comes to pass, that men willingly resort unto him, and there is no need to compel them. The gospel so allures, and makes them willing, that they come with a certain love and pleasure, and with all boldness; a desire and love unto Christ is increased in them, so that they do any thing willingly, who before were not to be urged and compelled. If we be constrained, we do grudgingly and unwillingly, which God plainly abhorreth; but when I perceive that God dealeth so lovingly and gently with me, my heart is as it were ravished, so that I cannot stay myself, but I must even run unto him, leaving all other things, after which all pleasure and joy ensueth unto me. Now consider how great an evil it is, when one judgeth another. The kingdom of Christ, as we have heard, is so ordained, that it healeth and justifieth only sick and miserable consciences, wherefore all they are far deceived, which have regard only to the strong and whole; it is great therefore, and very effectual knowledge whereby Christ is well known. It is grafted in us, by nature, to be altogether evil and wicked, and yet we would have every one to be honest, we earnestly regard strong Christians, not looking to the sick
sick and weak, thinking them not to be Christians, if they are not strong, and judge others evil, if they be not altogether holy, when we ourselves, at the same time, exceed the rest in wickedness. Now the cause is our corrupt nature, and our blind reason, which will measure the kingdom of God according to her own opinion, whereby we think that those things are unclean before God, which seem unclean unto us, therefore that opinion must be removed out of our mind; for if thou hast very much regard thereunto, thou shalt at the last think, Alas, what shall become of me, if all Christians must be such, namely, strong, whole and godly? When shall I once attain so far? And so thou shalt bring thy self into such a perplexity, that thou shalt hardly attain unto true comfort and joy. Thou therefore must be so affected, that thou say, Most gracious Jesus, although I find myself altogether weak, diseased, and in a wretched state, yet I will not therefore cast off all hope, but will fly unto thee, that thou mayest succour me; for thou only art the shepherd, and the good shepherd. Such a one I am persuaded thou art, therefore I will not despair although I come unto thee being void of works. We must bestow diligence that we may wisely and well know Christ, that in his kingdom only the weak and diseased are conversant, and it is nothing else, but as it were an hospital, where only the sick and feeble lie, of whom a care must be had. But few men have this knowledge for this wisdom is exceeding hard to be attained unto, so that it is wanting even unto them sometime, who have the gospel and the spirit, nor can any wisdom come unto men which is greater than it. Altho' men look into the scripture, which setteth forth the kingdom of Christ, affirming it to be most precious, nevertheless have not a care what the words signify, neither do they mark that true wisdom is hidden therein, which excel- leth our wisdom by many degrees; for it is not Christian wisdom to have to do with men which are accounted wise, and skilful, and to make mention and talk of them, but to be occupied among the unwise and them that lack understanding, not that delight and pleasure should be taken thereof, but that they may come from
On the good Shepherd.

fin and foolishness to righteousness and sound understanding. Hence it appears that Christian wisdom consists in this, not that we look aloft, and consider those things which are high and wise, and behold and see ourselves in them as it were in a glass; but that we look to those things that are below, and mark that which is humble and foolish. He which knoweth this, let him give thanks unto God; for by this knowledge he is able to prepare and apply himself to every thing in the world. But ye shall find many, yea, even among them that preach the gospel, which are not yet come thus far. Hitherto we have been so instructed and accustomed, that none must come unto Christ, before he be altogether clean; thou must therefore forfake that opinion, that thou mayest attain to true understanding, that thou mayest know Christ aright, how he is the true and good shepherd, whereof we have heard sufficient: Now he compareth the good shepherd with the evil or hireling, and faith, 'The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, feeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.' It is true indeed, that Christ is properly the only shepherd, even as the name of Christ belongs to him alone, yet he communicateth the same unto us, that we may be called Christians; so although he be the only shepherd, yet he impar eth the same name to them that be of the ministry. After the same manner, Mat. xxiii. 9, he forbiddeth, that we call 'no man father upon earth, forasmuch as there is one only our Father, which is in heaven;' notwithstanding Paul calleth himself the father of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iv. 15. when he faith, 'In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.' So therefore it seemeth as though God alone would have the name of a father and in the mean season notwithstanding he granteth the same name to men, that they also may be fathers, howbeit that they have not of themselves, but by Christ; even as we are called Christians, because we have nothing of our -
On the good Shepherd.

selves, but that all things are given unto us through Christ. Moreover, An hireling, faith Christ, which is 'not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, feeth the 'wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth,' &c. This surely is a hard saying, that they which truly preach the gospel, and strengthen and heal the sheep, nevertheless, at the last, suffer the sheep to be caught and torn in pieces, and fly away, when the sheep have need of greatest help: When the wolves do not appear, they do their duty carefully and diligently, but as soon as they see the wolf break in, they forthwith leave the sheep. If they then have fed them well, that they be fat, strong and whole, they are the better liked of the wolves, for whom they have fed them. But what is the hidden meaning of this parable? The meaning of Christ is this: In my kingdom (which consisteth in nothing else, but that the weak be strengthened, the sick healed, the faint hearted encouraged) the holy cross shall not be wanting. For when it is preached, that Christ only, whose silly sheep we are, hath care of us, strengtheneth, heals and helps us, and that our strength and our own works are of no importance at all, (whereby all works of the world, and the divers sorts of worshipping God, are utterly disallowed) the world cannot abide such manner of preaching so that it is a natural property of the gospel, to bring the cross with it as inseparably accompanying it, and he that will unfeignedly profess it before the world, must needs yield himself to bear persecution. Since the case stands thus, it is not hard to perceive what great difference there is between the true shepherds and the hirelings: He that is an hireling preacheth the gospel as long as he is reported among men to be a learned, godly, and holy man; but when he is reproved or set upon as an heretic and wicked fellow, or moved to make a recantation, then he either recanteth, or taketh himself to his feet, leaving the miserable sheep alone without a shepherd, then their case becometh worse than it was before. What doth it then avail the sheep if they were well fed before? If they were true shepherds, they would spend their lives before they would leave the sheep to the jaws
of the wolves, and would be ready always to offer their necks to the ax for the gospel's sake. They therefore are never good shepherds which so preach the gospel, that they may thereby get unto themselves honour, riches and profit, without all doubt they are hirelings, who seek after their own things even in sound doctrine, yea, and in the word of God; wherefore they abide no longer, than while they gave honour, praise and advantage thereby, but as soon as the wolf cometh, go back, deny the word, and get themselves away, leaving the sheep, which very earnestly seek for pasture and their shepherd, who may keep them from the injury of the wolves; but that good shepherd can nowhere be found, who flyeth away even at that time, when the sheep have most need of a defender and strengthener. The same shall happen to us in time to come, when we shall once begin to be touched indeed; then the preachers will shut their mouths, and provide for their safety by flying, and the sheep shall be miserably dispersed, so that one shall be carried this way, another that way: God grant that some of them may stand valiantly in defence of the gospel, and spend their blood, if the case so require in delivering their sheep. Thus Christ hath painted forth the hirelings in their colours, who thus faith, 'I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.' These words contain much, and I should spend over much time if I should handle them severally. He speaketh here of the peculiar duty that belongeth to himself; 'I know my sheep,' faith he and they again know me. Now the sum is this: Christ knoweth us to be his sheep, and we know him to be our shepherd. He knoweth us to be such sheep as are weak and diseased, which he doth not cast off, but hath a care of, and healeth them, although they be so diseased, that all the world thinketh that they are not his sheep; and this indeed is the knowledge of the world. But Christ doth not so know them, nor doth he greatly regard what manner of ones they be, but considereth whether they be sheep: They therefore are the true shepherds, who following Christ, so know their sheep, that they look unto the persons, not to the diseaSe. My Father knoweth
knoweth me, faith Christ but the world knoweth me not; therefore the hour shall come, that I shall die an ignominious death upon the cross, all with one voice will cry out, Was this the Son of God? He must needs be a condemned man, and given up unto Satan, both in soul and body. So the world will consider and know me, but my Father will say in this sort: This is my well beloved Son, my King and Saviour. He beholdeth not my affliction, my wounds, my cross and death, but he considereth my person, that is, my very self. Therefore if I were in the midst of hell, or in the jaws of Satan, yet I should come out again, for the Father will not forsake me. Likewise I know my sheep, and they know me. They are certain that I am a good shepherd, they know me, therefore they come to me for succour, and cleave unto me, neither do they fear, that they are subject to manifold infirmities and diseases, they know very well that I would have such sheep to resort unto me. 'Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.' Some have handled this place, and affirm it shall be fulfilled before the latter day, when Antichrist, John and Elias shall come; which is flatly against the truth, and forged of Satan, that men might believe, the whole world shall at the last become Christian; which Satan did that he might darken the sound doctrine, that we might never rightly understand it. Beware therefore of this delusion, for after the ascension of Christ this was done and fulfilled, and is yet at this day fulfilled. As soon as the gospel was published, it was preached to the Jews, and this people was the sheepfold; now, he faith, that he hath certain other sheep also, which are not of this fold, which also he must gather together, whereby he sheweth, that the gospel must be preached to the Gentiles, that they also may believe in Christ, that the Jews and Gentiles may be made one church: Which he performed afterward by the apostles, who preached the gospel to the Gentiles, and brought them to the faith; so there is now one body, one church, one faith, one hope, one love, on baptism, which continueth at this day
On the lost Sheep.

day, and shall continue even to the end of the world. Wherefore do not so understand it as though all men shall believe in Christ, for the cross must always be born of us, forasmuch as the greatest part is always of that faction, which persecuteth Christians; the gospel also must be continually preached, that always some may be brought to Christianity. And thus much for a compendious exposition of this text.

SERMON VIII.

On the lost Sheep.

Luke xv. 1. to the 7. Then drew near unto him, &c.

In this text, dearly beloved, that doctrine is contained, which we are persuaded, and glory to be our chief doctrine, and which by best right deserveth to be called Christian doctrine, viz. of grace and forgiveness of sins, set down against the doctrine of the law and of works. But it is a very shameful thing, that a sermon so excellent, and replenished with so great comfort and joy, should be heard of a man that is wicked and a contemner of the word of God. This is much more miserable, that all think they have thoroughly learned it; to the knowledge whereof every one will seem to have attained, thinking there is nothing in it, which he doth not perfectly understand, and that there is no need to expend any more study in learning it; although it be not grievous to God himself, neither doth it weary him, every year repeating it, or rather every day exercising it, as though he knew to preach nothing else, being unskilful and ignorant of all other kind of doctrine. And we miserable and wretched men as soon as we think we have attained to the knowledge of the chiefest doctrine, it is wearisome and tedious unto us to repeat it, whereby all pleasure and love of the word of God dieth and is extinguished in us. But before I declare the article or chief point here taught, I think it good,
good, that the beginning of this chapter be diligently considered, St. Luke theweth what gave Christ cause to make this sermon, where he faith, 'Then drew near unto him all the Publicans and sinners, for to hear him.' In which words he plainly signifieth with what men Christ kept company, namely with them, which in the sight of all men lived as it did not become them, and were openly called sinners and evil persons. Whereby it appeareth that the Pharisees seemed to have sufficient cause to find fault with Christ, for that he, which would be counted holy, did familiarly keep company with such men; for they were commonly called Publicans, at that time, to whom the Romans let out some city or custom, for a certain sum of money: as the Turk and Venetians do at this day, for which a certain sum of money is yearly paid, and whatsoever they shall scrape together by extortions above this sum, that is their own. So also the aforesaid Publicans did, which so gathered those tributes and money wherewith they were charged, that they themselves might have some gain thereby. And seeing that a sum of money to be paid for some city or office was not small, they by all means dealt unjustly, and used extortion in all things, in all places, and with all persons. For the Lords and masters held them so strictly, that they could not get much thereby, if they dealt rightly and justly, and oppressed no man. Hence they had a very evil report, that they were most unjust exactors, and endued with small honesty and integrity of life: the rest in general were called sinners, which otherwise lived dishonestly and wretchedly, and were defiled with filthy offences, as with covetousness, with whoredom, with surfeiting and drunkenness, and such like; such resort here unto Christ, and come to hear him, as before they had known him by report to be excellent and famous both in words and deeds. However it is certain that in them although they seemed even desperate, there was a spark of virtue and honesty, inasmuch as they longed after Christ, both coveting to hear his doctrine, and also earnestly desiring to see the works which he did, when before they knew him to be a good man, and heard no ill report either of his doctrine or works.
On the lost Sheep.

so that their life did far differ from his. Nevertheless they are so well disposed, that they are not his enemies, neither refuse or fly his company, but run unto him not of any evil purpose or intent, but to see and hear some good thing, whereby that they may amend their life. On the contrary the Pharisees and Scribes, which were counted most righteous and holy, are such poisonous beasts, that they are not only sore displeased at Christ whom they can abide neither to see nor hear, but also they cannot be content, that miserable sinners should come unto him, and hear him, whereby they being led by repentance might amend: yea they also murmur, and reprove Christ, for that he admitted and received publicans and sinners; saying, Behold is this that holy and famous man? who will now say that he is of God, when he hath society with wicked wretches? yea rather he is a drinker of wine and a glutton, a friend to publicans and sinners. Such a report he is constrained to bear of the holy Pharisees, not that he gave himself to gluttony and surfeiting, or to feed excessively and follow riotous pleasure with them, but only because he admitted such into his company, and did not contemptuously reject them. For in their opinion he should have gone with a sad and austere countenance, in base apparel, and have remained severed from the conversation and company of men, and refused their fellowship, least that by familiar custom with them, he should be defiled, and should have done as they were accustomed to do after the manner of holy men. Of whom Isaiah writeth, that they studied for such purity, that they did fear and suffer against their will, even the touching of a sinner; which indeed plainly appeareth, Luke vii. in the Pharisee murmuring against Christ, because he suffered himself to be touched of the sinful woman: and it was they, that would always be his masters, and prescribe unto him rules whereby to live, and behave himself in this life; therefore in this place they murmer that he did not apply himself unto them, neither did disdain the company and conversation of such sinners according to their example. Now Christ also is somewhat stout, plainly
On the loft Sheep.

plainly shewing here, that he can suffer the mastership of any, but that he is altogether free and exempt from the commands of all, as commonly in the gospels we see him to be at his own will and pleasure, who nevertheless was both gentler and more serviceable than all others: but when they would deal with him by laws, and be his masters, then all friendship ceased, for he leapt back, like the adamant laid upon the anvil and stricken, speaking and doing the contrary of that which they require of him, though they seem to speak even right well, alledging the word of God, as they do in this place, where they come and say, thou must do thus, thou must follow the conversation of honest men, thou must fly the company of wicked men. This truly is a substantial doctrine, and confirmed by testimony of the scripture: for Moses himself commandeth the Jews to avoid evil men, and take away evil from among them: by this text they confirm their sayings, and come with their Moses, and would make Christ subject to their laws, and have him ruled by them; but Christ nevertheless will be at his own liberty: and he is not unlike the unicorn, which beast men deny that he can be taken alive, for being hunted, he suffereth himself to be wounded, to be stricken with darts, and to be slain, but not to be taken, so doth Christ also, who although he be set upon by laws, yet doth he not suffer them, but breaketh through as through a spider's web, rebuking them most sharply; as Mat. xii. where they found fault with his disciples, because they had plucked the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, alledging the commandment of God that the sabbath was to be kept holy, &c. he avoucheth the clean contrary, tearing in sunder the commandment, affirming the contrary both in words and examples, Mat. xvi. where he declareth to his apostles that he shall suffer and be crucified, but Peter admonished him to be of good cheer, and setteth before him the precept of charities, saying, 'Master pity thyself;' there again he doth earnestly and sharply blame and rebuke his admonisher, and faith, 'Get the behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me: for thou favourest not the things that be of God, but those that
On the lost Sheep.

't that be of men.' And in short, he is most impatient of all laws wherewith they deal with him, he will be most free from all commandments, and acknowledged to be the Lord of them: he always giveth such answers, as with which he reprefeth the exactors, neither will he keep any law as though he were compelled to do it; on the contrary, when he doth any thing of his own accord, then no law is so little or so light, whereunto he doth not willingly obey, and doth much more than it requireth; there can none be found more gentle and serviceable than he, if he be not urged nor controulcd of none: moreover he so far humbled himself, that he washed the feet of Judas which betrayed him, according as he himself speaketh, ' I came not to be served, but to serve others,' &c. which is manifest to them that consider his life, how he walked abroad in Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and in the night slept on the ground, fasted forty days, and took no rest, but patiently sustained so much labour, that they feared least he should be ravished in mind, or finally bring some hurt to his body; he doth all things, but refueth to be compelled, and suffereth no laws to be proscribed unto him, which if any set before him, he most stoutly refueth and striveth against them; so he is both of a most stout and of a most mild spirit, neither is there any more stout, or more serviceable than he, who can do none of those things that are exacted of him, and nevertheless doth all things even most abundantly, and as it were overfloweth with a flood of good works, and watereth all things, no man commanding him, or by way of controulment exacting and requiring any thing of him, but he being permitted to do voluntarily and of his own accord. These things are done for our example, that we may learn what a true Christian man is after the Spirit, least we judge him according to the law, and according to our own wisdom and understanding; for Christ is therefore our Lord, that he may make such men of us, as he is himself; and as he cannot suffer himself to be tied and bound with laws, but will be Lord of laws, yet and of all things, so also ought not the conscience of a Christian
Christian to suffer them; for we are so much made free by Christ, that our conscience may know nothing concerning any law, whose judgment and controlment it may abide to suffer: neither ought we any otherwise to be affected according to the state of the inward conscience, than if no law had been given or made; yea as if neither ten commandments, nor one, either of God, or of bishop, or of Cæsar were given to us, that we may plainly say, I know nothing of any law, neither will I know any thing; for in that state and condition, wherein we Christians are, our works, and the works of all men cease, yea and all laws also; for where there is no work, neither can there be any law, requiring a work, and saying: this thing was to be done of thee, this to be left undone; but we through Christ are wholly free from all works, and righteous by mere grace and mercy, whereby we live only before God. And this is our treasure, whereby we are Christians, and live and stand before God; for how we ought to live in outward conversation, viz. in flesh and blood before the world, it doth nothing pertain unto this place: wherefore a Christian must learn so to rule his conscience that he suffer it not to be held captive or entangled with any law; but whosoever will bind and hold it with any law, let him stoutly and boldly strive against it, and do as he seeth Christ do here and elsewhere, where he useth stoutness and earnestness of mind, that no Moses or executor of the law can prevail any thing with him, altho' otherwise he be most humble, most sweet and gentle of all men; howbeit this art is above measure high and excellent, which none but he understandeth, whereof he is the master, who knoweth how to appease all laws and teachers of laws. We are not able to do so; for the devil mightily assaults us, and as often as he setteth upon the conscience of man, he driveth him, to that point, that he entereth into a dispute with him, what he hath done or not done; then such a dispute beginneth, wherein is debated of our sin and righteousnesses, even then man is brought into a dangerous case and into the mire, where he sticketh, neither can he escape or rid himself out, but is fortotherwith deeper and deeper plunged;
for he is laden with a heavy burden, which he is not able to bear, wherefore he walketh musing, gnawing and consuming his mind, neither can he get any quietness thereof; which I plainly feel in myself, neither can I wrestle out, and deliver myself by any travel, although I labour always, trying all means to escape out of this gulph, that I may answer the law, and obtain so much that it may keep silence, and say, now at length thou hast done so much, wherewith I am constrained to be content; but all endeavour and study is in vain; for such a deep pit and dangerous gulph it is, out of which no man is able to escape, although he joins the help of all men to himself, as they can bear me witness which have made trial thereof, and do as yet daily try it; the cause is our nature, which will have to do with works and laws, and hear what they say, and follow them that say, why doth he eat with Publicans and sinners? if he did eat and drink with us, he should do well. Also, why do thy disciples pluck the ears of corn on the sabbath day, &c with whom it will have to do so long, till the law faith, now thou art righteous; for it can attain to no higher understanding, than that the doctrine of the law is the chiefest doctrine, and that the righteousness thereof is the best life before God. In it it continually remaineth captive and bound, nor can it by any means deliver itself out of this prison, being not able to pacify and appease the law, that it doth not exact any thing of it, or reprehend it in any thing, but it is compelled to be captive therein as in a perpetual prison, and the longer it strives and fights with the law, so much worse, until at the last it be wholly subdued. What therefore must I do, the law assailing and urging my conscience, especially when I perceive myself not to do that which it requireth? I answer, even that which Christ doth here, who admittest or acknowledgeth no law, although brought out of the law of God. So learn thou also to do, that thou mayest boldly say to the law, leave off law to dispute with me, I have nothing to do with thee; and for that very cause, for which thou comest to dispute with me, and to enquire of me, how good and righteous I am, I will not hear thee;
thee; for it maketh no matter, what I am, or what I ought to do, and what not to do, but what Christ himself is, ought to do, and doth; for now we are in the bride-chamber, where only the bridegroom and the bride must have to do, and it behoveth not thee to come thither, nor to intermeddle with any thing there; but nevertheless it now and then knocketh and faith, in the mean season notwithstanding good works must be done of thee, the commandments of God must be kept, if thou wilt obtain salvation. Answer again: but thou hearest that it is not now time to speak of them; for now I have obtained my righteousness and the sum of all my salvation without my works in Christ my Lord, and am already saved before thou camest, therefore I have no need of thy presence; for as I have said, where works prevail nothing, neither is the law there of any importance or weight, and where there is no law, neither is there any sin; a bride therefore alone, all the rest being excluded, must reign in the bride-chamber with Christ, in whom she hath all things at once, neither needeth she any thing more, which is necessary to salvation: wherefore the law must be excluded and utterly rejected and cast off, as often as it will invade and set upon the conscience; for surely it ought not to meddle therewith neither cometh it in time, when it will have much to do there, where it ought to have nothing to do, and where it ought in no wise to come; for the conscience refleth in this article of our Christian faith, I believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, which suffered, died, and was buried for me, &c. unto whom both Moses' law, and Caesar's, and divine laws ought to give place. All that therefore is boldly to be chafed from me, whatsoever will dispute with me of sins, righteousness and such like things: behold, Christ would in this place resemble this liberty unto us, that as Christians we suffer no master in our conscience, trusting constantly to this one thing that we are baptized, and called unto Christ, and by him justified and sanctified, whereupon we may say, he is my righteousness, my treasure, my work against sin and unrighteousness, (whereof the law endeavoureth to accuse me.) If it please you to have other
righteousness, works, law, &c. then may ye take them from whence you will, surely ye shall find no place for them in me. Thus may a man defend himself, and stand against the suggestions and temptations of the devil and of sin, either past or present. Wherefore Moses and Christ are far to be separated asunder, as also works and faith, the conscience and the outward life, so that if the law will let upon me, and make my heart afraid, then it is time to send it away, and if it will not give place, to thrust it out by force, and to say, I will willingly do good works, and will go forward as much as I am able for that time that I live among men, but here I will know nothing at all of them in my conscience, and therefore let me alone, and talk nothing of them; for here I will vouchsafe to hear neither Moses nor the Pharisees, but Christ alone doth obtain place to reign here. I will, like unto Mary, sit at his feet to hear his word, but let Martha tarry abroad, and busy herself in the kitchen and about the household affairs. And in fine, I will not trouble the quietness of my conscience.

But what shall I say, whereas in the mean time I daily sin, which surely is evil? I answer, indeed it is true I am a sinner, and do unjustly, but I must not therefore despair, as though I were subject to condemnation, yea or tremble because of the rigour of the law; for by faith I apprehended him, which hath apprehended me, and apply myself unto him, which hath embraced me in baptism, and hath put me in his bosom, and by the preaching of the gospel hath called me to the communion of all his good things, bidding me to believe in him. Now as I have apprehended him by faith, then may I be bold to bid the Pharisees, and Moses with his tables, all the lawyers with their books, all men with their works, hold their peace and give place. No law hath then any power to convince or accuse me; for in this Christ I have all things abundantly, whatsoever can be required in me. This, I say, is the doctrine and art of Christians, the scope and end whereof is this, even to reign with Christ. But blockish men do not understand it, taking hereupon occasion to live more freely,
On the lost Sheep.

as they lift, saying what need is there that I should do good works forasmuch as Christ hath abrogated the law, &c. Their foolish babbling is in no wise to be born, for Christ on the other part also to be considered of thee, and thou must mark what he doth more; for here he himself faith, That he is that man that seeketh the miserable and lost sheep, which also he witnesseth by his present deed, by receiving sinners and Publicans, and by preaching unto them. Whereby thou seest that he doth fulfil much more than the law commandeth to be done, and teacheth thee to do the same by his example. He is of such an heroical spirit, that he will not be under the law, yet doth he of his own accord more than the law requireth; do thou so also, neither look when thou shalt be forced and driven on by the law, but without the law, and of thine own accord, do that which is needful to be done, as Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 16. admonisfeth, saying, 'As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. And Paul, Rom. vi. 18. 'Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.' These are they, which do all things with a free conscience, without the law, and unconstrained; for when the gospel is truly in the heart, it maketh a man to be such an one, as doth not look while the law cometh, but it is so full of joy in Christ, that he is carried unto good works, doing well to all men, as much as he is able, and that of his own accord, before the law cometh into his mind. Moreover he bestoweth both body and life, having no regard what he must therefore suffer, and so he is full of good works, which voluntarily flowing as it were out of a continual fountain are derived unto many: As Christ being compelled, doth not abide to take up so much as a straw, but uncompelled giveth himself to be crucified for me, and for the whole world, dying for the lost sheep. Howbeit it is very necessary to discern these things well, when it is come to hand-strokes, and within the throwing of the dart, as it is said, the law and sin disputing now with thy conscience, then see that thou do boldly reprefs Moses, and bid him keep silence,
tending him abroad to the old man. Drive him into Moses school, that he may dispute with him, and say, Doft thou hear? Thou art too slow and sluggish in giving and serving thy neighbour. When Christ is to be served of thee, thou wilt more willingly serve thy belly; thou wilt come in no peril for Christ's sake, thou dost deceitfully rob thy neighbour, circumventing him by what means soever thou canst: For that sluggish as flying labour, and following only idleness and wantonness, use the tables of stone, whom even against his will will constrain to go on in his duty. Wherefore when thou shalt set upon me, in that thing which is right and meet (thou must say unto Moses) I will willingly hear thee, and follow thy admonitions, namely according to the outward man and in outward life, where thou mayest bear rule like a school-master, and as one governing a family: Where thou hast power to command me, to be obedient, modest, patient, good to my neighbour, dutiful and liberal to the poor, and to celebrate God with praises poured forth to his glory; moreover to be content for his word sake to abide the contumelis and flanders of all persons, and to suffer any kind of injury of the world. With all which I am not greatly moved, yea, I would do more things than I am able to do according to the outward man; for the Spirit, by the testimony of Christ, is willing and ready, although the flesh be weak. But if thou wilt go so far, whether it is unlawful for thee to come, into my heart and conscience, there will I neither see nor hear thee; for there I have an unspreakable treasure, whose name is Christ, and in fine, whatsoever pertaineth to bridle the outward man, thou canst not lay on a sufficient burden but thou must not burthen the conscience at all; for he that enjoyeth Christ is above all laws, as Paul faith, the law is not given for the just, who notwithstanding in the meantime doth in more things, than he is able to fulfil in the flesh: For according, to the law we are sinners, and concerning our person we must abide under it; but through Christ we are far above the law. So Moses
honest civilly before the world; for he doth not make Christians righteous and honest: However I will not deny that he doth this, that he sheweth unto them their duties, which otherwise they would willingly fulfil and satisfy, but the flesh doth not so willingly and with that readiness it ought, follow the spirit. In which respect they are to be admonished and urged, the conscience nevertheless remaining free, so that the law hath no power to accuse them; wherefore such doctrine and admonition ought to be among Christians (as it is certain that among the apostles there was) whereby every man may be admonished of his state and office. As for the rest, which are not Christians, they must be ruled by Moses laws, and burdened with them both outwardly and inwardly, whereby they may be forced and afflicted, that they may do that which is right, forsaking that which is evil, although they do it not with a patient and willing mind. Of which kind are the rash multitude of the unruly common sort of obstinate people, who do not regard nor understand the liberty of Christ, although they can babble and glory of many things concerning the gospel, and they notwithstanding do abuse it only to the lust of their mind; let them know that they are under the discipline and correction of Moses: For they are not such men as are capable of this doctrine, which live with such a secure mind, that they think they have no need of the gospel, or that they sufficiently know it. But they only are capable hereof, which are busied with the disputation of the conscience and the law, of sin and of the wrath of God, in consideration whereof they become astonished, feeling the words of the heart speaking thus: Alas how wretchedly have I led my life? What account shall I make unto God? and so they are too fearful and amazed; the other more than is meet, secure and presumptuous, feeling no law nor sin, no nor any trouble at all. And the case standeth very unequally with both, for they which should have nothing to do with the law, do most of all wrestle with it, and alone feel it; but others of whom only the law should be felt, are nothing moved with it, yea, the more grievously they are terrified by the law and the
wrath of God, so much they become more indurate, There must therefore be another matter to amend these, namely the slayer and tormentor, who may teach them, being unwilling to do well in the name of the Lord and with favour, in the name of another to do that that becometh them with no favour, the reward also of hell-fire and all miseries being set before them. Howbeit Christ doth here and every where else, both by doctrine and also by his own example teach us, which feel our sin and the burden of the law, and would willingly be Christians, to accustom ourselves to fight against it, and drive it from us unto others; to give up no place to the devil, who would by the law break up the bride-chamber of Christ, and thrust himself into his place; that is, take away from the conscience her joy and comfort, whereby he may draw man into despair, that he may not be able cheerfully to lift up his heart and head before God: For this is the art of Christians, whom it behoveth to know and learn more things, than that prophane and blockish common fort knoweth and understandeth, that we may know well the manner how to fight with the devil, and to bear his assault, as often as he shall set upon us, and dispute with us out of Moses; with whom when he goeth about such things, we must not dispute in many works, but must forthwith appeal from Moses to Christ, and cleave to him: For all his travels and deceits tend unto this end, that he may craftily pluck us from Christ, and draw us unto Moses; for he knoweth full well the matter being brought to that point, the victory shall be on his side. Wherefore thou must again and again take heed that thou suffer not thyself to be plucked out of this haven, neither to be enticed out of this circle; and although he shall lay many things against thee out of the law, as it is the word of God, it is meet that thou obey, yet mayest thou answer him and say, Doest thou not hear, that I will now know or hear nothing concerning the law? For we are now in that circle and haven, wherein it is not inquired what I must do or leave undone, but by what means we obtain to have God gentle and favourable unto us and how we get remission of sins. Here I will abide in the arms of
of Christ, cleaving inseparably about his neck, and creeping into his bosom, whatsoever the law shall say, and my heart shall feel; nevertheless, so that we keep the principal part of our faith sincere, and the chief point safe, outwardly I will willingly do and suffer what burden forever it shall lay upon me. Behold, he that understandeth this art well, should be a right and perfect man, as Christ was, so far above all laws, that he might be bold to call Peter Satan, and the Pharisees fools, and leaders of the blind, and put Moses himself to silence, and so live altogether without the law, and yet at the same time fulfil all laws; be obstinate and stout against all that will enforce and constrain him, and yet notwithstanding of his own accord profit and obey all. But truly herein consisteth all the defect, that we do never fully and perfectly learn this art, the devil so letting and hindring us, that we go preposterously to work, being too ready and willing to hear all things whatsoever the law faith; at whose threatnings also we are not a little astonished, which it had been better for us not to have heard. Again in outward things also we give ourselves to liberty more than is convenient, whereas the body should be kept under and bridled with works, whereby it might be compelled to bear whatsoever should be grievous unto it, when as yet it oftentimes sinneth, yet so, that sin abide without, where it must abide, and have his Moses, who always may be near unto it, with his exactions; however inwardly let no sin or law bear rule to reign, but let Christ alone rule, and reign by meer grace, joy and comfort. So all things should be done rightly, and man should be apt and fit to all good things, both to do and also to suffer, with a glad and obedient heart, by faith not feigned, in the grace of God through Christ: Wherefore let the conscience bear rule over all laws, let the flesh be subject to every law. Now he that is skilful of this art, let him give thanks to God, and take heed that he be not too wise in it, and that he conceive not a false persuasion of knowledge; for I and my like do not yet understand it, as we ought to understand it, although we be most expert of all, and have been long exercised therein; for it is such an
art as no man knoweth, but they which are Christians, to the learning wherein they are compelled to be scholars all their life long. Therefore far from the knowing hereof are those secure spirits, who alone know all things, but who in very deed beside that false persuasion of knowledge, know nothing, and by this very persuasion they are farthest of all drawn from this art, and from the whole gospel; neither is there any thing more grievous, no nor a greater hurt can be brought unto Christianity, than by those petty doctors and masters, which seem unto themselves to have some wisdom; for they fill all corners of the world with sects and factions, being such man as serve neither God nor men, hear neither the law nor the gospel, but contemn the law with a secure mind, and loath the gospel with hearing it, always seeking after new doctrine. But truly we teach nothing for their fakes, inasmuch as they are not worthy of our doctrine and are so punished of God, that they can never learn it, and bring forth any fruit thereby, although they hear it; therefore let us keep it, whereof they take away nothing from us, but that they hear a vain noise and sound of it. Thus much for the first part of this sermon, in which Christ teacheth by his own example, how every man ought to keep his conscience free from all disputation of the law, and terror of the wrath of God and sin: Now consequently I think it good diligently to consider this excellent parable of Christ, where he faith, Lukexv.4. ' Whatman of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leavetheninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?' Christ is not only of a great mind, who will not follow the words and mastership of them, but bringeth probable causes of his greatnes, with wisdom refelling their objections, and stopping their mouths, so that they cannot murmur against him. Moreover, he convinceth them by their own examples and deed, and concludes, that they ought for good cause to be utterly ashamed, being bold to speak unto him, and reprehend that in him, in so great a matter, which they themselves do in a much less; for by what means could he
he more readily answer them, that if he should say, "Will you, O excellent and most wise masters, command this thing, and teach me to drive away and alienate from me miserable sinners, which long after me, and come to hear me; there is nothing that you yourselves do not for one lost sheep, who leaving ninety and nine in the wilderness (that is, in the field and at the fold) run to seek that which is lost, neither do ye leave off seeking, until ye have found it, and brought it home? And you count it to be well done, for which if any should find fault with you, without doubt ye would reprove him as mad and beside himself. And should not I, as a Saviour of souls, do likewise with men, as you do with a lost sheep? Seeing there is no comparison even of one soul to all the creatures living and breathing in the earth. Why therefore are you not utterly ashamed of your doings, presuming to reprehend me in this work, which you yourselves are forced to commend? Wherefore if ye reprove and find fault with me, you yourselves are first to be reproved and found fault with. This is rightly to have answered, and with honour to have stopped the mouths of these fault-finders, the causes being sufficiently shewed, why they ought not here to find fault with or control him. They have well yielded unto him with shame, as it is meet, and have gained nothing by their mastership than utter shame and ignominy; for it is a shame for such masters, and an exceeding great abomination, that they stick not to arrogate so much upon themselves, as to teach that man, and admonish him of his duty, who of God is appointed a master over all. But it ought so to fall out that he which will rule and judge a Christian by his mastership, and endeavoureth to bring him from his baptism and the article of Christ, to be ruled by his wisdom or law, doth not only become a fool, but is also the author of extreme abomination and homicide; for he worketh shame to the temple and sanctuary of God, and with devilish raths invadeth his kingdom, where he alone with the holy Ghost must reign. Wherefore he well deserveth, that God bring him to shame and ignominy before the whole world, seeing that he taketh
On the left Sheep.

to himself mastership in that place, where only Christ ought to be master, and not unworthily to his great evil he kicketh against the prick. Wherefore it is not good to jest with Christians, for they are saints, and let him that is wife not be too busy with that man, whose name is Christ, for he cannot get no gain thereby, for Christ is most impatient of all their mastership and doctrine; so also a Christian must by no means suffer them, for if he suffer them, giving place to such suggestions, to wit, thou oughtest to have done this or that, or as yet thou oughtest to do it, then is his case become exceeding ill, inasmuch as he hath fallen from Christ. Therefore we must endeavour to hold Christ fast, having no regard, although all the world should teach us; for if we shall abide with him, and hold the true understanding of the article concerning him, we shall easily overcome all such masters and teachers; for this Christ will be free from all mastership contending to be the only master and controuller of all men, that either in favour they may reverently acknowledge him for their Lord and master, and themselves for fools, or in fury and indignation, being subject to the reproach of all men, may utterly perish. But I have said before, that the present doctrine for the exceeding goodness, sweetness and consolation thereof, is not to be set forth to the rude, blockish and unruly common sort, to whom we do not preach it, but to those only, which strive with terror and anguish of conscience, or stand in peril and danger of death, and dispute with the devil concerning their sins committed, whereby he would drive them into despair. Before these this amiable image is to be set, by which they may receive comfort and cheerfulness of mind; as for others which live with a secure mind, and little know what anguish and spiritual sorrow is, they are to be led to Moses to the tormentor. This is an image most pleasant and amiable, and more artificially painted, than any Apelles is able to paint with his pencil, neither doth any man excel in such eloquence of speech, that he is able sufficiently to declare and comprehend it in words. Wherefore it is to be apprehended in the heart by faith; nevertheless we must speak something
On the lost Sheep.

thing of it, that we may give cause and occasion to others to think and consider more earnestly thereof. I also faith he, have an hundred sheep, that is, that little flock of all Christendom, of which number one is lost, and fallen from the communion of Christians: Now dost thou desire to know the affection of my mind? Then must thou bestow thy diligence, to paint out well and artfully both the shepherd and the lost sheep; for that shepherd, which is but a man, and guideth the flock, which is created to be slain, hath great regard to preserve it in safety, and is not a little careful how he may find the sheep when it is lost, and bring it home again; and with no less desire the sheep longeth after the shepherd; Whom if it understand to be his own shepherd (as by nature it doth) it feareth him not, but runneth unto him with great confidence, and being full of good hope, goeth before him; yea, as soon as ever it heareth his voice, it answereth by bleating. On the other side also, the shepherd hath great care and desire to find again the lost sheep which hath strayed from him; both he himself seeketh, and sendeth forth servants to seek, wheresoever he thinketh it is strayed, neither doth he leave seeking, until, having found it, he hath brought it home; for he is not ignorant how miserable a living creature a solitary sheep is, whose life consisteth only in the help and safe keeping of the shepherd, inasmuch as it cannot help itself, but being desitute of a shepherd, perisheth. Moreover it is also fearful and ready to go astray, and as soon as it hath wandered out of the way, and from the shepherd, forthwith cometh into peril of life, and cannot tarry, although it cometh to another flock; and a strange shepherd calleth it, it goeth on through thorny and fedgy places, through waters and fens, until it come in danger of the wolf, or by some other mischief utterly perisheth; and although it be brought into by-ways and deserts, and is now thought to be lost, notwithstanding it hath this hope, as much as nature hath put into it, that if it might hear his shepherd, it should exceedingly rejoice, being delivered from all evil. Moreover, neither doth the shepherd therefore seek it, that when he hath found it, he may wrathfully fight with it,
it, or handle it ill for that it hath gone astray, or cast it to the wolf to be torn to pieces; but all his care and thought is, that he may most gently allure it to himself, and deal with it most lovingly, viz. lay it on his shoulders and carry it, until he hath brought it unto the rest of the flock.

This is that picture, resembled in this simple creature, whereby Christ shews us, what affection of mind he bears towards us, and also what we ought to promise ourselves concerning him; for since this is manifestly true in nature, the same is much more true in the kingdom of Christ, which is the kingdom of grace, love and consolation. Therefore see that thou also set before thyself the sheep pertaining to this shepherd, then shalt thou truly understand how much greater and earnest care he hath taken to preserve it, with how great study and diligence, from the heart, he is careful for it, that he may find it and bring it home again; for he will have his marvellous and continual kindness, and the unspeakable flames of his most fervent love to be shewed, or rather poured forth upon miserable, fearful and trembling consciences, which unfeignedly lament their sins, and desire to be delivered from them, and such are his true sheep; for with a man that hath lost his shepherd, and heareth him not, the case standeth as with the lost sheep which being estranged from his shepherd, strayeth more and more from him. And although it he called by the voices of others, and runneth unto them, thinking that it shall find his own shepherd, yet it findeth him not; he runneth from corner to corner, straying up and down, and wandereth further out of the way; neither is it succoured with any comfort or help, before it hear the voice of the true shepherd: We learn this to be true by daily experience, and every man tryeth it in his own heart; for the gospel of Christ being taken away, or not exercised, some false master, or author of some sect, in another place some fantastical fellow thrusteth in himself, one perverteth the supper of the Lord, the other baptism, one teacheth this, the other that, of a singular holiness of life, both which allureth to himself the miserable and straying sheep, and sheweth himself so,
fo as though he were the true shepherd. But by the
means of these the sheep is entangled only with greater
errors, until it wandereth altogether out of the way: to
to these cometh the devil also with his cogitations, which
he craftily putteth into the heart. Alas, if thou had
done this or that, or had not done, &c. with all which
he practiseth nothing else, but that he may make it fall
into great errors, that it may not know where to abide;
and this truly falleth out, Christ being removed out of
ight, and the article of him being extinguished: what-
soever shall be taught, counselled and shewed, by what
means soever, all things nevertheless become worse and
draw near unto destruction, unless the true shepherd
come with his voice, and call back and bring again the
straying sheep. Hence it appears that it is exceeding
necessary and convenient, that we learn to know Christ
well, that we do not behold him as a cruel tyrant or an
angry judge, (as the preachers hitherto have set him
forth to the people, and the devil himself sheweth him
to the hearts of men no otherwise to be thought upon
and considered) who hath drawn his sword already against
us: but as the sheep doth naturally look on the shep-
herd, not as on him, of whom it shall be terrified, cha-
shed and slain, but as soon as it beholdeth him, is
cheered and put in hope of help, and is no more in fear
or solitariness, but forthwith goeth to him with all bold-
ness; so also when we desire to conceive a trust and hope
of help, and to be strengthened and eased with com-
fort, then the voice of our shepherd, that is of Christ;
must be known and learned well of us, all voices of
other shepherds not regarded which draw us only into
errors, and toss us up and down, and that only article must
be heard and comprehended in mind, which Christ so
lovingly and comfortably painteth in our heart, as by
any means it can be painted, that I may with all confi-
dence and boldness say, the Lord Jesus Christ is my
shepherd, and I alas! the lost sheep, which hath strayed
in the desert, but am troubled with anguish of mind for
my wretched life, desiring with most fervent affection,
to have God favourable unto me, and peace in my con-
science; but truly I understand he is no less desirous of
me,
me, than I am of him; I labour to come unto him; and he is careful and desirous that he may bring me unto himself. If we were certainly thus persuaded of his affection toward us, and did grave in our mind that it so greatly desireth after us, and is so sweetly poured forth upon us, it cannot be, that we should abhor and fear him, but we would with a cheerful mind run unto him, and tarry only with him, abiding to hear the doctrine or voice of no other; for the doctrine of another coming between, either of Moses or of any other whatsoever, doth nothing but disquiet the conscience, so that it cannot find any peace or quietness. Therefore Christ saith, Mat. xi. 28. "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, &c." As though he said, Run and seek in whom places ever ye will, hear and learn whatsoever can be preached unto you, yet shall ye find no quietness of heart, ye shall find no peace but in me alone. We will easily permit good works to be preached, a righteous life to be taught, the ten commandments to be delivered by instruction, and all things else which serve to the amendment of life, but so far only, as they are taught to the unruly and untractable common fort, also to force and bridle the wantonness of our old Adam. But they which preach to the conscience wrapped in anguish and terrors because of sin, ought to preach no other words than of Christ. For this is that lost and miserable sheep, of whom no other master is to be born with, but that only shepherd Christ, who neither urgeth it with the law, nor is eager upon it, but most sweetly and gently handleth it and layeth the miserable and sinful sheep upon his shoulders, doing that of his own accord, which was to be done of the sheep, as we shall hear by and by more at large: but surely in this place the doctrine of both, or the voice of Moses and of Christ, must be well discerned; for Moses ought to have no entrance to the lost sheep, no nor by any means is to be admitted to it, although he preach best of all other: for if confounding these we will comfort and erect the troubled conscience by
by the law after this fort; be of good cheer, for thou hast not committed homicide, neither hast thou defiled thyself with adultery, neither hast thou perpetrated any other hainous offence, or done it with a good will, &c. This also is a comfort, but endureth a very small time, neither can it sustain the assaults and violence of the enemy, nor bringeth it, or containeth any thing but confidence of itself, wherewith the miserable sheep is nothing helped; for it remaineth as much wandring and lost as before, neither can it help itself, or come to his own shepherd; but if we will help and succour it, we must shew it the true shepherd, who cometh to seek it, that having found it he may bring it home, and exhibit his voice unto it. Hereby it may obtain true and effectual consolation, and be bold to answer Moses, and say Now truly I have not any care either of thy comfort or terror, and if it please thee, amplify my sins as much as possibly thou canft, make me a man-slayer and parricide, or the worst man of all men; for now I will neither hear thee with an astonished mind, nor follow thee: but that is the sum of my comfort and salvation, I confidently trust, that I have such a shepherd as seeketh me of his own accord, and having laid me on his shoulders carrieth me. Let us enter into dispute hereof if thou art so disposed, not how righteous or unrighteous I am, but how I have come unto Christ; wherefore we must always preach according to the capacity and quality of the hearers; For I have said that this doctrine is not fit for a blockish and untractable man As it is not meet that a labourious thresher should be fed with delicates, wherewith the sick are to be strengthened and refreshed, but the hireling is to be fed with brown bread and cheese, and with water; the other dainty meats and easy of digestion thou must reserve for the sick or children, which are able to digest no gross meat; so in this thing also thou must observe the same difference, that thou rightly distribute these things, and give unto every one his portion as a prudent householder. For thou must keep the doctrine of Moses and of the law, until thou light upon unruly, hardened, and untractable men, which lead their life securely and without fear, Set before these only
strong and common meats of threshers to be eaten, that is, offer angry Moses unto them to be heard, who lightneth and thundereth from mount Sinai, who terrifieth the people of Israel bringeth them into the desert, and drowneth King Pharaoh in the Red sea; but when thou shalt light upon troubled hearts, and weak and afflicted consciences, which are now become lost sheep, then speak not a word concerning Moses and all the works of God done in the law, but let thy talk be only of the works done by Christ in the time of grace, and well and diligently repeat to the miserable conscience, how he theweth himself toward the lost sheep, viz. that he is the gentle and good shepherd, which is exceeding careful for the lost sheep, so that leaving all the rest he travelleth to find that one, and to bring it again into the way, neither doth he leave off till he hath brought it home; for it is a great grief unto him, that any man should be in sin, and therefore be troubled and fear, neither would he that any should remain therein, and so perish; wherefore he doth most lovingly allure and provoke thee by his sweet gospel to come unto him, and suffer thyself to be laid upon his shoulders and carried, and to be called his well-beloved sheep. As for them that live securely and pleasantly, and have no regard whether God be angry or pleased, they are not to be called lost sheep, but rather wild goats, which suffer not themselves either to be fed or ruled: but he, to whom his sins are a burthen, and who fighteth in the fight of faith, where he is not in danger to lose Moses, but Christ himself, and the principal article, that is, where the conscience is in anguish and fear, whether it hath God gentle and favourable, this is that very man, who with groaning and sighs seeketh out and crieth for his shepherd, and desireth to be helped, as David doth Psal. cxix. 176. 'I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek 'thy servant,' &c. In the mouth of these this sugar and these pleasant delicates have a good taste, with which the heart is refreshed, that it fall not into despair, but being again recreated with such a consolation, is lifted up not by Moses but by Christ; not that it hath Moses a friend or is able to pacify him, but because it hath God favourable
favourable through Christ, whereassoever Moses remain-
eth with his comfort; although it be very well, as also
it is meet, that we do not contrary, to the law practice
thievety, that we steal not, that we commit not homo-
cide, or otherwise do injury and hurt to our neighbour:
howbeit that is not the right comfort of the heart, but
only a momentary tickling of the outer skin, not du-
ring and piercing; for the devil coming and setting up-
on the heart, all comfort is utterly taken away. And
although in some point thou hast done well and right-
ly, he nevertheless again bringeth ten-fold more, where-
in thou hast done amis, yea even in the most pure
works he can find much impurity, and turn all into sin;
wherefore we must in no wise trust unto such comfort,
but must rather refuse it and say, whether I be good or
evil at this present I do not dispute, but will refere it
rather unto that place, where it shall be taught and in-
treated concerning works; but in this circle wherein I
now stand, there is no place to entreat of works and in-
tegrity of life, but of Christ and his works, which
he doth towards me a lost sheep. Wherefore if thou
demand whether I be good or honest, I answer plainly,
no; but if thou demand whether Christ be good and
righteous, that undoubtedly I am able to confirm, and
him I set for my goodness and righteousness, unto whom
also alone I courageously appeal. For in his name I am
baptized, of which thing I have a seal and testimony,
viz. that I am his sheep, and that he is that good
shepherd, seeking his lost sheep, and dealing with me
without all law, exacting nothing of me, neither as
Moses urgeth, troubleth and forceth me, but sheweth
unto me his meer and most sweet grace, while he sub-
mitteth himself to me, and layeth me on his shoulders,
and carrieth me; why therefore should I fear the thun-
derings of Moses and of the devil, when as I reft in his
safe custody, which hath given unto me his righteousness and all other things, which holdeth and carrieth
me, so that there is now no more danger lest I perish,
I remaining a sheep and denying not my shepherd, but
reposing myself wholly in him? thus hath thou Christ
most lovingly set forth unto thee: now only faith is re-
quired,
quired, whereof there is great need; for this doctrine is excellent, and replenished with most sweet comfort, but this is wanting that the use thereof is not felt, where it ought to be felt; for when the sheep go astray, that is, when a man feeling himself grieved with his sins, and cannot tell where to abide, and is cast of the devil into a great fear of mind, then he always runneth unto the contrary, neither can he comprehend or conceive in mind, that this is true, all things falling out of his mind, which he heard here, because of the present teeling and fear. For the devil hath blinded his eyes, neither can he perceive any thing else but the wrath and indignation of God. Wherewith his heart is so burthened, that he is not able to raise up himself in mind, and to turn his eyes any other where: may, he lyeth so drowned in it, that Christ appeareth no otherwise unto him but as an angry judge, as he hath hitherto been painted out, and is so beaten into the hearts of all by the wicked Papists, sitting on the rainbow, with a sword coming out of his mouth. For this is one of the most deceitful crafts of the devil, yea and of his mischiefs which he practiseth against the miserable sheep, to blind his eyes, that he may not know any more his own shepherd and under a pretence of Christ to lead a man to Moses, disputing as much of Christ, as he had accustomed to do before of Moses. Wherefore we have need of a strong and firm faith, that we may believe these things to be true, when a man himself must dispute even against himself; for the sense is vehement of itself, wherewith the devil also cometh marvellously amplifying sin and terror, the greatness and anguish whereof is able to consume, even the marrow in the bones, yea, and the heart in the body. It cannot therefore be perfectly learned so soon as some think. In prosperity it is easily believed that Christ is sweet and amiable, but anguish and terror coming upon and overwhelming the mind, man is blind and without good understanding, and will judge only according to the sense and understanding of his own heart, which he followeth and confirmeth himself in his own error; for he is taken therein, and can think no otherwise, but that it is true, never-
nevertheless it is not so. Now it were a point of this art, for a man thus to say unto his heart, if thou confess thyself to be a lost sheep, thou sayest right; but that thou wilt therefore run from Christ, and so think of him in thy mind, as though he were a man, which would chafe and terrify thee, it is a suggestion and temptation of the devil; for if thou didst rightly consider him, and confess him as thy true shepherd, then wouldst thou not fly from his sight, neither would I conceive terror in thy mind, but with all cheerfulness and boldness would run unto him; for surely he is not therefore ready at hand that he may condemn thee, but he cometh to thee, seeking thee, that having laid thee on his shoulders he may carry thee, and exempt and deliver thee from sins, errors, the devil and his power, yea and from all peril. Thou perceivest therefore that thou art a sinner, and hast deserved indignation, so much more earnestly is that shepherd to be sought and called for of thee, that he may deliver thee from it; of whom consider no otherwise in thy mind, than the sheep doth of his own shepherd, whom it cannot fear, but seeing and hearing him becometh glad and cheerful, although it hath run from him, so that for this deed it hath a sufficient cause to fear: the whole matter therefore consisteth only in this, that thou do perfectly learn Christ aright, and consider him according to the word of God, and not according to the proper cogitations of thy mind, and thine own senses; for the cogitations of men are false and lying, but his words are true and cannot deceive: wherefore the word alone is to be engraven in our heart, and we must cleave unto it with a constant mind, whereby we may reprove our own heart of lying; for it alone must be true, and all things else that are contrary to it false and vain. But truly this is an art, whereof I am ignorant, but much more those other light spirits, who boast many things of it, as they that know all things when they have once heard any thing thereof, and nevertheless they do not perceive or try so much as any whit of it: for it is an easy thing to speak and preach of it, but how hard a thing it is to prove it in-
On the lost Sheep.

deed, they only have experience, who earnestly make trial thereof. This is a most aimable demonstration of our Christ, described by himself in this Gospel, wherein he hath most abundantly poured forth the flames of his most servant heart and affection toward us, shewing that he hath exceeding great care and regard to recover his sheep, which alone leaving ninety and nine, he seeketh and enquireth diligently for, not to terrify it and beat it but that he may help it, and having found it, may bring it home, and with his loving and sweet voice and speaking unto it, may cheer it, being miserable and afflicted in conscience. By all which thou seest, how acceptable a thing thou shalt do unto him, if thou trust and cleave unto him with thy whole heart, and promise to thy self from him all goodness and love. Secondly, thou plainly seest this also, how by all manner of outward signs and means, heoureth forth his joy and unspeakable goodness, and also having found his sheep how loving he sheweth himself, for surely he dealeth not with it by any law, as by his right he might deal, and drive it before him as he doth the rest, or suffer it to go by him; but he doth none of these, but layeth it upon his shoulders, and all the journey carrieth it through the desert, taking all the labour and trouble upon himself, that at the least wise the sheep may rest. Neither doth he it grudgingly, but willingly, for he is full of joy for his sheep recovered. Now mark this also, how well it goeth with the sheep, with how great quietness and ease it lieth on the shepherds shoulders, neither doth it unwillingly see itself resting so sweetly, being delivered from the difficulty of the journey, as also void of all fear both of dogs and wolves, that is of all errors and lies, yea, and of all perils and mischiefs: And this surely deserveth to be called a very pleasant picture, exceeding aimable and comfortable to be looked upon.

No otherwise doth our Lord Jesus Christ deal with us, while he delivereth us, which he hath once done corporally, by his passion and death, but now doth often the same by his power, and spiritually by the preaching of his word. Wherefore he layeth us upon his shoulders, carrieth and defendeth us, so that we are safe from all
On the lost Sheep.

perils of death and the devil, which although they terrify us, and shew themselves so, as though they would devour us, yet prevail they nothing; for whereas we are carried, it is a safeguard unto us, and the same exempteth us from all dangers, and putteth away all fear; as the sheep lying upon the shepherd's shoulders, is little careful, though the dogs bark, and the wolf craftily goeth up and down, but rather hanging down the head, is quiet and sleepeth soundly; so we also, if we stand and abide unmoveable in this article, I believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, who suffered, died, rose again for us, &c. there is no cause why we should be careful least we perish, or be devoured of the devil, though he open his jaws never so wide; for we are not then in our own way, neither walk we upon our own feet, but we hang upon the neck of our shepherd, and lie upon his own shoulders, where we are safe enough. For sin, death and hell, although indeed they be terrible, yet dare they not set upon him, otherwise if it were not for this, we should be miserable sheep, which should forthwith be brought into a lamentable and wretched case. For even as a sheep cannot take heed and foresee to itself, that it stray not out of the way, unless it be led of the shepherd, and when it hath strayed and is lost, cannot by itself come again to the shepherd, but must be sought and inquired for of him, until he hath found it, and so must be laid upon his shoulders and brought home again, lest that it be again strayed and chased from him; or catch'd of the wolf and rent in pieces; so we also our selves can profit our selves neither by help nor counsel, that we might obtain peace and quietness of conscience, and escape out of the hands of the devil, death, and hell, except Christ himself repeat his word unto us, and call us again unto him; and although we come unto him, and now stand in faith, yet it is not in our power to keep ourselves therein, or to stand by our own strength, unless he often by the power of his word, hold lift up, and carry us, for the devil always imagineth and purposeth deceit and destruction towards us, going about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour, as St. Peter witnesseth. Here is no place to boast of free-will,
or of our own strength, which is none, neither in beginning any thing, neither in going forward, much less in persevering or continuing in it, but Christ our shepherd alone doth all things. But we are sure that while we ly upon the shoulders of Christ, we shall remain safe from all terror and misfortune; for he will not suffer us to be plucked or taken from his neck, neither will he himself cast us off, being so glad and joyful, that he hath found his lost sheep, and brought it again to the rest of the flock; and in fine here is no terror or trouble, but meer life and grace, whereby he handleth his sheep most lovingly and gently. But on the contrary Moses, not as a shepherd of miserable and weak sheep, but as a master of stronger cattle, driveth his herds with a staff and rod, three days journey through the desert, until they be tired and weary with walking; of this shepherd those hardened and wild ones are to be tamed and bridled; and we also, when we shall be under Moses, to wit, according to the flesh and the outward life, must go, and do that which the law requireth: But in that we are, and are called Christians, we must by no means suffer, that any work be laid upon us or exacted of us, but must give ourselves only to Christ to be carried and gently lifted up, not upon horses and chariots, but even upon his own shoulders; which cometh to pass, when he suffereth the word to be preached unto us, and we believe the same, that he died for us, that on the cross he bore our sins in his body, that he hath overthrown the devil, death, and sin, and put them under his feet; and hath made and opened unto us, entrance to eternal life: We must not have respect to our own life, how righteous and strong we are, but we must study upon this one thing, that we may rest lying upon his shoulders: In this circle we must have no care of sin, death, life, or pensiveness, inasmuch as we have all things to the full in Christ, who heareth and keepeth us. Now he is not content that with such great travel he seeketh his sheep, and having found it, he carrieth it with incredible joy, he maketh festival days, and exceedingly, rejoiceth, calling together his neighbours and friends, that they may rejoice with him; yea, he affirmeth
firmeth, that God also in heaven with the whole heavenly host, do rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. In which words he sheweth who he is, which deserveth to be called the lost sheep, namely such a sinner, as being led by repentance of his former life, most fervently desiring to be delivered from sins, and earnestly endeavouring to come unto Christ; such a one hath a miserable and troubled, yea, a contrite and humbled heart, and an afflicted conscience, the devil by all means fighteth against, and preseth it, that it is almost overcome with distresses, &c. but Christ assisteth and comforteth him, for he seeketh no sheep but that which is lost, and and cannot help it self. Can Christ be preached with greater gentleness, and more effectual consolation of words; Or what should he do more to cheer the mind of a sinner, and confirm in him a sure confidence towards himself? We see him set forth by himself to us miserable sinners, as a most loving shepherd, who most sorrowfully seeketh his sheep being lost, and most joyfully bringeth them again, being found, and taketh so great joy, that with him all the Angels and Saints rejoice over us. Now he that firmly believes these thing, would without doubt, through Christ receive true comfort and joy; as here he hath a certain promise, that if he surely cleave unto Christ, and rest upon his shoulders, he shall be an acceptable and welcome guest in the kingdom of Heaven, and shall be received with exceeding great joy. But we being troubled with sorrow and anguish of conscience, have a far different feeling and affection, when the heart thinks that all the Angels stand behind us with drawn swords, which so troubles us, that we can conceive no cheerfulness of mind, neither of God, nor of the Angels; and there are some which can behold no creature with a glad mind, fearing the beholding of the sun, yea, being sore afraid at the noise of a leaf; all which proceed from hence, they trouble and vex themselves with their own thoughts, out of which they would willingly wrestle, sparing no labour, that they might feel that.uprightness and integrity, which would be void of fear; but if thou be desirous to conceive true comfort and joy in thy heart, then see that thou
On the Woman of Canaan.

On diligently and well print this amiable image of the most loving shepherd, and the word of the gospel, and seek it where it is to be sought, that is in Christ, and nowhere else; for in this man thou shalt find all things, so that thou abide in him, and rest upon his shoulders; but whatsoever comfort can be obtained without him, it cometh not from the heart, although thou call the help of all creatures, and shouldest also partake of the pleasure and joy of the whole world.

SERMON IX.

Of the Woman of Canaan.

Matth. xv. 21. to the 28. Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, &c.

In this text is set forth unto us an example of a constant and steadfast faith; for this woman did so persevere, that she overcame three most sharp conflicts, and notably teacheth us, what is the quality and proper virtue of a true and right faith, which indeed is a certain trust, and most deeply settled in the mind, of the divine goodnes and grace, known and made manifest by the word of God. For Mark mentioneth that he heard the report of Jesus, without doubt, good and joyful, that he is a bountiful man, and marvelous ready to help every one; that report was good tidings, and the word of grace unto her, whereupon this her faith did begin; for unless she had believed that he might be made partaker of Christ's goodness, she would not have followed him, or cried after him, which is that we have often admonished, and which we are taught Rom. x. 17. 'Faith cometh by hearing.' Wherefore the word ought always to go before, and give the beginning of salvation; but how came it to pass, whereas many others heard the same report of our Saviour Jesus, yet they followed him not, but quite despised that report? I answer, they that are not sick, as they have
Of the Woman of Canaan.

have no need of the Physician, so neither are they desirous of him. But this woman was afflicted and felt her necessity, that report was so joyful unto her, that she being stirred up thereby, did follow Christ, running after such a pleasant Saviour, Cant. i. Wherefore Moses must always go before; who may teach us to feel sin, whereby grace may be wished for and desired of us; it is vain therefore, although Christ be preached to be loving, and to be desired and longed for, if a man be not before humbled through knowledge of himself, and made desirous of Christ, according to the song of Mary. The Lord hath filled the hungry with glad things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.' Luke i. 53. Now all these things are written for the consolation, and lifting up of them which be miserable, poor, needy, oppressed with sin, and objects, that they may know to whom they may flee in all distresses, and where they may seek for help and safety: But see how Christ urgeth and inflameth faith in them that be his, whereby they may become stronger and more confirmed. First, this woman being encouraged with that alluring fame of his, goeth after him and cried for help, not doubting but she should find him to be such an one, as she had heard him reported to be, and that she should forthwith intreat him for the recovery of her daughter; Christ in all respects sheweth himself unto her so, as though he would deceive all her trust, and make his report false, so that she might think with herself, Is this that man which is so bountiful and ready to help all? Doth he so fulfill the most commendable report which goeth of him? Where doth there appear any thing like those things, which men have told me of him? They were deceived themselves, and deceived me also. He sheweth himself an enemy rather than a friend; why doth he not so much as speak a word, and friendly deny me help, if I be unworthy thereof? He holdeth his peace, and vouchsaeth not to speak a word, neither offereth his help; here surely Christ gave a grievous blow to the mind of the silly woman; so it is, an incomparable torment to them that believe, being in distress, when God sheweth himself such an one at their prayers, like
Of the Woman of Canaan.

unto one that is angry, and whom they pray unto in vain, hiding so deeply his grace, that they now perceive nothing else, but that he will not perform those things which he hath promised, and that so he will shew his own words to be false. This truly happened to the Israelites at the Red-sea, and to many other excellent holy men; but what doth the woman? She removeth out of her sight and mind, that Christ sheweth himself so ungentle and hard to be intreated, she being constant and not moved hereat, persevereth in the trust of his goodness, whereof she had heard, and which she had conceived in her mind, suffering herself in no wise to be turned from it; so also must we do, we must trust unto the word alone, although God himself, and all creatures pretended otherwise than the word preacheth. But this is most hard to nature and reason, to be so utterly destitute, and to depend on the word of God, without any feeling of comfort, even when a man feeleth and tryeth all things to be contrary; God give unto us such a mind and faith, that we may so do, especially at the point of death and in extreme necessities. Secondly, as the cry and faith of this woman seemeth to have suffered repulse, the disciples come with their faith, doubting not but that they shall intreat the Lord, but when they think they shall make him more easy to be intreated, they find him to be much more hard repelling as it appeared, and as they thought, the faith and prayers both of the woman and also of themselves. Neither doth Christ hold his peace, and leave them in doubt, as before, but he seemeth plainly to deny that which they ask, saying, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; this stroke is much more grievous than the former, where not only the person is repelled, but all hope is cut off, namely the comfort of the intercession of all other Saints and Elect; for it is almost the last refuge to them that suffer distress and feel the indignation of God, so get themselves to good, godly and holy men, seeking for comfort and help, and as charity requireth, they find them ready and willing, but even they also some time do in vain ask help and succour, for neither are they heard.
heard, so the case of them in distress become worse and more lamentable; so the afflicted and desolate may truly object unto Christ those words, wherein he hath promised that he will hear his Saints; 'if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven,' Mat. xviii. 19. Again, 'whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive,' Mat. xxi. 22, and many such like; but if to him that object these things, and ask him how he can go from his words and promises, he answers thus, I go not from my promises, I have not promised that I will hear all prayers, but the prayers of them that be mine, which are of the house of Israel, not of all whosoever. What thinkest thou, having takensuch a repulse? Such an answer is like a flash of lightning, wherewith the heart and all trust is severed and broken in a thousand pieces: For what trust can there be left, when he heareth that that doth not pertain unto him, which because of the word of God he trusted to have obtained, but unto others. Here not so much as a word can be left if one do according as he feeleth. But what doth this woman? She doth not so fall from hope, she still sticketh to the words which she had heard of Christ, although he went about by this repulse, to wrest them out of her heart, she suffereth not herself to be frayeth away, neither with his silence, neither with the hard answer, she continueth steadfastly in a sure confidence, believing that under this difficulty which Christ did pretend, that grace was as yet hidden and laid up for her, which she had heard reported of him, she cannot be brought as yet to judge Christ, not to be bountiful and gracious, and that he can deny the help which she desireth. This was to preserve strongly in faith; she followeth Jesus even into the house, as St. Mark writeth, she is instant upon him, falleth down before him, and faith, 'Lord help me.' Here the Lord giveth a deadly and the last blow, saying unto her face, 'that she is a dog, and unworthy to be partaker of the bread of the children.' What can she answer? For he seemed to signify in these words, that she is of the number of the damned, which can look for no part with the cleft; this word
word seemeth eternal, and that cannot be gainsaid; for he which doth not pertain to the company of the elect by the ordinance of God, what may he hope to be left for him? This woman is not yet discouraged and past hope, but yieldeth to this judgment of the Lord, she confesseth of her own accord, that she is a dog, neither desireth she any thing but that which is wont to be given to dogs, namely, the crumbs which falleth from their master's table. She seems to have used great cunning: She takes Christ in his own words; he had made her like unto a dog, she acknowledgeth it, and desireth that he will only suffer her to be a dog, according to his own saying; what should he here do? How should he escape? He was now taken: For the crumbs under the table are granted to the dogs, to whom they are said to be due; here therefore Christ being overcome opens himself wholly, and granteth the desires of the woman, and sheweth that she is not a dog, but a true Israelite. These thing are written for the instruction and comfort of us, whereby we ought to learn, how deeply sometimes Christ hideth his grace from us, and how we must not judge of God, according to our own sense and opinion, but only according to his words; for we see here that although Christ sheweth himself very hard to this woman, yet he did not plainly deny to help her, but whatsoever he answered, howsoever it seemed a denial, yet it was not a denial, but left in doubt, leaving an entrance for faith, although but small. For he said not at first petition, I will not hear her, but he held his peace, neither promising nor denying help. So to the second petition, which the Apostles made, he dont say, she is not of the house of Israel; I cannot therefore perform that which she desireth, but he only faith, 'I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel;' leaving all things in doubt, between a plain grant and denial; so when she had the third time desired him, he faith not, thou art a dog, get thee hence: the bread of the children is not due unto thee, but he, faith, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, &c.' again leaving in doubt, whether she was a dog or no; nevertheless all these sayings seem outwardly rather a denial of help,
help, than room to hope, but in very deed they did contain in them rather a promise and hope, than a denial, yea, there was nothing but a promise, though most deeply hid and altogether secret under that silence, and answers, although they were hard, and a denial only founded outwardly. By these it is shewed how our heart is wont to be affected in temptation; for according as that feeleth in temptation, so Christ here behaveth himself; it feeleth all things to be denied, when it is far otherwise; wherefore it is requisite, that leaving his own feeling, by a sure faith in the word of God, it conceive and hold fast the promise of help deeply hid- den under the denial, and yield to the sentence of God towards us, as this woman did, so shall we overcome and take the Lord in his words, that he cannot but help us; so that if we feel in our conscience at any time God rebuking us, pronouncing us sinners, and unwor- thy of the kingdom of heaven, then we feel as it were Hell, and it seems unto us that we are past all hope and recovery for ever: Then if we had the skill of this woman, that we could take the Lord in his own judg- ment, and say, yea, Lord, I am a sinner, and almo- ther unworthy of thy grace, but thou hast promised forgiveness to sinners, neither didst thou come to call the righteous but as Paul faith, to save sinners, he truly should bring to pass, that the Lord should be forced, even by his own judgment to have mercy upon him: So did Manasses, when being penitent, He prayed for pardon, as we read in his prayer: He yielded to the judg- ment of God, acknowledging himself a most grievous sinner, and so he bound God with his promise which had promised forgiveness of sin to sinners, not to the righteous. The same also did David observe. Psal. li. 4. * Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this 'evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when 'thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." For that purchases us displeasure, that we disdain to suffer the judgment of the Lord, and against our wills, yield unto his sentence, when he pronounceth us sinners; such a hard thing is it to acknowledge sins, and to embrace the judgment
Of the Woman of Canaan.

judgment of God; we all confess ourselves sinners in words, but as soon as the Lord speaketh in our heart, and pronounceth us sinners, we do not abide by that which before we confessed, we had rather he counted righteous and free from that judgment. But it must needs be, if God must be just in his words that thou be a sinner, then also mayest thou use the right of sinners, which God himself hath given unto them, namely to pray with a sure expectation of forgiveness of sins, then is it permitted unto thee not only to feed under the table of crumbs after the manner of dogs, but being a child of the household, thou shalt sit at the very table, God having now, how great soever he be, given unto thee according to thy desire. Here we have a historical exposition of this text, allegorically; for as it chanceth to this woman's daughter being sick, for whom through faith she obtained health by a miracle, so also it falleth out with us, when we are delivered from spiritual sickness, to wit, sins, which truly are a most grievous and troublesome devil unto us; for as she acknowledged herself a dog, so must we acknowledge ourselves sinners and judged unto Hell, the Lord pronouncing it, which if we can do as she did, we shall be safe. We have already spoken elsewhere of other things whereof there might be occasion to speak out of this text, as how one may obtain grace and safety by the faith of another, as here it fell out to the daughters of this woman; this thing also that Christ's Disciples, and the woman, are here examples of love, forasmuch as none of them pray for, seek or do those thing that are their own, but every one that which is another's is very manifest by itself, and easily acknowledged of every one, especially seeing that we have so largely treated hereof in another place.
Sermon X.

Of Salvation by Grace, without Works.

Tit. iii. 4. to the 7. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, &c.

Paul having willed before, that all should be put in mind to be obedient to such as be in authority, and ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be nobrawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men,' &c. these few words being put between, that we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures,' &c. he added those words which we have already mentioned, as if he should say, Wherefore should it grieve us to deserve so well of all men, when God before hath dealt so bountifully, kindly and gently with us, with whom, with comparison we are les, and have lees of him deserved than any, being compared to us, can be, or can deserve of us? As God hath with exceeding bountifulness and kindness most gently behaved himself towards us, of his mercy granting and giving unto us all things; so ought we to do all things with charity and good will toward our neighbours, altho' they have otherwise deserved, as we are like unto them, subject to sin and evil desires. Here we see how the Apostle will have us to be affected towards men: He will have us subject to them that be in authority, kind unto others, and ready to do well unto them with all gentleness, although they be evil, blind, and in error, that we grudge not to bear these things, and as much as lies in us, endeavour to do them good taking all in good part; considering that God hath so dealt with us, when we were evil and wicked, like unto them.

This word, appeared, we have elsewhere declared to signify the revelation of the gospel, whereby Christ appeared in the world; altho' the unhandsomeness of ministers hath wrested it to the carnal nativity of Christ.
Of Salvation by Grace,

He useth not here the word grace, which he used before, Tit. ii. 11. but instead thereof two other words of great comfort, [kindness, and love toward man] which he attributeth to our God. The first is that kindness, gentleness and sweetness of conditions, wherewith we are with pleasure conversant, and greatly delighted with their company, so that they by their gentleness and kindness allure all men to love them; for such can suffer all without grief; they contemn no man; they repel none from them with bitter and hard conditions; access unto them is not hard, but they are so open and ready, that every one dare resort unto them, and desire their help; and to conclude, they are such men as the gospel describes Christ unto us, whom they declare to be gentle unto all, a despiser of none, which denieth no benefit to any, pliant, prepared and ready to do good to all. So God also, by the gospel, is preached and offered unto us wholly good, bountiful and sweet, open to all, rejecting none, bearing all our sins and offences, repelling no man with excessive severity; for we read and hear nothing declared in the gospel but meer grace and goodness, whereby he must mercifully hears us, and most gently handles us, and not any man according to his deserts. This is the time of grace wherein it is granted to all to go with great boldness unto the throne of grace, as it is written, Heb. iv. 16. and Psalm xxxiv. 5. 'They looked unto him, and were lightned, and their faces were not ashamed;' that is, he will not suffer you to pray and come in vain, neither to return with confusion. The other word is Philanthropia, love of men, as covetousness may be called love of money, as David, 2 Sam. i. 26. calleth the desire of women, the love of women: And the philofopers call certain living creatures Philanthropa, that is, loving toward men, as are horses, dogs, dolphins; for these creatures are by nature delighted with man, they desire his company, and willingly serve him as though they were moved with some reason and sense of humanity. This name, and such love, the Apostle here attributeth to our God, which Moses also did, Duet. xxxiii. 2, 3. 'The Lord came from Sinai; from his right-hand went a fiery law. Yet, he
he loved the people.' The meaning of the Apostle is this: Our God hath in the gospel shewed himself unto us not only bountiful, kind, gentle and sweet, which can bear and will receive all, but also he so loveth us, that of his own accord he joineth himself unto us, seeketh to have to do with us, voluntarily sheweth and offereth his grace unto us, and most gently embraceth as many as only do not refuse his grace and love, and desire to draw nigh unto him. What should he do more? Who cannot see why we count the gospel a preaching, joyful, and full of all consolation of God in Christ? For what can be spoken more lovingly and sweetly to a sinful and afflicted conscience than these words?

Now let no man refrain these two words (kindness and love towards man) to the persons, for God is plainly without respect of persons, bountiful to all, and a lover of all; otherwise, if we should here make a difference between men, we should acknowledge that some thing is received through our merits, and not all things through his mercy: Where it must be well marked, that God is said to be a lover of men, not of this or that nature only, not held with love of the person, and therefore these two, kindness and love toward man, must be taken after a general sort, that in all things the chief praise may be attributed to his mercy, that no man trust in his own merits, neither be terrified with sin, but altogether trust to his grace, which he voluntarily offereth unto us, with so great kindness and love toward us, for if any respect of persons might be had here, it should surely be had of them who are rich in the works of righteousness, but Paul expressly rejecteth these, saying, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done.' How much less then shall this love of our God toward men appear because of any man's wisdom, power, nobility, riches, or any such thing, when no respect is had of works of righteousness? Great is the grace of God toward us, which appeareth in the gospel, yea, and nothing but grace, which admitteth no merit at all of ours, utterly, taketh away all boasting and glorying, and setteth forth the glory of God alone, who freely giveth it.
it unto us, being unworthy. So in this text these two, faith and love, are taught to receive benefits of God, and bestow them on our neighbours, which the scripture doth very often repeat, so that even the doctrine of salvation consisteth wholly in them, neither can one be separated from the other; for he that doth not firmly trust in the divine grace, cannot but be remiss, and flow to do well to his neighbour, and so witness the faintness and weakness of his faith, which is the fountain of all duties and benefits: On the contrary, the stronger faith that one is indued with, so much more dutifully, and with readier mind, he endeavoureth to deserve well of his neighbours. Therefore both doctrine and life, worthy of Christ, consist in these two, faith and love; whereby man is made as it were a mean between God and his neighbour, that he may receive of God from above, and give to his neighbours beneath, and be as it were a conduit through which the fountain of the divine goodness continually flows to his neighbours. And such men are like unto God, which in Christ receive of God whatsoever he hath, and do again by their good deeds declare themselves as it were the gods of other, and fulfil the prophecy of the prophet, Psalm Ixxxii. 6. 'I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.'

We are children of the most High by faith, whereby of nothing we are made the heirs of God: and we are gods by love, which maketh us beneficial to our neighbour; forasmuch as the nature of God is nothing but bountifulness, and Paul faith, 'the kindness and love of God toward man,' which he doth with incomparable plenty daily pour forth upon every one, as we see. We must only endeavour, that every one do nothing doubt that these things are spoken to him, that the bountifulness and love of God to manward is revealed and offered to every one, that by these words he may establish exercise, and strengthen his faith, being certain that they are most true, and that God both undoubtedly is, and always will be bountiful and loving toward him. If thou canst believe this, it will assuredly so come unto thee; thou mayest then with a full confidence pray and desire of him whatsoever thou wilt, and complain unto him of whatso-
without \textit{Works}. \hfill 165

whichever doth grieve thee or other. But if thou want this faith, it had been better for thee never to have heard any thing hereof, for thy by that infidelity thou reprovest of falsehood these words, so precious and full of consolation and grace, making so light account of them as not believing that they be true; which surely is a great contempt and dishonour of God, that scarce a more grievous sin can be committed of thee. On the contrary, if thou be indued with this faith it cannot be but that thy heart being thereby cheered, should even as it were laugh and leap for the holy joy in God, because void of all care and trouble, and be made above measure confident; for how can any discouragement, any whit of sorrow remain in that heart, which doubteth not that God is gracious and bountiful unto it, and beareth a singular affection of love toward it, that it is a delight and pleasure unto him to do it good, and enjoy it as a friend? Surely the heart is necessarily delighted with this spiritual joy and pleasure, or undoubtedly it wanteth faith. Paul in the epistle to the Galatians calleth this, to receive the Holy Ghost by the gospel; for the gospel is so pleasant a preaching of the grace and goodness of God, that while it is preached and heard, it bringeth the Holy Ghost with it, in like manner as the beams of the sun do naturally bring heat with them. How could the Apostle use more pleasant and sweet words? I dare say that I have in the whole scripture read none more pleasant, and so sweet words of the grace of God as these two, \textit{Chrestos}, \textit{Philanthropia}, that is, kindness and love toward man; in which the grace of God is so described, as whereby he doth not only forgive our sins, but doth also desire to be conversant with us, and is ready to do the part of a very friend toward us, voluntarily offering himself to help us in all things, also to bestow more benefits upon us than we can desire or ask, that we may presume of him no otherwise than of a most near and familiar friend, of whom we may obtain all things, in whose eyes we are most dear and even delightful. Think in thy mind of a most perfect friend, which hath fulfilled all the parts of friendship toward thee, and thou shalt have after a sort of form, although yet far unlike, of
the divine goodness and kindness, which is here attributed to our God, by the name of kindness and love toward man; but when thou hast a found faith in this kindness and love toward man, and thereby dost live in thy God, so bountiful, gracious, and gentle to thee, rejoicest and art full of all good things, being certain of his continual grace; what shouldst thou do any longer in earth? what in this life? Thou canst not in this case be idle, as surely that love of God, and pleasure which thou enjoyest in him, will not suffer thee to be idle. Thou shalt be inflamed with a marvellous study and desire to do what things soever thou canst know will be an honour unto thy God, so loving and bountiful unto thee, and will turn to praise, glory and thanksgiving unto him. Thou shalt have no choice of works, thou shalt feel no compulsion of the law, having a most ready will and pleasure to do whatsoever things thou shalt know to be acceptable unto God, whether they be contemptible or noble, small or great, thou shalt count them alike; but first of all it shall be thy desire, that this blessed knowledge of God be common also to the rest, whereupon by and by thy love will here shew itself, and will attempt all means to make this truth of salvation manifest unto all, it will publish and repeat it wherever it shall be able, rejecting and condemning whatsoever others teach or say, that agreeeth not with this truth. Whereby it will come to pass, that Satan and the world, which hear nothing so willingly as this truth, and cannot abide that their things should be condemned, will rise against thee with all their might, will by and by trouble thee; all the great, learned, rich and mighty of the world will condemn thee of herefy and madness, and will leave no means unattempted until if they be able, they have dispatched thee of thy life. Thus with Christ thy Lord thou shalt be persecuted, and suffer extreme ignominy, thy body, life, goods, name, friends, and all things being brought unto peril, until they have thrust thee from them out of this life into the eternal and blessed life: In the mean time thou must suffer all these things with a patient mind, and take them
them in good part, losing none of the spiritual joy which thou hast of Christ in thy God, and for thy part shewing to thy persecutors all kindness and love, being always mindful, that thou a little before was not much unlike them, before God; all which things thou shalt do through faith and love, altho' they exceed the strength of nature. And this indeed is a true Christian life, where-in thou dost endeavour to do so to others, as God hath done to thee. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have not said, and proveth it as it were by rendring a reason; for if the bountifulness and love of God to man hath appeared, and hath saved us of his mercy, and not because of our own righteousness, yea, we being by all means unworthy, and subject to innumerable sins, it is meet that we also do good to them that have not deserved so much of us, and are unworthy thereof; for we which are become the sons of God must resemble God our Father, and bestow benefits according to our ability, as well upon our enemies and persecutors, as upon our friends: Whereof Christ also hath admonished us, Mat. v. 44. 'Love your enemies, that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?' Now the Apostle doth not only expressly condemn us for evil works, but faith, 'Not by work of righteousness,' or, which we have done in righteousness. Where he also rejecteth those works, which he counted righteous, and were thought both of us and others to have been done in righteousness, when they were so far from being righteous, that they made us unworthy of the grace of God, and more unfit to receive it, for they are deceitful works, whereunto we add this sin, that we think them righteous, and trust in them, whereby God is provoked to anger more than can be said, even us our enemies are wont to move us to anger, when they will avouch those things to be just, wherein they do unjustly; but even as God, when we, L 4 being
being unwise, by error moved him to anger, counting our fins works of righteousness, did not therefore reject us, but of his meer mercy delivered us from this error and sin; so we neglecting the foolishness and dotage of our adversaries, whereby they contend that sins are to be counted for righteousness, ought nevertheless of meer love, having no respect of evil or good desires, to be beneficial unto them, and endeavour to do them good in all things, looking for fruit of our benefits, not to them, but of God alone. Let these things suffice to have been spoken for a compendious and general exposition of this text.

Now let us also briefly weigh the words, wherein he fetteth forth and commendeth the grace of God. First, he so greatly extolleth it, that in respect of it he condemneth all our good works and righteousness; neither doth he condemn a small thing, when he condemneth our righteousness or righteous works, the most excellent thing that man can have in earth; for if all men with all their might should labour and endeavour to attain to most exact prudence, wisdom, and liberty of mind and will, which we read that some philosophers and princes have done, as Socrates, Trajanus, and many others, whose fame the whole world hath long since spread abroad, both by word and writing; nevertheless all such wisdom, and all such virtues, are nothing but sin before God; forasmuch as they are not done in and by the grace of God. Doers of such virtues are ignorant of God, and therefore they cannot honour him by their studies and endeavours; they think they have all things of themselves, when no man can have any good thing at all, but of his grace alone, which the gospel preacheth: so Paul glorifieth, that he, before he knew Christ, lived a blameless life, and was more zealous toward the law, than those of his age; that he also thought, that he did a thing acceptable to God, by persecuting the Christians, who condemned that blameless life which he led; but afterward, when he had learned Christ, he faith, that he counteth that righteousness to be but dung, that he might be found, not in such righteousness, but in Christ by
by faith, Phil. iii. 6. The same thing he witnesseth, and treateth of at large, in the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians: Here therefore is condemned all boast-
ing of free-will, man's strength, righteousness, and good
works; and it is concluded, that they are all nothing but sin, and certain destruction, although they have a
fair shew; that they are saved only by the grace of God, as many of us as believe, and call for it, with
acknowledging of our own vanity and perdition. Now
we must accustom ourselves to the scripture, which
maketh mention of two sorts of righteousness, one
human, which Paul here and in many other places hath
mentioned; the other divine, even that grace of salva-
tion, which justifieth us by faith, whereof he speaketh
in the end of this text: 'That beingjustified by his grace,
we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal
life,' Tit. iii. 7. Here thou seest plainly, that the grace
of God is our true righteousness, whereby we are justified
which is therefore called the righteousness of God, for
that it is given unto us of God, and made ours, when
we are made partakers thereof by faith: Of this he
speaketh also, Rom. i. 17. In the gospel 'is the righteous-
ness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written,
'The just shall live by faith.' And, Gen. xv. 6. Abraham
believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for right-
eteousness.' Whereupon the scripture concludes, that no
man is counted righteous before God, but he that be-
lieveth, as the Apostle testifieth, where he reciteth that
saying of Habakkuk, 'The just shall leave by faith:' Soit
appeareth, that faith, grace, mercy, truth, righteousness,
are all the same which God worketh in us by Christ and the gospel. Whereupon it is said, Psal. xxv. 10. 'All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth; for
those are the ways of the Lord in which we, observing
his commandments, do walk, and he again in us; now
those ways must be directed by his mercy and truth
alone, not by our strength and industry, forasmuch as
our ways, being ordered hereby, are nothing but vanity
before God, and do deserve his wrath, according to
that which the Lord faith, Isaiah lv. 9. 'As the heavens
are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than
your
Of Salvation by Grace,

'your ways.' As if he should say, 'Your righteousness is earthly and of no value, wherefore ye must bid it farewell and walk in mine, if ye hope for salvation. But according to his mercy be saved us.' It is marvellous how the credit of these words can stand, wherein the Apostle affirmeth that we are already saved, although living yet in earth, and therefore in continual misery. But he did so speak, that he might more fully express the power of the divine grace, and the nature of faith against hypocrites, who as though salvation were yet far off, do in vain endeavour to obtain it by their works; for Christ hath already saved us; he hath performed all things which are required hereunto, that we may be saved; he hath overcome and subdued sin, death, hell, &c. so that he hath left nothing for any man to care for; he hath also given all these things to us in baptism, that whosoever believeth in Christ, hath performed them, hath them together in the same moment, he hath need of nothing more unto salvation, but faith alone, that he may firmly believe that these things are so performed. But mark what incomparable riches of his grace God hath poured upon us in baptism, who hath delivered us even from those works, whereby those foolish holy ones go about to merit heaven, and to be saved: for we must have heaven, and be saved, before we can do any good works, for that works cannot merit heaven, but heaven being before given of mere grace, causeth us to do good works and that for no hope of merit or reward, but only to the profit of our neighbours, and the glory of God, until this body be delivered from sin and death.

Wherefore, all the life of a Christian, after baptism is nothing else but an expectation of salvation, and felicity to be revealed, which they that believe in Christ do now possess, although hidden. They have all things now certainly, but they are yet hid in faith, which when it is changed, knowledge being revealed, all things as they now have them, shall appear, which shall come to pass, when pleasant and wished for death cometh, according to that saying of John, 1 John iii. 2. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that
that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Wherefore suffer not thyself to be deceived, and to be seduced from this truth by those hypocrites, which contemning faith, do falsely affirm that salvation is far from thee, and teach thee to endeavour in vain to attain unto it by thy works; it is in thyself, if thou believe that all things are performed by Christ, even as he himself witnesseth, 'The kingdom of Godis within you,' Luke xvii. 21. So that all our life after baptism ought to be nothing else but an expectation that that should be revealed which is already in us, and that we may apprehend, as we are apprehended as Paul faith, Phil. iii. 12. But I follow after, if that I apprehend that so, which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus, that is, that I may at length see those things which are given me, being as yet in the shut closet of faith; he coveteth, and burneth with desire to see the treasure which by faith he received both given and sealed in baptism: whereupon he addeth in the same place; ver. 20. 'For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change your vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' Herewith also agreeth that which he saith, Gal. iv. 9. 'Ye know God, and by and by he doth as it were correct that which he had said, Yea, faith he, 'rather are known,' both which are true, although not after the like sort: we are now known of God, so that he comprehendeth us, and we indeed know God, but we do not yet comprehend, for that our knowledge is as yet hidden and closed up in faith. He faith moreover, Rom. viii. 24. 'For we are saved by hope; that is, we are saved, although we yet see it not, 'for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.' Christ confirmeth this, Luke xii. 35, 36: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." In which
Of Salvation by Grace,

which words he only biddeth them that he histo be ready
to look for him the bridegroom, as which are already
saved, being admitted into the number of his ministers.
Hereunto also pertaineth that which the Apostle faith,
Tit. ii. 12. "We should live soberly, righteously, and
godly in this present world; looking for that blessed
hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and
our Saviour Jesus Christ." In these and such like places
whereof thou may read many here and there in the holy
scriptures, he witnesseth that we are already saved, and
that it doth not behove, that a Christian man should
first seek to attain to salvation by his works: this devils
doctrine blindeth the eyes of Christians, extinguisheth
the knowledge of faith, and carrieth men from the way
of truth and salvation. We must cleave unto that which
the apostle here faith, "He hath saved us according to
his mercy," and which he addeth to the end of the text,
that we are heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
We are now heirs, but that is hidden in faith, but we
look with a certain hope, that hereafter it shall be revealed.
And God will have us so to look for the revelation of
this inheritance, and to live a certain time after baptism,
that he may chastise our body by our ministry, and declare
the power of his grace in fight against the flesh, the
world and the devil, but especially for this cause,
that by us he may help our neighbours, and both by
document, and also by our life which he liveth in us,
may bring them to the communion of faith; and altho' he can do this by angels, yet it pleaseth him rather
that it should be done by us men, that both the manner
of faith may be the better known, and that all things
may be done sweetly and lovingly: for if angels should
always have to do with us, there should not be so much
faith, neither should it be so pleasant, as when we are
taught and guided by them that are partakers of our
nature, whom we do better know, and with whom we
do more familiarly associate ourselves; and so, that there
may be some, by whom others also may be converted
both by doctrine and good examples, it is not meet that
we should by and by after baptism be taken into heaven,
wherein notwithstanding we are already admitted
citizens.
Hereupon if one weigh all things rightly, it cannot be doubted, that it is a practice and miracle of Satan and Antichrist, that so much is spent for purgatory's sake, such faith as this being put quite out of men's minds; for men are taught by their works to save themselves from purgatory, or at least to deliver themselves from thence, as though salvation were not yet given us, and it were necessary to come unto it by other means than by faith alone, which how it disagreeeth with the scripture and a Christian life, there is no man that doth not see, but he that feeth nothing in the scripture; for thus the holy scriptures do teach every where, that whoever doth not receive salvation by mere grace, through faith before all works, he shall never be partaker thereof; and that whosoever refer their good works, not to the profit of their neighbour but to their own advantage, being more careful of their own salvation than of their neighbours, have no good works at all: all the works of these are void of faith, and infected with pernicious error. It had been greatly to be wished that purgatory had never been invented, and no mention made thereof in the pulpit, for it hath been such cause of hindrance to Christian verity and sincere truth, as cannot be recovered; for we see it brought to pass by the means of Satan, that almost all prayer are directed only to purgatory, with this ungodly and pestilent opinion, whereby miserable men think that they shall be redeemed from thence, and obtain salvation by the works of men; whereby the riches of baptism and faith are had in no reputation, and they at the last, of Christians are become heathens. O most pernicious abomination! Christians should be taught as Christ and Paul teach them, that after baptism and absolution from sin they should so live, that they should be ready every hour to receive death, with desire looking for the revelation of salvation already received. Now by the opinion of purgatory they are made secure and slothful, so that they defer the study of godliness even to their death, and think by contrition and confession they shall amend all things, as though there were some sins remaining for which they must go into purgatory, they hope that by
masses for the departed, and other bequests they are persuaded to make in their testaments or last wills, they shall be redeemed out of purgatory; but these miserable men are in these things utterly deceived, and shall at length find them to be far otherwise. 'By the washing of regeneration.' He setteth forth the grace of God given to us in baptism, with words very full of praise and commendation: he calleth baptism a washing, whereby not the feet and hands, but the whole man is at once washed, purified and saved. There is need of nothing but only faith in this grace of God, that it may remain and be acknowledged the work of grace alone, that we are saved without all our works and merits, and so also there may remain in us pure love, praise, giving of thanks, and glory of the divine mercy, without all glory and pleasing of ourselves in our own strength and endeavour, as it hath been often said and at large. Human righteousness is also a washing, but not whereby the whole man is so washed, but that Pharisaical washing, whereby only the apparel and vessels which are outward, are made clean, whereof it is spoken, Mat. xxiii. Whereby it cometh to pass that men seem unto themselves pure, but inwardly they remain full of filthiness. Therefore he called baptism not a corporal or outward washing, but the washing of regeneration or new birth, by which not those things that are outward are washed, and only the outward man made clean, but the whole nature of man is altered and changed into another nature; that is, the carnal nativity is thereby destroyed, with all the inheritance of sins and perdition. Whereby he again witnesseth, that our salvation is given us at once, so that it is not to be gotten by works; for not one or two members are wont to be born, as the hands or feet, but the whole man, which cannot work this, that he may be born a man, but is first born that he may work. Likewise our works, do not purify or save us, but when as before we are pure, justified, and saved, we work freely those things, which maybe profit to our neighbour, and honour to God. And this is the simple and pure knowledge of the divine grace, whereby a man learneth to know both God and himself; to praise God alone
alone, to humble and cast down himself; to trust in God, to despair of himself. This doctrine of salvation they marvellously hinder, which urge men with laws, precepts, and works, and teach them to seek thereby to be saved. And the renewing. That this washing and new birth may be more fully understood, he hath added, the renewing, that thou mayest understand, that he that is truly baptized, is become a new man, and a new creature, endowed with a new disposition, which now is far otherwise affected, loveth, liveth, speaketh and doth far otherwise, than he was wont or could before. So the Apostle faith, Gal, vi. 15. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, that is, no works of the law are of any value or importance, but a new creature." As if he should say, salvation cannot be perfected by joining together certain good works, but the whole man must be at once renewed, and his nature changed, whereupon true good works will follow of themselves, not by piece meal, but together with great plenty. Of this new birth, whereby the whole man is renewed, Christ speaketh, John iii. 1. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Here again it manifestly appeareth, that nothing is here done by our works, but that it behoveth, that man, how great soever he be, must die, and be changed into another, which is done in baptism, if we believe. The condemned also shall be born again in the last day, but they shall not be renewed, they shall remain unclean, as they were here, and as they were born of Adam. Therefore that he might speak rightly of baptism, he calleth it the washing of the new birth, whereby they that are born again are also renewed; of this new birth many things are to be found here and there in the scripture, because of which God calleth his word and gospel a womb, as Isaiah xlvii. 3. "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are born by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb." He therefore that believeth the gospel, is as it were conceived in the womb of God, and from thence born a new man, and like unto God; whereof we will in
in another place speak more; now it shall be sufficient, to have learned by these words, how our works are nothing in fulfilling the commandments of God, and that it is a mad thing to attribute here never so little to our own strength, seeing that it is faith alone, whereby man is at once born again, and renewed; wherefore understand this, that good works must follow a new creature, but to attain unto righteousness and that new creature they are able to help nothing at all; no otherwise as the grace of God wont to renew man, than as if God should turn some dry and withered block into a new green and flourishing tree, which may afterward bring forth fruit plentifully; for the grace of God is a great, strong, very mighty, and marvellous effectual thing, it lyeth not in the mind, as the Schoolmen dream: it sleeppeth not, or is born, as a painted table beareth a picture: it self-beareth, guideth, urgeth, draweth, changeth, and worketh all things in men, so that every one may feel and have experience of it, itself indeed is hid, but the works of it cannot be hid, but do witness of it, as the leaves and fruits do of the tree, of what nature it is; wherefore the Schoolmen Thomas and Scotus do ungodly detract from it, who attribute no more unto it, than that it doth adorn the works of nature, and is a help that they be brought to perfection. For it doth not adorn or help only, but it alone worketh those things that be good, neither doth it work them only, but doth rather change and renew the person; for it exhibiteth the washing of the new birth, and of renewing not of works only, but much rather of the whole man; he that shall preach these things of grace shall truly and fully commend it: which Paul endeavoured to do when he saith, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost. Nothing can be done here by joining of works together, the nature must needs be changed, whereupon it cometh to pass, that they that truly believe must suffer many things; for the grace worketh in them, and declareth it self present: Hereunto pertaineth that saying of the cxi. Psal. 'The works of the Lord are great sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.' What are these works?
works? We are they, by grace in baptism made the
great, new, and regenerate works of God; is it not a
great thing for a man by and by to be saved, and de-
livered from sins, death, and hell? Therefore he faith,
' Sought out of all them that have pleasure therein;
for by this new birth God hath found out, and done
whatsoever men can desire; for what else do men covet
and desire, but to obtain salvation, to be delivered from
sin, death and hell?

'Of the holy Ghost.' Lastly, that he may the more ex-
press the greatness and virtue of grace, he attributeth
this washing of regeneration, and renewing to the ho-
ly Ghost; for this washing is so great, and of so weigh-
ty importance, that no creature but the holy Ghost a-
alone is able to perform it; but how much, most excel-
rent Paul, dost thou condemn free will, the great good
works of the proud holy ones, that is, the merits of
hypocrites? In how high a place dost thou set our salva-
tion, and again, how dost thou bring it down to us,
and place it near us, yea, even with us? How purely
and sincerely dost thou set forth grace in these words?
Wherefore work whatsoever and how much ever thou
wilt, it is impossible for a man to be renewed, and the
person changed (without which no works acceptable to
God can be done) but by the washing of 'regeneration
' and renewing of the holy Ghost.' We may plainly
see in those hypocritical counterfeiters of works, that
thou shalt find none harder, none prouder, none so rash
and hasty spirits; for they are broken, and not renew-
ed, obdurate, obstinate, confirmed by continuance, co-
vering indeed, and somewhat adorning that old Adam,
but there doth not appear any change of nature in
them, they continue still in the oldness of their corrupt
flesh. O what a pestilent people is this, and in how
great indignation of God are they, when as in the mean
time they think that they sit in God's lap? Now
whereas the Apostle attributeth this washing of rege-
neration and renewing to the holy Ghost, he faith the
fame which Christ doth, John iii. 5. 'Except a man be
be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into
the kingdom of God.' For that which Christ signified by
water, the Apostle calleth the washing, so both make mention of new birth, and of the Holy Ghost; and we must mark that that which is spoken here of the Holy Ghost, both by Christ, and the Apostle, must not be referred to that Papistical confirmation, as they call it, for both of them referred to baptism, that which is here mentioned concerning the holy Ghost, who when the body is washed with water doth himself work the new birth, and renewing by faith, which Christ called, to be born again of the Spirit. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, that the Apostles did often lay their hands on them that were baptiz'd, and that so the holy Ghost came upon them by a visible sign which the Papists also snatch to their confirmation; but as that was done, that the believers might by a visible sign be endued with the holy Ghost, to preach the Gospel in divers languages, so it continued only the time thereof, until the doctrine of the Gospel was commended to the world by sufficient signs, wherefore it is now long since worn out of use; but that a certain ceremony hath come from thence even unto us, of laying hands on them, which are ordained ministers or preachers, which is now brought into an ungodly and pernicious use; but of these things in another place. 'Which he shed on us abundantly.' See how notable the Apostle setteth forth grace, he faith not that the holy Ghost was given, but shed, and not that only, but shed abundantly; for he cannot sufficiently extol and magnify grace, and the works thereof, and we, alas, count it vile in respect; it were a dishonour to God and to his Spirit, if when he hath plentifully shed it upon us; there should as yet be something wanting, necessary to righteousness and salvation, which we are able to perform, as though the works of so incomparable grace could not be sufficient; and Paul surely might be reproved of lying, which had not spoken all things whereby we must be justified and saved, when he affirmeth that he doth it, but as he writeth, so it is; no man can attribute so great things to this washing and regeneration, no man can so much presume of them, but greater things may be attributed unto them, and thou oughtest to promise to thyself more things of them;
no man shall believe so great things, but he shall receive greater; forasmuch as those good things which God hath given, are so great and so unspeakable, he would have them here come unto us, being included and hid in his words and faith; for the nature of our present life cannot bear them being manifest, and therefore it must perish, when they begin to be revealed, that man may by these inestimable riches, which he now possesseth by faith, be as it were swallowed up, and vanish away; we are already abundantly justified by faith, without all our own merit, therefore Christ faith, 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. * Behold, they that believe, have already everlasting life, and therefore undoubtedly are justified and holy without all their own labour or means, that thou mayest see, that nothing but grace and mercy is plentifully poured upon us, and that our works could avail nothing hereunto. Thou wilt perhaps say, thou canst not preach sufficiently, that the grace and mercy of God doth work all things in us, and that no respect is to be had of our works, to the attaining of salvation; and how cometh it to pass then, that the Scripture so often witnesseth that they shall be saved which have wrought good works? As John v. 29. * And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. * And Rom. ii. 7, 8. * To them, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation, and wrath. * We read many sentences here and there in the Scripture like unto these; I answer, as the words found, so take them without all glofs, for it is even so, they that do well shall be saved, they that do otherwise, shall be condemned; but herein many err from the truth of the Scripture, in that they judge works according to the outward appearance, contrary to the Scripture, which teacheth, that no man can do good, who is not himself good before, and by works no man can become good;
good, but works take their goodness of the worker, and he becometh good by the washing of regeneration, and by nothing else; this Christ meant, Matt. vii. 18. 'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit: neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.' Wherefore make the tree either good or evil, and it will bring forth like fruits; hypocrites oftentimes do works like to the works of the godly, yea, sometime have a goodlier shew, for they diligently pray, fast, give alms, and pretend a marvellous holiness; but Christ calleth these sheep's clothing, wherewith most hurtful wolves are clothed and hidden; for none of them is of a true, humble, meek, and bountiful heart, which they chiefly declare when they are rebuked, when their holiness is reproved; for then bring they forth their natural fruits, whereby they are known: those are rash judgments, impatience, stubbornness, obstinacy, flattering, and such like; it is true therefore, he that doth well shall be saved, that is, his salvation shall be manifest, but he can do no good at all, if he be not before regenerate by the washing of the new birth; for what good works can one work in the oldness of the flesh, and by the strength proceeded from Adam, they are the good works which Paul here condemneth, saying, 'Not by the works of righteousness which we have done.' They are indeed good works done in righteousness, but not before God, who first hath respect to the person, and then to the works, as we read Gen. iv. that he had respect first to Abel, then to his sacrifice, as he first turneth himself from Cain, and then from his sacrifice, altho' according to the outward appearance it was as good a sacrifice and work, as the sacrifice of Abel. 'Thro' Jesus Christ our Saviour.' This he addeth that he may keep us under the wings of Christ, as chickens are wont to be preserved under the wings of the hen; for thus Christ faith, Mat. xxiii. 37. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?" And hereby the nature of a true and right faith is taught; for it is nothing which some say, I believe in God almighty,
mighty, as the Jews and many others are wont, and
do therefore receive corporeal benefits of God; it is a
true and lively faith, whereby thou believest in God,
howbeit by Jesus Christ. First, that thou doubt not that
God is become a merciful father unto thee, which hath
pardoned all thy sins, and in baptism hath adopted thee
for his son and heir, that thou mayest certainly know
that thou art saved; again thou must also know this,
that that was not done freely, neither without satisfac-
ton made to the divine justice, for their can be no place
in thee for the divine grace and mercy to work salva-
tion, and to give thee eternal good things, unless the
justice of God be before most fully satisfied; for Christ
witnesseth, Mat. v. 18. 'One jot, or one tittle shall in
no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.' That
which is spoken of the grace and goodness of God,
cannot come but to them which do most purely and exactly
observe his commandments, according to that saying,
Mich. ii. When as the Jews did presume of the good-
ness of God towards them, and did always promise un-
to themselves peace, saying, how can God be always an-
gry, 'is the spirit of the Lord straitned?' It is answer-
ed them; are not my words good unto him that walk-
eth uprightly? Wherefore it shall be lawful for none to
attain unto the abundance of grace, unless he hath be-
fore most exactly satisfied the commandments of God,
Now it hath been spoken at large, that our works are
nothing before God, whereby we cannot fulfil so much
as the least commandment of God, how much less shall
we be able so to satisfy the justice of God, that we may
become worthy of his grace? Moreover if we were
able to fulfil all the commandments of God, and in all
things to satisfy his justice, notwithstanding we had not
as yet deserved grace and salvation, neither should he
therefore owe it unto us, for that he may by the right
of creation require as due service, all those things of
us his creatures, created to live unto him; wherefore
it should yet come of grace and mercy, whatsoever
should come from him unto us: this Christ declared very
well, Luke xvii. 7, 8, 9, 10. 'Which of you having a ser-
vant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and
Of Salvation by Grace,

by, when he is come from the field, Go, and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do." Seeing then that heaven is given of grace, and for no merit, even unto those, if there were any such, which have done all things that were commanded them, according to that promise, 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments:' what shall we boast of our good works, which although they were most absolute, yet would they be unworthy of heaven, but inasmuch as it is given us by the free and merciful promise? Hereupon (for that we must so satisfy the divine justice, and yet notwithstanding our works are not able to attain thereunto, whereunto if they should attain, yet should they deserve no grace or salvation, for that they are before due) God first gave unto us a man, which should satisfy the divine justice, for us in all things. Again, he hath by the same man bestowed this grace and bountifulness upon us, that altho' we without our own merit and worthiness, yea, having evil deserved and being unworthy, receive grace, yet it cometh not unto us altogether freely and without all merit, for we have it thro' the merit and satisfaction of Christ, whereupon Paul saith, Rom. v. 18. 'As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' That is, as without all our merit, and own work we fell into sin, being born sinners, so again without all our merit and means, we are redeemed from sins, by the washing of the spirit, born again the sons of God, partakers of grace and salvation; and this is the cause why the Apostle where he speaketh of faith and grace, is wont to add, by Jesus Christ; whereby surely he would give us to understand, that none should count it sufficient, if he say, I believe in God, Christ being neglected; he that
that truly believeth, must acknowledge, that his faith
cannot be acceptable to God, yea, that it can be no
faith at all, if all the commandments of God be not be-
fore fulfilled, which seeing it is above thy ability, (and
if it were not, yet notwithstanding thou have perform-
ed nothing, but that thou oughtest, and have as yet me-
ried nothing, having fulfilled even all the command-
ments of God) thou hast need of another, which in all
things may satisfy the divine justice for thee, and may
also merit heaven for thee; now this other is our Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath for thee fulfilled the
whole law, and merited for thee, that God now ac-
cording to his justice cannot but give heaven unto thee,
and in all things acknowledge thee for his son and heir:
and this is a true and found faith, which trusteth in
God by Christ, and is certain that by his merit it hath
already received of God salvation, which shortly after
shall be revealed with blessed abundance of felicity;
neither can any other be called Christian faith, but that
whereby it is believed, that by Christ doth come unto
us both satisfaction, which we owe to the justice of God,
and the gift of salvation, which we ourselves by no
means, if the law could even be fulfilled of us, can
merit; whereupon Paul, Rom. iv. 25. faith, ' Christ
was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for
our justification.' That is, by Christ we have received
not only remission of our sins, but also, that before
God we are accounted righteous, and the sons of his
grace: to the same effect also tendeth that which he
faith, Rom. iii. 25. ' Whom God hath set forth to be a
propitiation, thro' faith in his blood, to declare his righ-
teousness for the remissions of sins that are past, thro'
the forbearance of God.' Where again we learn, that
it is true faith, which trusteth in the blood of Christ, and
believeth that thereby it shall obtain grace; whereas
that thou believest he hath shed his blood for thee, thou
receivest satisfaction; in that thou acknowledgest him the
reconciliation, thou confessest that by his merit the di-
vine grace and salvation do come unto thee. We have
all things without our own merit and means, but not-
Of Salvation by Grace,

without the merit and means of Christ, who hath for
this cause shed his blood. Wherefore that we may al-
lude unto the parable of Christ, we must contain our-
selves under his wings, and not to trust in ourselves;
 flee out and contend to come unto God, otherwise we
shall be a prey to the hellish kite; for as it hath been
often said, our righteousness, our merits, yea, and our
faith shall prevail nothing, without this our mediator
Christ; and therefore he faith St. John xiv 6. "No man
' cometh unto the Father but by me.' And in the whole
Gospel what other things doth he, but endeavour to
take us out of ourselves, and to transfer us to himself
under his wings, that we may trust only in his satisfaction
and merit? The same the Apostle also teacheth in the
words following, Tit. iii. 7. 'That being justified by his
grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope
of eternal life.' He faith that we are justified, not by
our own works, but by the grace of the same Jesus Christ.
That is, we are therefore justified, for that Christ hath
the grace of the Father, having fulfilled his will in all
things, and thereby merited eternal life; for seeing that
he hath no need of this merit, he giveth it unto us
which do believe in him, that before God all his things
may be imputed to us, and by them we may receive sal-
vation. See, how rich a thing found faith is, and how
great good things it bringeth with it; see also how pre-
cious a thing the Gospel is, and how great a treasure it is
to have it purely preached; and on the contrary, how
great a disadvantage there is, where it is not preached, or
not rightly preached, the inventions of men being ming-
led with it, or thrift in instead of it. Take heed therefore
of such deceivers, and of their counterfeit faith, rest not
in thyself, but get thee under the wings of Christ, keep
thyself under his protection, trust that thou art heir of
eternal life, not by thy own righteousness, or grace which
thou hast received, but whereby he his righteous and ac-
ceptable before God: hereunto pertaineth this saying,
Psal. xci. 4. 'He shall cover thee with his feathers, and
' under his wings shalt thou trust:' and in the song of Solo-
mon, ii. 14. it is said, 'O my dove, that art in the clefts of
' the
the rock, in the secret places of the stairs,' that is, in the wounds of Christ; and this indeed is a true Christian faith, which reflieth not in itself as the Schoolmen dream, but reflieth itself wholly in Christ, and as it trusteth in him, so it reflieth in him, having received eternal salvation. Whereas he faith that we are made heirs of eternal life according to hope, besides that he proveth, that we without all our own merits, by only hope of grace are born again heirs of eternal life, and do not become heirs by working whereof, we have already spoken at large, he also teacheth this, that our salvation and eternal life is as yet hid, although if we believe, we do verily possess it, and this body being put off, and the kingdom of Christ revealed, all things shall appear manifestly. The text fighteth most mightily, and with most plain words against all righteousness and good works of man's reason, and free-will, for the words are plain, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing,' &c. All which words do utterly overthrow our righteousness, attributeth all things to the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the holy Ghost, to Christ and his grace; how can there notwithstanding any presumption as yet remain in us? Wherefore let all sacred and profane laws, have a fair shew; let all sacrificing Priests, Monks, and Nuns boast of themselves; let all religious and honest men and women seem goodly in outward appearance; let them even raise the dead; if faith in Christ be absent, whereof we have now spoken so much, all these things are to no purpose. These most false shews do as yet deceive the whole world, and seduce almost every one; they make the gospel obscure, and extinguish the faith of Christ; all their works and orders, although they appear goodly, and they think them to have merited never so much do avail no more unto salvation, than the works of beasts, or of artificers, whereby they do maintain themselves and theirs, yea, they do most hurtfully hinder it: therefore that I may conclude, take heed as much as thou art able, of these wolves, which under a fair pretence counter-
counterfeit themselves sheep, and learn and accustom thyself with a sound faith to cleave unto Christ alone.

SERMON XI.

Of the Kingdom of God.

Forasmuch as there is often made mention in the new Testament of these words, the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Christ, and it is very profitable and expedient for a Christian to know these, viz. that they are nothing else, but remission of sins, and grace preached and offered by the gospel; for in this kingdom thou shalt find nothing but grace, goodness, pardon and forgiveness of sins, love and gentleness: I therefore think it good to treat somewhat at large of the state and kingdom, and of forgiveness of sins, the kingdom of God, whereby he reigneth over all the faithful, and as a faithful king defendeth, punisheth, rewardeth, guideth and directeth them, &c. they again from their heart trust in him, suffer his fatherly chastisement and correction with a patient mind, and always serve him through obedience, is not worldly or temporal, but spiritual; neither confisfeth in meat and drink, or in any outward thing, but only in justification, quieting and consolation of the heart and conscience of man; wherefore it is nothing else but forgiveness and taking away of sins, by which consciences are defiled, troubled and disquieted; for even as a worldly and temporal kingdom is ordained to this end, that men may live quietly and peaceably one with another; so the kingdom of God giveth these things spiritually, and destroyeth the kingdom of sin, and is nothing else, but an abolishing and pardoning of offences, God reigneth in the hearts, inasmuch as he worketh in them by his word, peace, quietness and consolation; even as sin, worketh the contrary, namely, unquietness, anguish, and all kind of evils. Herein God sheweth his
his majesty and grace in this life, that he taketh away and pardoneth mens sins; and this is the kingdom of grace. Now when as sin with his guard, that is, Satan, death, and hell, shall trouble man no more, then at the last the kingdom of glory, and absolute felicity shall be. Hereupon it followeth, first, that the kingdom of God is ruled or governed by no law, no not by the law of God, much les by the laws of men, but only by the gospel, and faith in God, by which hearts are purified, comforted and quieted, whilst that the holy Ghost poureth out love and the knowledge of God into them, and maketh man as it were one thing and one spirit with God; so that his affection is set upon the same thing, he willeth and desireth the same thing, he seeketh and loveth the same thing that God doth; neither standeth the case otherwise here, than it doth between two friends, which bare good will to one another, and agree one with another in all things. Hereof it cometh, that a man in this kingdom of God is perfect, merciful, pitiful and bountiful towards his neighbour, seeing that he knoweth by the instinct of the holy Ghost, that God is of the same affection toward him, and toward all men, and doth pour forth his goodness plentifully; such affection of God no man can know by the law, but only by the spirit, and word of the gospel. None therefore shall obtain quietness, comfort, and peace of the heart, or attain unto the kingdom of God by any law; and they which prescribe many laws, do withdraw men from the kingdom of God to the kingdom of sin, wherein is nothing else, but unquietness, anguish affliction, adversity, and all kind of evils, tormenting the conscience. On the contrary, in the kingdom and knowledge of God, the Lord Christ reigneth no other wise than as a master of a hospital amongst the sick, poor, and diseased; for unto this kingdom none pertain, but sinful and miserable men, unto whom their sins are forgiven, whereupon Christ faith in the gospel, Luke vi. 24. ‘Woe unto you that are rich: for ye have received your consolation.’ But on the contrary,
contrary, the poor, miserable, and succourless receive comfort and joy by the gospel; for Christ came to call sinners only, and not the righteous, that all glory may be referred to God alone, for he that forgiveth sins of his grace and meer mercy: such abolishing or putting away of sin, wherein Christ reigneth as a King of the kingdom of God, is done of him after two sorts: first thus, in that he remitteth, pardonneth and covereth sins, so that God will not regard, remember or revenge them, although they be in a man. As it is in Psalm xxxii. 1, 2. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin iscovered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. And in Isaiah xlili. 25. God faith, I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake and will not remember thy sins." Secondly thus, in that he purgeth or rather scoureth sins by divers crosses and afflictions; for they are two things, to remit sins, and to weaken the body of sin that it may not reign in us. If a man believe and is baptised, then all his sins are forgiven him, but afterward sin must be scourd or abated by manifold affliction and mortification, as long as he shall live; sin sticketh in us, as long as the mortal body remaineth, but for Christ's sake it is not imputed in the wrath of God, but freely remitted, and the force thereof diminished by his fatherly chastisement: in such chastisement for their amendment, true Chrislians have great comfort peace and joy, as St. Paul faith, Rom. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 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." So thou haft two things to be considered: the first, that in this kingdom of God we are justified. The second that by tribulation and affliction we are glorified, without which we cannot attain
to glory. Thirdly, good Christians are not known by this, when any suffer manifold tribulation and chastisement that the body of sin may be weakened, and they brought to amendment; for herein they do altogether differ among themselves, one suffereth this, another one is chased thus, another otherwife, so that even the very apostles did not love and suffer alike: but they are known in forgiveness of sin, or justification by faith, wherein God turneth his anger from them, and receiveth them unto grace, and counteth them for his dear children, and imputeth no sin to them unto condemnation. Herein are all alike, even as all live under one heaven. Wherefore they do most grossly err and stumble, which measure Christians by manners, works and the outward manner of living, even as the Pharisees were wont to do, and did therefore find fault with Christ, for that he did not observe their ceremonies, but was a friend of Publicans and sinners. As that Pharisee said within himself, Luke vii.39. 'This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who, and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner.' Here now an example of those things which are before said: a physician which goeth about to cure the sick, doth first promise him health by the assistance and help of God, whereby he putteth him, in great hope and comfort. Afterward he beginneth to purge cleanse and strengthen, and such like things which make to recovering of health: so God also, when he hath remitted sins, and received man into the bosom of grace, doth lay on him all kind of affliction, and doth scour him, and renew him from day to day, in the knowledge and love of God, until he become safe, pure and renewed, which then at the last cometh to pass, when this mortal body dieth. Fourthly in these two partitions of the kingdom of God, two sorts of men are found, which abuse the same kingdom of the grace of God, and the gospel. Some become sluggish and slothful, laying well if sins be pardoned freely of meer grace: and be washed away in baptism, there is no need that I should add any thing of mine own. Others think on the contrary, that they shall put away their sins by works, and so trusting to their
Of the Kingdom of God.

Of the Kingdom of God.

1. Of the Kingdom of God. their own merits, they are proud and arrogant, and in respect of themselves contemn others, which do not so. The first of these contemn God's grace; the others, appugn it as not sufficient, and so they represent swine and dogs. Now all this appeareth by the gospel, by with Christ reigneth in the kingdom of God; for some abuse it unto carnal liberty; others on the contrary are persuaded, that it is not sufficient to salvation, but that their works also do help somewhat, and by this they deny and contemn the grace of God; hereof thou mayest read more in the epistle to the Romans, wherein these two sorts of men are plainly set forth. Fifthly, this kingdom of God, or remission of sins hath no bound or measure, as that place of the gospel doth very well shew, where Peter asketh the Lord, Mat. xviii. 21, 22. ‘ Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and if I forgive him? till seven times? ’ Jesu faith unto him, I say not unto thee, ‘ Until seven times: but, until seventy times seven; ’ that is as often as shall be needful. After this followeth a parable, which the Lord there putteth forth, wherein he most severely admonisheth us, if we will not fall out of the favour of God, that we forgive our neighbour his offences without all delay or grudging, forasmuch as God always forgiveth us innumerable sins. Our debt, whereby we are bound unto God, is ten thousand talents, that is so unmeasurable and great, that we are not able to pay it with all our substance, all our strength and works; for we can put away no one sin, although it be even very little. Seeing therefore that God doth remit so many sins of his grace in his kingdom, it is meet that we should forgive our neighbour a few offences. Of this kingdom of God, wherein sins are forgiven, the scripture every where maketh mention, and faith, that the kingdom and dominion of Christ doth extend from one end of the land to the other; so faith David, Psal. lxxii. 8. ‘ He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.’ And a little after he faith, ‘ All nations shall serve him.’ This also the Angel Gabriel declared to the Virgin Mary, Luke i. 32. ‘ The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever,'
ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' These
and such like places do shew that forgiveness of sins,
wherein the kingdom of God doth especially consist,
hath no measure or bound. Sixthly, hereof we may see
how unchristianly they do, which bring forgiveness of
sins to a certain measure, as they do, which measure
out their indulgences for prescribed years, with forgive-
nefs of the third, fourth, or half part; for hereby they
bring the kingdom of God into a narrow and strait
room, and are injurious to his mercy, forasmuch as there
is no end of his kingdom, or measure of his mercy.
But whosoever shall in faith call upon the name of God,
shall be saved, as often as he doth it. Moreover, when
the sinner shall be sorry for his sins, the Lord will no
more remember them, as it is in the prophecy of Ezekial,
chap. xviii. Seventhly, as this kingdom of God hath
no measure or limits of forgiveness of sins, so also it
hath no end, but endureth continually without ceasing;
altho' the subjects of this kingdom do not abide in it
continually, firmly and faithfully, but do oftentimes for-
sake it. So the favour and grace of God were continually
with Peter, although he denied the Lord, and revolted
from him. To the same effect tendeth the parable in
the gospel, whereof we have now spoken; for the ser-
vant, which would not have pity of his fellow-servant,
did make himself unworthy of the mercy of God, did
deprive himself of the kingdom of God, which consists
in pardoning of offences, as it is above-mentioned.
Here university divines of a pregnant wit, as they seem
unto themselves, and puffed up with knowledge, have
disputed, whether and how forgiveness of sins doth
come again when man reneweth his sin, not knowing
what they say. But follow thou the plain and simple
words of the gospel, viz. that thy sins are so often
forgiven thee, as thou dost forgive thy brother, whom
thou must so often forgive as he shall offend against thee.
Wherefore in this parable, whereof I have even now
made mention. Christ doth admonish us all, that we
pardon and forgive all them that have offended us; as
if he would say, As in man's affairs, he which is benefi-

Of the Kingdom of God.
On the Kingdom of God.

ficial to another, hath others also beneficial unto him again so faith Christ, in the kingdom of heaven, which consisteth specially in forgivenesfs of sins, that is, in Christiianity or among Christsians, he which pardoneth another his offences, I also will pardon him his: and on the contrary, he that is not merciful toward another, to him I also will deny grace. I am over you as a Lord and King, and ye are fellow-servants and companions one with another; seeng therefore that I your Lord do readily forgive you, you also ought more readily to forgive one another. After the same sort also he hath commanded us to pray in the Lord's prayer, Mat. vi. 12. Forgive us our debts: which he would not have done, if he did not promise, and would not mercifully forgive us. But nevertheless, he addeth a condition or sign to this promise: when he faith, 'If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.' The first is a sign, the other a promise: Mark that it is here enjoined us, to forgive one another his sins and offences; so that we must be merciful and bountiful toward our neighbours, if we will have the heavenly Father gentle and appeased toward us. And let us be most certainly persuaded herof, when we shall interpret at the best, and excuse as much as equity doth suffer, the offences and trespasses of others, although they be even great and grievous, that we also shall have a bountiful and merciful Father towards us in heaven. Wherefore it is a thing to be abhor'd in Christiianity, and even blasphemous, when it is said, I cannot, neither will I forgive him that which he hath committed against me. I will be revenged, &c. Surely those blind men are ignorant that they do take from God his glory, to whom alone vengeance belongeth, and challenge it to themselves, and so they give up to the devil their own souls, which they have received of God, and ought to render them unto him again, whereunto they are perhaps provoked even with some small or trifling matter: Such kind of men as these ought to set before the eyes of their heart, these words of the gospel, Mat. xviii. 32. 'O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion
Of the Kingdom of God. 193

compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Neither is it sufficient, if in gestures, signs, mouth or tongue, thou shew thyself a friend unto him, and forgive him, but thou must do it from thy heart, otherwise God will not forgive thee, yea, thou shalt be driven out of the kingdom of grace; wherefore if, at any time, we have tried the mercy of God towards us, we must also readily pardon our fellow-brethren, which have offended us; for in that respect the merciful Father forgiveth us our sins, that we also should forgive our brethren, and shew mercy towards them, even as he is merciful towards us, and remitteth sin, death, the fault and the punishment. When we shall do this, then are we received into the kingdom of God; for the goodness of God liveth in our hearts, and maketh us also good; Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, yet nevertheless he reigneth in the hearts and consciences of the faithful, so that they love, fear, reverence, and diligently obey him, no otherwise than obedient subjects do their king, and in all their doings are made like to him, even as he himself faith, Mat. v. 48. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Now God is perfect in this, that he taketh away and pardoneth our wickedness, defect, sin, and imperfection, that we also may do the like to our brethren; but when we will not do the like, we are driven out of this kingdom, and are made subject to the kingdom of sin, death, and the devil, as disloyal and disobedient inhabitants of some country, are thrust out: Which God of his mercy turn from us. Amen.

[All these things may be comprehended in the principal points following.] 1. Christ reigneth, when, by faith of the gospel, he worketh the goodness and grace of God in our hearts, and maketh them like unto God, 2. In such a kingdom the conscience enjoyeth peace, consolation and rest, when it understandeth and knoweth that God is merciful unto it, and imputeth not sins:

N 3. There
3. Therefore man beareth all kind of tribulation and affliction, by which sin is scoured, and the force thereof abated: He also endeavoureth to be beneficial unto others, as he himself hath been as it were overwhelmed with the benefits of God. 4. And so the Lord reigneth after two sorts: First, for that he maketh the faithful certain of the grace of God, and remission of sins. Secondly, for that he layeth the cross upon them, that the body of sin may be weakned, and they brought to amendment. 5. He that forgiveth his debtors pertaineth to the kingdom of God, but he that doth not forgive them, remaineth under the kingdom of sin. These things I thought good to speak in this present place concerning the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of Christ, which is the same; to wit, that it is nothing else but a kingdom, in which thou shalt find nothing but forgiveness of sins. Which kingdom is preached and offered unto us by the gospel; God grant that we may so receive it. Amen.

SERMON XII.

Of Prayer.

THAT prayer may be good indeed, and may also be heard, we must first consider that two things are necessary thereunto; one, that we first meditate upon the promise of God, and do as it were advertise God thereof, and trusting unto it, be imboldned and made cheerful to pray; for unless God hath commanded us to pray, and had promised also that he will hear us, even all creatures could not obtain so much as a grain by their petitions. Whereupon it followeth, that no man doth obtain any thing of God for his own worthiness, or the worthiness of his prayer, but by the only goodness of God, who preventing all our petitions and desires provoketh us to pray and desire of him, by his gentle and bounteous promise and commandment, that we may learn
learn how great care he hath over us, and is ready to give us more things than we durst enterprize to ask, and that we may also learn to pray boldly, inasmuch as he giveth us all things, even in more ample manner than we do ask them. It is necessary that we do no whit doubt of the promise of the true and faithful God, for therefore he hath promised that he will hear us, yea, and hath commanded us to pray, that we might have a sure and strong faith that our prayer should be so heard, as he faith, Mat. xxi. and Mark xi. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing; ye shall receive.' And in Luke, chap. xi. 9. 'And I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?' We must boldly trust to these and such like promises and commandments, and pray with true confidence. If one so prayeth, that he doubt whether God hear him, and maketh his prayer only at a venture, caring not greatly whether he be heard or not heard, he commiteth a double offence: One, for that he himself maketh his prayer frustrate, and laboureth in vain; for so James faith, chap. i. 6, 7. 'But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.' Such a man's heart is not quiet and settled, wherefore God can give him nothing; but faith maketh the heart quiet, and capable of the gifts of God. The other offence is, that he counteth the most faithful and true God, as a lying, vain and inconstant man. as he which neither is able, neither will fulfil his promises, so by his doubtings he robbeth God of his honour, and name of faithfulness, and truth. Whereby it is so grievously offended, that even that of-
fence being committed, a Christian is plainly changed into a heathen, and denieth and loseth his true God, so that if he continue therein, he is damned for ever without all comfort; and if any thing be given unto him, which he asketh, it is given him not to good but to evil, as well temporal as eternal, not for his prayer fake, but from the wrath of God, that he may recompense those goodly words, which are uttered in sins, unbelief, and to the dishonour of God. Some say, I would trust indeed that my prayers should be heard, if I were worthy, or if I could pray well. Then, say I, if thou wilt not pray, before thou shalt know and find thyself fit to pray, thou shalt never pray. For as it is before said, our prayer must not rest upon our worthiness, or the worthiness of itself, or be grounded thereon, but upon the immutable truth of the promise of God. If so be that it trust to itself or any other thing, and ground itself thereon, it is false and deceive thee, altho' thy heart should even burst by reason of the ardent affection of godliness, and thou shouldst weep nothing but drops of blood. For therefore we pray, because we are unworthy to pray, and hereby surely we are made worthy to pray, and fit to be heard, inasmuch as we think that we are worthy, and do boldly and cheerfully trust to the faithfulness and truth of God. Although thou be unworthy, yet have regard hereunto, and mark most diligently, that a thousand times more consisteth in this, that thou honour the truth of God, and not with thy doubfulness accuse his faithful promise of faldhood. For thine own worthiness doth not further thee, neither thy unworthiness hinder thee; but infidelity doth contemn thee, trust and confidence maketh thee worthy and preserveth thee; wherefore so behave thyself all thy life long, that thou dost not at any time esteem thyself either worthy or fit to pray or receive, unless thou find thyself to be such a one, as dareth enterprize the matter freely, trusting to the true and certain promise of thy merciful God, which will so shew both his mercy and goodness unto thee, that as he promised to hear thee being unworthy, and having not deserved it, of his mere grace, moved with no prayers;
prayers: so he will hear thee being an unworthy asker, of his only grace, to the honour of his truth and promise, that so thou mayest give thanks, not to thine own worthiness, but to his truth, whereby he hath fulfilled his promise, and to his mercy, whereby he hath made and set forth his promise. And this the 25th Psalm confirmeth, where David faith, "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies." Grace and mercy are in his promise, faithfulness or truth in fulfilling and hearing. And in the 85th Psalm, he faith, 'Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other,' that is, they come together in every work and gift, which we obtain of the Lord by praying. In this trust and confidence thou must so behave thyself, that thou do not limit to the Lord any bound or end, day or place, neither appoint any manner or measure of hearing, but that thou do commit all those things to his divine will, wisdom and omnipotence, that thou boldly and cheerfully look to be heard, and yet not desire to know, how, and where, how soon, and how long, and by what means. For his divine wisdom shall find a better manner and measure, time and place, than we can think, even although that should be done by miracles. Even as in the Old Testament, Exod. xiv. when the children of Israel trusted that God would deliver them, and yet no possible means were before their eyes, or in all their thoughts, then the red sea opened itself, and gave them passage, drowning all their enemies at once. The holy woman Judith, when she heard that the citizens of Bethulia would after the space of five days give up the city, if God in the mean time did not help them, rebuked them, saying, "What are ye, that ye tempt the Lord? those are not devices and purposes, whereby we obtain mercy of God, but rather whereby we provoke him unto wrath and displeasure. Will ye set the mercy of the Lord a time, and appoint him a day after your will?" Hereupon God did help her after a marvellous sort, that at the last she slew Holofernes, and
On the bidding of Guests

put the enemies to flight, Judith xiii. So Saint Paul also faith, Eph. iii. that the power of God is such and so great, that it doth far greater and better things than we either ask or think. Wherefore we ought to think ourselves more vile, than that we may name, appoint, or prescribe the time, place, manner, measure, and other circumstances of that which we ask of God, but we must leave all things wholly unto him, constantly and boldly, believing that he will hear us.

SERMON XIII.

On the bidding of Guests to the Great Supper.


As in the whole scripture, so in this text also we must endeavour, that according to our ability (as ye have oftentimes heard heretofore) we may understand the true and simple meaning, and thereupon settle our heart and conscience. For he that shall encounter with Satan, must not waver and stagger this way and that way, but must be certain of his cause, and instructed with many places of scripture, otherwise when the devil shall by an uncertain place of scripture, draw him to his fork, he will toss him this way, and that way, as the wind doth a dry leaf. Wherefore out of this text we must gather a certain meaning, whereby we may persist and stand sure. Howbeit it is not to be understood of the reverend eucharist, or the bread of the Lord's table, although Papists have miserably wrested it, as they have done many other authorities of scripture. But this is the scope, this is the sum of this text; that the gospel is preached and published through the whole world, but few receive and embrace it; and it is therefore called a supper, for that the gospel must be the last word, which shall continue to the end of the world. Wherefore
fore the supper here is nothing else, but a very rich and sumptuous feast, which God hath made through Christ by the gospel, which setteth before us great good things and rich treasures. And he sent his servants to bid men to this sumptuous supper; that is, the apostles were altogether sent with one word into the whole world, that they might bid and call men to this supper, with one voice, with one gospel, with one embassage; after such sort, that if St. Peter had come and preached the gospel of God in that place where Paul had preached it before, yet had it been one word, and the same preaching, that the hearers should have been compelled to say, Behold he preacheth the same that we heard before of the other, they wholly consent and agree, and the thing that they publish is all one. That the Evangelist might insinuate this consent and agreement in preaching, he faith, 'He sent his servant,' he faith not, his servants, as of many. Now this message the servant must do to the hidden guests. 'Come for all things are now ready.' For Christ hath suffered death, and in his death hath slain sin and death, also was risen again from death, the holy Ghost was given: and briefly all things were prepared which pertained unto that great supper. All things were without all our cost. For the father by Christ hath paid the price of all things, that without all our merit and labour we might enjoy his goodness, and be nourished and enriched. He sendeth his servant therefore first to the Jews, to bid them to this great supper, unto whom the promise was made of God; for the law and all the prophets were directed hereunto, that they might prepare the people of God. As the angel Gabriel declared of John the Baptist to his father Zacharias, Luke i. 15, 16, 17. "He shall be filled with the holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers of the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." But what did the guest answer to the message of the servant? The text following declareth, 'And they
all with one consent began to make excuse." This is that whereof the Lord speaketh, Matth. x. 37, 38. " He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: And he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." For he that will be partaker of this supper, must put all things into danger for the Gospel's sake, body, goods, wife, children, friends, &c. Moreover he must leave all things whatsoever they be, that separate him from the Gospel, altho' they seem good, just, right, and holy; neither think ye that these men which here excuse themselves, were guilty of grievous sins, or occupied about unjust matters and works; for it is not unjust to buy, to use trade of merchandize, to maintain himself honestly, to marry a wife, to be joined in matrimony. But therefore can they not come to this supper, for that they will not forfake these things, but will rather cleave to them in their heart; now they must be utterly forfaken and left, when the Gospel so requireth; thou wilt perhaps say, I would indeed willingly follow the Gospel, I would cleave unto it, and do all other things whatsoever, but to forfake goods, houses, family, wife, children, &c. Surely this is a hard matter; God hath commanded me to labour, to maintain my wife and children, &c. Behold therefore this is the scope and sum, that the Gospel is the word of faith and offence, because of which every faithful man doth bear offence willingly; indeed God hath willed thee to do these things, however he hath also commanded, that thou prefer him before all creatures, and love him above all things, and think him higher than all things which thou canst know, even as the chief and greatest commandment giveth us to understand; 'Thou shalt love the * Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might,' Dent. vi. 5. Wherefore thou must forfake all things before thou suffer thy self to be plucked away from the love of him, or his words; although indeed he loseth nothing, which forfaketh any thing for the Gospel's sake; if for the gospels sake thou lose this temporal life, God will give thee another far better
better viz. eternal life, as Christ faith, Matth. x. 39. • He that findeth his life shall lose it: And he that ‘loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.’ If thou be compelled to forfake thy wife together with thy children, remember that God hath a care of them, he will be a better father unto them than thyself, which undoubtedly cometh to pafs, if so be that thou believe; for we have very great and rich promises that he will not suffer his word to fail, but will always fulfil it; if we can freely and confidently trust in him, and commit our selves wholly to him; Christ faith after this sort, Matth. xix. 29. • And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for mynames sake, shall receive an hundred-fold and shall inherit everlasting life.” We have here his words and promise, what would we have more? Or what can we desire more? Wherein therefore do we fail only in our faith; Whereof no man cometh to this supper, but he that bringeth with him a sincere faith, which God preferreth and loveth above all creatures; but how doth the Lord recompence them which excused themselves that they could not come to the supper? The text itself declareth, • Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed and the halt, and the blind.” To go into the streets and lanes is nothing else, but that where as the Jews made themselves unworthy of the Gospel, and did refuse it, the disciples turned to the Gentiles: for it was enjoined them of Christ, that they should not turn themselves to the Gentiles, nor preach the Kingdom of God in the cities of the Samaritans, but should go only to the sheep of the house of Israel, and should feed them only, as they did; now the Jews striving against this sword, and by no means receiving it, the Disciples said, Acts xiii. 46, 47. • It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spokento you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, Io we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto
unto the ends of the earth." But what meaneth that which he faith moreover to the servant?

'Go out into the high-ways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.' This is to be understood of desperate and weak consciences, which also pertain unto this supper, and are compelled unto it, but this compulsion is not outward, but inward and spiritual, and is done after this sort: when the lawis preached, sin is set before our eyes and revealed, that a man may come to the knowledge of himself, so that to compel, enter or come in, doth rightly signify to drive sin into the conscience, whereby a man may know that he is nothing, that all his works are sins, and subject to damnation, and so suddenly his conscience may become desperate, and his heart faint and terrified, that all that confidence and opinion of help may depart, and man himself be able no where to comfort himself in any thing, and at the last be driven to despair of himself; if so be that one be once after this sort compelled, then do not long delay to let him come in, but deliver the man out of desperation; that cometh to pass, when thou comfortest him by the Gospel, and declarest that he is delivered from his sins, saying, believe, in Christ that he hath made thee free from thy sins, then shalt thou be delivered and free from sin. And this is the meaning of that which he faith, 'Compel them to come in.' It is not to be understood of outward compulsion, as some interpret it, that wicked and ungodly ones should be violently driven to the supper, for this prevaleth nothing, neither is it so meant in this place wherefore it is to be referred only to the conscience, and is inward and spiritual. Now he goeth on to speake to the servant and the rest. 'For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidder, shall taste of my supper.' This is the conclusion, that they which think themselves most certain that they shall come to the supper, and taste of it, shall not taste of it: the reason ye have heard. Now briefly the guests that are bidden and do not come, are they, which think that they shall obtain the supper by their own works, very much wearying themselves, thinking assuredly that they shall taste of it; but the Lord concludes faith
faith, Not one of these men shall taste of my supper. Wherefore most gentle Lord? they have committed no wicked thing, neither have been occupied about unjust matters; behold this is the reason, for that they have forsaken faith, and have not confessed it freely before every one, neither have preferred that rich and sumptuous supper before all creatures; for seeing it is sumptuous, it requireth those men that do judge it to be so, and do put any thing in danger, whatsoever it be, that they may be partakers of it; thus ye have the compendious meaning of this text, which I have only briefly run over, if any will expound it more at large, I am well content he so do.

SERMON XIV.

On the Works of Charity.

Luke vi. 36. to the 42. Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful, &c.

The works of charity which we must do to our neighbours in temporal things, and in corporal necessity, are described unto us in this text; which the Lord then declared, when he said a little before in the same chapter, 'Love your enemies, dogood to them which hate you: bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other: and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also, &c.' All which he comprehending in a brief sum, faith, 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' Here ye see all good works summarily described, which we must exercise among ourselves, as our heavenly Father hath exercised them toward us. Ye have oftentimes heard, that it is not needful to do good works toward God, but toward our neighbours only: God can be made neither stronger nor richer by our works, but man may be strengthened
On Charity.

and enriched by them, unto whom also they are necessary, unto whom only they are to be directed, and not unto God, which ye have very often heard, and which is now in your ears; but would to God, it would at the last burst forth both into your hands and works. Mark therefore how perversc an order it is, when any deal with God by works, with whom notwithstanding they must deal only by faith, and when faith is directed unto man, whereas it is to be placed in God alone. Turn these contrariwise, and they shall be right, after this sort; let us first repose faith in God alone, and let us then give ourselves to serve our neighbours, and to direct all our works so that they may turn to their advantage. We must deal before God by no other thing but by faith alone, because none is able to help us but God only, and whatsoever we possess either in mind or body, that cometh wholly to us from God alone, in whom we ought to trust, upon whom we ought to set our heart. Now some use such a preposterous order, that they repose faith, which ought to have respect to God only, in themselves and others; they rest upon their traditions, and whatsoever their great masters have invented, in that they put their trust. Of such God faith in Jeremiah, chap ii. 13, 35. "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn fromme: behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned." First he faith, that his spouse is turned into an harlot, and hath estranged herself from God the fountain of life, from whom life, salvation and every good thing floweth, him they have forsaken. Secondly, they set up their own traditions, and dig unto themselves a fountain of their own, which can hold no water. So Papists trust to their own inventions, to their founding of masses, to their fastings, prayers, and such like things, which appear to be as a fountain, out of which they would draw life, and blessedness of salvation, when notwithstanding it is able to hold no water; they forsake the fountain of life. Afterward he faith, they dare
On Charity.

205
dare rise against me, that I should not be angry with them, alleging that their works are just, and they will go to law with me. Behold this is another sin, that they go about to defend their works. Whereupon God also faith, 'I will plead with thee. Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?' So faith pertaineth to God alone, whereunto it belongeth to obtain all whatsoever things are necessary, as well temporal things as eternal, and so to obtain them, that it think not that it hath merited in any thing. Also, it must again apply itself downward toward our neighbour, without looking for any recompense, not that blestness consisteth in that deriving of faith, to wit, charity, for neither doth God require that, who will have the conscience to rest only in him; even as the spouse must cleave only to her husband, and to no other, so also God requireth of us that we trust in him alone. These things Christ declareth, when he faith, 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' Wherefore I must so order my conscience toward God, that I undoubtedly believe, that I have him a bountiful and merciful Father, as I will afterward declare, and that I also do shew mercy toward my neighbour; which faith must be inward, and carried upward unto God, but works must be without, and derive downward to our neighbours. After this sort Abraham did, when at the mountain in the country of Moria, he ascended to God, he left his servants and asses below at the bottom of the mountain, taking only Isaac with him. The same must be done of us if we will ascend unto God that we may come to him with Isaac only, that is, with faith; servants and asses, that is, works, are to be left below. Thus much for the entrance of this text concerning faith and works, to wit, that faith must pierce inward and upward, but works must go without and downward, whereby at the length it cometh to pass, that we are righteous before God and men for that we give due honour unto God, and believe according to his word, and satisfy our neighbour in the duty of love. Now let us see the very words of the text in order. 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.' How therefore is our heavenly Father merciful? After that sort, that
giveth us all good things, corporal and spiritual, transitory and eternal, freely, and of his mercy; for if he should give unto us according to our desert, he should give unto us nothing but hell-fire and eternal damnation. Whatsoever therefore good things he bestoweth upon us, he bestoweth them of his meer mercy: He seeth us flicker fast in death, therefore he hath mercy upon us and giveth us life: he seeth us to be the children of hell, therefore he taking pity upon us, giveth us heaven: He seeth us to be miserable and naked, hungry and thirsty, in pitying him hereof, he cloutheth us, and refresheth us with meat and drink, and maketh us full of all good things: So whatsoever we have either in body or in spirit, he giveth it us of his meer mercy, without any merit or desert of ours. Whereupon Christ here faith, Imitate your Father and be merciful like unto him. This is not simple mercy, such as reason teacheth, for that is greedy of her own advantage, which giveth only to great and learned men, and to them that deserve it; it loveth them that be fair and beautiful; it giveth unto them, of whom it looketh for profit again, which is a mercy divided, begging, and as it were torn and broken in pieces: For if I shall give to him that hath deserved, or if I shall regard fairness or friendship, it is a bargain or debt, and not mercy. Hereof Christ speaketh in the same chapter before this text, in this wise, "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again." But the mercy of Christians must not seek her own, but so behave itself, that it be indifferent, that it regard all alike with open eyes, both friends and foes, even as our heavenly Father doth: And whereforever this mercy is not, neither is there faith also; for thy heart being settled in faith, so that thou knowest God to have shewed himself thy God, so gentle and bountiful without thy desert, and of meer grace when thou wait as yet his enemy, and the child of everlasting malediction;
On Charity.  

thy heart, I say, being settled in this faith, thou canst not contain thyself, but that thou shew thyself again so to thy neighbour, and that wholly for the love of God, and for thy neighbour's good. Take heed therefore what difference thou make between a friend and enemy, between the worthy and unworthy; for ye see all, which are in this text rehearsed, to have otherwise deferved of us than that we should love them, or do well unto them. And the same thing the Lord meaneth, when he faith, Luke vi. 35. "Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil." But how cometh it to pass, that a certain contrary thing to that which we have taught, seemeth to appear in this text where he faith, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Again, Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." All which authorities found it, that we must deal before God with our works, and by them deserve the mercy of God, when notwithstanding ye have very often heard, that faith alone doth all; and both Paul, and the whole scripture, do commonly say and affirm, that we must believe in God alone, and deal only by meer faith before him. It is requisite here to understand that good words are only a setting forth and condemnation of faith, so that if I believe, I must be merciful, I must not judge nor condemn my neighbour, I must forgive, and give unto my neighbour. Wherefore set an example before yourselves, Gen. xxii. 12. What did Abraham, being commanded to offer his son? He obeyed the commandment, and drew forth the sword to kill his son: What ensued thereupon? The Angel of the Lord stayed him, saying, 'Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not with-held thy son, thine only son from me.' Howbeit this is here to be known and marked of us, that we must first receive, before we give; before we shew mercy, we must receive mercy of God; we do not lay the first stone, neither doth the sheep seek the shepherd, but
On Charity.

but the shepherd the sheep. Wherefore do bestow thy works in every respect, that thou look for nothing at God's hand because of them; for we obtain even every thing of God without merit or desert, so God faith, Isaiah lxv. 1. ' I am sought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that sought me not.' And in the end of the same chapter, ' And it shall come to pass (faith God) that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.' For indeed before we seek him, he findeth us, before we ask him, he heareth us. Likewise St. Paul faith, Rom. iii. 22. " There is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, thro' 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:' And in the chapter following, he faith, " 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. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace," as he faith afterward in the eleventh chapter. Again, I must bestow my works so that they may be a certain sign, and as it were a seal graven with letters, whereby I may be assured that my faith is sincere; for if I feel in my heart, that my works proceedeth from love, I am sure concerning the integrity and soundness of my faith. If I forgive, the same forgiveness doth assure me concerning the sincerity of my faith, doth declare my faith, and certify me, that God hath also pardoned my sin, and doth daily more and more pardon me. So it fell out with Abraham, his work made his faith known unto him. God indeed knew that he did believe, (but it behoved that Abraham also should know, and he wrought his faith; wherefore works following only freely as fruits of faith, are decla- rations of such a faith) for what should it profit me, if I had even a strong faith, but unknown unto me? even
even as if I should have a chest full of gold, yet I being ignorant thereof, should have no advantage thereby: but if any would shew it unto me, he would do me as great a pleasure as if he gave it me. So if I have faith, and yet be ignorant thereof, it is no profit unto me; wherefore it must burst forth, and be shewed by the works that ensue, which are both signs and seals of the present faith. So St. Peter meaneth, when speaking of the works of charity, and the virtues of faith, he concludes thus: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. He faith not, do good works, that by them ye may be called, but that ye may assure yourselves of your calling. Accustom yourselves well unto the phrases and manner of speaking used in the scripture, that ye rush not upon them like blind moles, and confirm works in such places as this; for works are to be rejected, if we think that we are justified by them; but herein they are extolled and commended, in that they are profitable to our neighbour, and fruits and signs of faith. Behold, it was meet that I should make this digression, least I should confirm the meaning of the Papists. Now if it should be demanded why God oftentimes setteth down such contrary sentences, and disagreeing one with another, as it seemeth to us and our reason; I answer, that he may exercise us in reading, and that we should not think that we understand the whole scripture, when we scarce understand one place. Some sayings do guide the spirit, how we ought to behave ourselves toward God, only by faith, as this: 'Being justified freely,' Rom. iii. 24. Again, left the body should be sluggishly outwardly, there are sentences also set forth unto us, which do guide and exercise the body, as these which we have heard here rehearsed, 'Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.' Christ affirmeth that he will require works in the last day, and will say after this sort to the condemned, Mat. xxv. 42, 43. 'For 'I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took
took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." Which sentences, while ignorant and light spirits labour to wrest and apply to works, they see not how great evil they commit. But spiritual men refer them to the very body only, they themselves standing naked before God in spirit, which is both just and necessary. For there are two things in man, the spirit and the flesh. Hereupon there are some places which do guide only faith in the spirit: some which do direct only works in the body; for one place cannot direct both the body and the spirit together. We must so do with our substance, that we be willing to part from it, to lend, and to give to our neighbour, when it shall be requisite. And if we see any not to have, wherewith to make restitution, we must release him, and forgive the debt according to the example of Nehemiah, as we read in Esdras i. 5. For God hath given many things unto us, who is able to give us more things also if we believe. And thus we hear that if we will be Christians, we ought to lend, give, and to be willing to part from that which we have, otherwise we shall not shew the fruits of a lively faith. Wherefore lay up this text inwardly in your minds, that ye deal by no other thing before God, but by faith only, and refer and bestow your works to the service and profit of your neighbour. Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the former part. Now what is to be said more of this text, or what doth follow, we will afterward consider. In the words following the Lord interpreteth himself, what kind of mercy he understandeth, saying after this sort: 'Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give and it shall be given you.' In this place the Lord divideth mercy into three parts, that we may not be ignorant, what manner of mercy that ought to be, which it behoveth us to shew to our neighbours. First judgment and condemnation is taken from us. Then thou must forgive thy neighbour if he hath committed any thing against thee. Lastly thou must help the needy. These things this word
word (mercy) signifieth, wheresoever it cometh in the scriptures. And all these must proceed from a sincere heart, all colouring and flattery being taken away, that there be no respect had of the person. For if thou desirest to wish well to them, which wish well to thee; or to hurt them, which hurt thee, thou art utterly deceived. But thou must do so, as Christ faith a little before; imitate thy heavenly father, love thine enemy; do well to him, which do evil to thee; forgive him that hurteth thee; lend to the needy, and so of the rest. That therefore we may speak of the former part, that we must not judge or condemn; we must mark, that God hath ordained the sword of the magistrate, to the punishing of public offences, so that it be provided, that it be not done against the precept and commandment of God, as that the innocent be not executed; for whereas the judge dealeth unjustly, he is as well an homicide as another, of which judgment Christ faith nothing here. Elsewhere he maketh mention thereof, when as he said to him, which desired that he would bid his brother divide the inheritance with him, Luke xii. 24. 'Who made 'me a judge or a divider over you?' For the care and governing of outward things do not belong to the kingdom of Christ. But Christ speaketh here of another judgment, namely of that whereby one reputeth and counteth another good or evil, when as notwithstanding he seeth no good or evil to be done of him. Which judgment belongeth only unto God. For it may be, that thou see thy brother offend to day, notwithstanding tomorrow God doth receive, then may he both be, and also seem unto thee to be good, neither must thou remember his sins; for that Christ hath forbidden; there cannot be either love or concord where this judgment and condemnation is usual amongst men. To judge and condemn another is nothing else, than to have a beam in his own eye, which all hypocrites do without doubt bear in their eyes. For they that judge themselves good, are offended at their brother, whatsoever others do, it displeaseth them, forasmuch as they will not acknowledge their own sin. But it cometh to pass, that when thou seest many sins in others, thou seest not the beam.
that is in thine own eye, and so falleth into the judgment of God. Hereof it cometh, that thou which judgest another, art made worse than the most wicked bawd, or the most unchast harlot before God, who alone knoweth who is to be saved, and who to be condemned. Such hypocrites are of that nature, that it is a pleasure unto them, and they take no small delight thereof, if they reason and talk either of the adultery or fault of another man, yea, they increase a small thing or trifle in their neighbour, and whatsoever others do, they interpret it at the worst, so that no man is able to do that, which pleaseth or liketh them; and though they themselves do not such things, yet they willingly hear that other men do them, whereas a godly man helpeth as much as he is able, that these things may be covered and amended; but it many times falleth out, that they are most filthy adulterers, even according to the flesh, which do so judge and condemn others, howbeit they do not judge man only, but even God himself. Wherefore if thy brother be a sinner, conceal his sin, and pray for him to the Lord, if thou reveal his sin and rejoice thereat, surely thou art not the child of the merciful father, for if thou were, thou wouldst be merciful according as he is. This is a thing most certain, that we are not able to shew so great mercy to our neighbour, as God both hath and doth shew to us; but that is the practice of Satan, that we do those things which are quite contrary unto mercy, which is an undoubted sign, that there is no mercy at all in us. Of these judgers of others, Christ speaketh in the Gospel, when he saith, Luke vi. 39, 40, 41, 42. "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch? The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect shall be as his master. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thy self beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brothers eye." As if he said, thou thinkest that thy brother is blind, and in thy mind
mind doest find fault with another, that is, thou wilt
guide another, notwithstanding, thou thyself art blind;
thou judgest him a sinner, and thyself an honest and just
man; what other thing is this, than for thy heart to be
so affected, that thou count thyself better? Which is
nothing else, than that thou wilt lead and guide others,
when thou thyself art blinder than a mole, so that he
which followeth thee, doth fall with thee into the ditch.
Of such as judge themselves to excel others, and think
themselves to be followed more than the word of God,
St. Paul speaketh, Rom. ii. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.
" Behold (saith he) thou art called a Jew, and restest in the
law, and makest thy boast of God; And knowest his will,
and approvest the things that are most excellent, beingin-
structed out of the law, And are confident that thou thy
self art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in
darkness, An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes,
which haft the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the
law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou
not thy self; thou that preachest a man should not steal, doft
thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adul-
tery, doft thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols,
doft thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of
the law, thro' breaking the law dishonourest thou God?"
Whereupon he also faith in the beginning of the same
chapter to hypocrites: "Therefore thou art inexcusable,
O man, who soever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou
judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judg-
eft, doft the same things. But we are sure that the judg-
ment of God is according to truth, against them which
commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that
judgest them which dost such things, and dost the same, that
thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Lo, this is to
speak the truth to hypocrites, who go about to shew the
way to others, which they themselves know not, leading
other men into the ditch with them. Therefore the
Lord faith, ' The disciple is not above his master, but who-
soever will be a perfect disciple shall be as his master.'
This is a common proverb: I can learn no more of my
master then he knoweth himself; wherefore doth the

Lord
On Charity.

Lord speak this proverb: because of two sorts of masters; the one is blind, whom if I shall follow, I also my self shall become blind: he himself falleth into the ditch, and I follow. The other master is the merciful father, of whom we must learn mercy, whom if we follow, we also do become merciful like as he is; if we were merciful daily, we should also become perfect, as he is perfect, but that cometh not to pass, as long as we are in this life. The second part of mercy is, that we forgive them which have endamaged us, or hurt us by any means. A Christian can never be so hurt, but he ought to forgive, not only seven times, but seventy seven times as the Lord faith unto Peter, Mat. xviii 35. Wherefore God forgiveth a Christian his sin or infirmity, that he may also forgive others their infirmity, which Christ fetteth forth in a most goodly parable, which he concludeth in these words; ‘So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.’ And so we pray daily in the Lord’s prayer, with an addition, saying, ‘Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.’ Is this a hard matter, if I a wretched sinner, do forgive my neighbour his trespasses, and his infirmity, whereas the Lord will forgive me my sins and my infirmity? If one had killed my father, what were this, compared to my sin, wherewith I have offended God, and provoked him to anger?

The third part of mercy is, that we give to them that be in misery and need, and that we help them, whereas John speaketh thus, 1 John iii. 17. ‘But who so hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how well eth the love of God in him?’ For where the love of God is, it is moved to shew it self even in outward works. Hereunto also pertaineth the saying of Christ, Mat. v. ‘Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.’ Wherefore the Lord addeth, a promise in the Gospel, saying, ‘Give and it shall be given unto you, a goodmeasure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall men give into your bosom.’ And continuing on his speech,
Speech, he faith, 'For with what measure ye mete with, the same shall men mete to you again.' This much shall suffice concerning the parts of mercy which we ought to shew to our neighbours; unto which the special words of Christ ought to exhort us, who when in the Gospel of Matthew, he had spoken much of a Christian life, and of love to be shewed to our brethren, thus concluding, saying, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets,' Mat. vii. 12. Now every one is so affected, that being cast down, and in distress, he would wish all the world to help him; if I be a miserable sinner, drowned in sins, bearing a burthened and troubled conscience, I would that the whole world should comfort me, should help and succour me, should cover my sin and shame, so I also ought to behave myself toward my neighbour, not to judge him, nor condemn him, but to forgive him his offences, to help him, to provide for him, to lend unto him, and give him, even as I would wish to be done unto myself, if I were driven into distress, necessity, exile or poverty; and herein truly Christians are known, if they love one another, if one do such works of mercy unto another, as Christ said unto his disciples at his last supper, 'I give unto you a new command that ye love one another, as I have loved you; by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another;' Thus ye have the meaning of this text, it remaineth that we call upon God for his grace.

SERMON XV.

The Sum of a Christian Life.

1 Tim. i. 5, 6, 7. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, &c.

It is well known unto you dearly beloved brethren, with how great severity God hath commanded his word to be heard and learned; for he most highly esteemeth
Of the Christian Life.

Seemeth it, and hath bestowed much labour in defending, and publishing it to the world; he hath suffered all the prophets to come into perils and dangers, at the last also he sent his own son because of his word, whom he suffered to die even the death of the cross; and what persecutions have not the apostles themselves bore for the word fake? what afflictions have not all the Christians suffered? unto some of which he hath committed the ministry of his word faithfully to be executed, and to others, hath enjoined the charge of hearing the same. If there were no other cause besides this, whereby we might be moved to hear and learn God's word, but for that it is the good pleasure, will, and commandment of God, yet this one ought to be sufficient great and weighty; for it is our duty as creatures to obey our Lord and Creator, and that with all readiness of mind, in as much as he hath given us so many good things, and doth as yet daily give us more, for which we shall never be able to give him sufficient worthy thanks. Howbeit he is not content, only to have commanded us to do this, or to require it of us asbound in duty, but promiseth also that great fruits and advantages shall redound to us thereby, affirming that by this means his greatest and highest worship is given unto him; for he is the great Lord, whom we serve, who hath many and divers kinds of service, and manifold manners of worship, and whom we may serve divers ways; but this only service which is given to him by hearing the word, doth excel all the rest; for if any where a faithful man of the country, or a citizen, or any which is otherwise in subjection doth serve his Lord or Master, he doth by the same service also serve God; likewise a child, a man servant, or a maid servant, if they be obedient, and do diligently that which belongeth to their duty; also a prince and parents if they govern well, and do their duty faithfully; they all do serve God; for it is his will and commandment which he requireth to be fulfilled of us. Of such services and kinds of worship the world is full. For to every one in his state his works are committed and enjoined of God, whereby he
Of the Christian Life.

daily both ought and may serve him; that there may be
left no place for excuse unto any man, as though he
were ignorant, how and wherfore he must serve God,
neither that any seek after other things, and invent pecu-
cular manners of serving God, which he hath neither
ordained nor commanded, and in the mean time neglec-
ted this service both of them that hear, and them that
preach his word; and therefore hath ordained also a
special day thereunto every week, in which we must
apply ourselves to no other business; altho' we serve
God by other labours all the week, which he hath bound
to no time or certain day; but he hath chosen this day
specially, which he hath severely commanded to be
kept, whereby men may have time and leisure to per-
form this service, lest any might fly unto this complaint,
that he hath no leisure by reason of his labours and bu-
iness; moreover, he hath appointed special places also
for his service, as among us temples and houses, where
we do come together; yea, he hath instituted and kept
the whole order of ministers hencunto, giving also other
things which pertain to the performing of the charge
of this office, as the knowledge of many tongues, and
divers gifts beside; and briefly he hath commanded the
whole world by a certain special precept, that it think
this worship or service holy, and far more excellent than
the rest; which he will have so to be delighted in of
all Christians, that it may be manifest, how much he
doeth esteem it, and how acceptable unto him the exer-
cise and handling of his word is; these things I speak
to stir you up, and to admonish you, why ye ought wil-
lingly to hear the word of God, because it is not only
the commandment of God, whereunto we must obey,
but we have also most ample promises, that it is a
thing acceptable to God, and the greatest worship,
whereby we can do honour unto him; and it so far ex-
cceedeth other kinds of worship, as the brightness of the
sun exceedeth the brightness of the other stars, and the
sabbath day, the other days, and in fine, as much as the
heavenly
heavenly kingdom excelleth the kingdoms of the world; for here all things are holy and specially chosen, the time, place, person, and that because of the word, which sanctifieth all things unto us; wherefore we must earnestly endeavour, that we take heed unto ourselves, that we fall not into sluggishness, and slothfulness, neither that we be carried away with contempt and loathfomeness of hearing the word, as those delicate and cloyed spirits, which seem unto themselves already to be masters, and exactly to know all things, yea far more perfectly than any can teach them, or as others also, which are soon cloyed with it, thinking, why I have heard this very often, where shoud I so often hear the same song? they know not how great and marvelous a thing it is, also how great worship of God they so greatly contemn, and neglect with so great slothfulness; wherefore they do after unspeakable means provoke God to wrath, having his commandment so in contempt, and suffering his promise to be made void in them, and as much as is in them impairing and hindering by their example so commendable a worship and service of God. But admit it to be true, which is not, that thou dost understand all things perfectly, and as wise and skilful as Christ himself: yet thou feest how earnestly he performeth the office of preaching, and applieth himself unto this work, whereof he was most skilful before, and had not any whit need thereof, as we do greatly need it; so Paul also a Prince of apostles, although he was exceedingly well learned, and so excellent a doctor, yet going through many countries did often and every where preach, neither was he wearied or cloyed; wherefore it is meet that thou be nothing at all weary of hearing this word, insomuch as the aid and help thereof is exceeding necessary for thee, both against the devil and all other temptations; and although for thy instruction thou shouldest not need it, yet oughtest thou not to be wearied or cloyed, that thou shouldest not bestow a few hours in a day every week upon this worship and service of God; seeing that before, applying thyself to false worship, when thou didst pass the
of the Christian Life.

Of the Christian Life. 219

Of the whole day in temples, and didst run from temple to temple, from altar to altar, thou felt no tediousness or weariness, neither didst say as thou dost at this day; O, I have heard no new thing, I have heard these things before; but didst think thus; this day and yesterday I went to hear Mass, and to morrow I mind to go to hear it again; how much oughtest thou to do this now, knowing assuredly that this is the right service and worship of God, and to say, altho' I knew most perfectly, as I do not know, yet to give honour and show obedience unto God, I will do this service, and because of his love and praise I will hear his word, that my Lord may see by this chief worship, wherewith I am especially delighted, that I am willing to serve him; for although no other fruit or profit come unto me thereby, yet I may rejoice that I have performed a most holy and acceptable work unto him, whereunto other kinds of worship and services being compared, are of small importance. Now, he that doth not care for these things, neither is moved with them, reverently to think and highly to esteem of the word of God willingly and earnestly to hear and learn it, whencesoever opportunity and means shall be offered, I will have nothing to do with him; for neither may I, neither will I draw any man hereunto violently; he that contemneth, let him contemn still, and remain a swine as he is, even until that day, when God will kill him and throw him down headlong to hell; for such an one cannot be a good man, neither is it a human sin, but a certain devilish obstinacy, so greatly to contemn that, whereunto God hath appointed a place, person, time, &c. Moreover he moveth us by his commandment, lovingly provoketh us by his promises, stirreth us up and admonisheth us by his words, and offreth all these of his own accord, and to be bought with no price or treasure, which is to be far fetched, or hardly come by, the excellency whereof can indeed be countervailed with no gold; add hereunto that it is a worship or service very easy to be done, which may be performed without all labour or grief, but that thou must attentively hear the preacher, or ap-
ply thy mouth to speak and read, than which labour none surely is more easy; and altho' it is to be feared, thou shalt bear the cross, and suffer persecution, yet the work itself is so joined with no difficulty, as no other labour is, no not even that that is most easy. If so be that it be not grievous unto thee, to sit the whole day in a tavern or an alehouse, or otherwise with thy companions to trifle and sport thyself with filthy and unseemly jests and pastimes, also to sing and prate, and yet art not weary, neither feelest any labour; thou mayest with a little pain sit in the temple, and hear the preacher, whereby thou servest God, and dost that which is acceptable unto him; what wouldst thou do, if thou shouldst at his commandment carry stones in quarries, or go armed on pilgrimage to St. James? or if some other laborious and painful work should be enjoined thee? as hitherto it hath been the custom among us, when as we would do all things willingly, whatsoever was enjoined us, when we were deceived with meer trifles, and most impudent delusions; but so doth the devil blind men, in whom also he worketh a fatiety and loathing of the word of God, whereby it cometh to pass that they have no regard what a treasure the word of God is, but live after a beastly sort, contemning all good doctrine. Let us therefore at the last, delight in these things, thinking thus with ourselves, that as often as we read or hear the word of God, either privately or publicly, of whomsoever it be preached, we apply ourselves to the chief service of God, which pleaseth God exceedingly well; after this sort thou mayest inflame thyself to hear, and God will inspire thee with his grace, that the seed of his word be not sown in vain, but may bring forth plentiful fruit; the word is never taught without fruit, whencesoever it shall be diligently and attentively heard, neither can it be, but that by often hearing it, thou should become better; and altho' for the present time thou feest or feekest no fruit, yet in process of time thou shalt plainly perceive and feel it. But it were long here to rehearse the fruits proceeding of the word, nay, indeed they cannot be all rehearsed. 

These
These things I thought good to speak instead of a preface before the words of St. Paul, to the intent to stir us up more diligently to hear the word of God; and surely there is great need of such an exhortation daily in every sermon, which also is much pertinent unto the text which we have in hand: for Paul in this place reprehendeth curious spirits, which go about by their own wisdom to be masters of the word of God, and do by and by falsely persuade themselves, that they know it well, and that they need not any more the help of any teacher; but turn themselves to trifling and vain jangling, that they may bring forth some new thing, which the common fort may be desirous to hear, presuming also to be Masters of the scripture and of all men, labouring to teach every one, and yet not understanding what they speak, or whereof they affirm; for this is a plague and calamity that followeth, where the word of God is not handled diligently and seriously the learners are weary of hearing, and the preachers slothful in preaching. Hence it cometh that so great companies of hearers slide away, and churches become desolate. Of which calamity vain talking spirits are the cause, which promiseth new things, that they may win the hearers of the multitudes unto themselves, boasting in that they are masters of the scripture, and yet are always such men as are ignorant, forasmuch as they have never tried, what it is to teach others, which we now now plainly see, and the wrath of God is at hand to punish our contempt and unthankfulness; therefore Paul beginneth his epistle to his disciple Timothy so, that he should take heed, that such teachers do not arise, which can talk many things of the law, bringing many new questions and doctrines what is to be done, how righteousness is be obtained, all which they do for ostentation fake, that they may be seen and praised, and seem to be more learned than others, and yet they never came so far as to teach any certain thing, or that which might be counted to be of any importance, but do all things confusedly and out of order: such babblers use only these words, that we must be honest, that good works must be done, and God must be served, &c. but they understand not the sense of
of these words, what they mean; and being asked how we must do good works, now they teach this particular work to be done, another time another work, as offer so much sacrifice at this altar, get thee into this or that monastery, run unto this saint, here erect a chapel to the honour of such a saint, in another place found a mass, light tapers, eat fish, buy indulgences, &c. which being done, they by and by bring another work, and forthwith after that another: so they know not how to instruct after a constant and certain manner of teaching, much less can they say, this is, or in this doth the sum of a Christian life consist, &c. and yet in the mean time those things must be counted, very excellent that they teach, so much do they boast, and promise almost golden mountains, as though they alone were doctors, that might not be gainsaid, and controllers and masters of all other; but he is to be counted an excellent master, and highly to be esteemed, which teacheth the chief point and whole sum of doctrine, viz. how the heart and conscience, yea, and the whole man must live; they know nothing of that thing, though they be very full of words, but do altogether err from the principal point of the law. In the mean time, they intangle the minds of the hearers with such a confused company of words, that they know neither how to make a beginning or end of speaking, as it is uncertain whereunto that disordered company of words doth serve, whereby no man can be made better, much less can he confirm his conscience thereby, as we hitherto have enough and too much seen, and tried in the papacy among our preachers of dreams. What therefore is the sum of that doctrine, which is to be taught to the people? St. Paul answereth, 'The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.' This is the sum of Christian life most excellently and fully comprehended, compendiously and briefly uttered, and which may be not unfitly printed in thy memory; thou must endeavour, if thou wilt not err from the law, but attain to the chief point thereof (that thou mayest know what
what is to be done and what is to be left undone) to have love proceeding out of a pure heart, from a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; if thy love be of this sort, then it is right, otherwise thou errest from the meaning of the whole law. Now these words are profound, and comprehend much matter in them; Wherefore we must partly expound them, that they may be the better understood, and that we may accustom ourselves to St. Paul’s manner of speech. First, he attributeth to love the sum of the whole law, wherein it wholly consisteth; and to love is nothing else (as I think it is known to all) but to favour and embrace one from the heart, and to shew, and perform unto him all the duties of friendship and good will. Now those jangling doctors also use such words, preaching and boasting many things of love, but all by piece-meal, and particularly applied to their own trifles and follies; even as heretics, wicked men, and ungracious wretches have love also, but that which consisteth only among themselves, and them that are of the same sort with them, in the mean time, they hate and persecute all good Christians, whom they would willingly accuse of murder, if they could, &c. But this doth not yet deserve to be called true love. If I choose one or two, whose conditions like and please me, whom I do friendly and lovingly imbrace, and no man beside them, it is called a particular love, which proceedeth not out of a pure heart, but from an infected and filthy heart; for true love floweth out of a pure heart when I endeavour as God hath commanded me, to pour forth my love toward my neighbour, and to favour all without difference, whether they be friends or enemies, even as our heavenly Father himself doth, who suffereth his Sun to rise on the good and evil, and sendeth his Rains to the thankful and unthankful, maketh the earth to bring forth many good things, giveth many riches, fruits, cattle, and many times, especially unto them that are the worst of all others; but from whence cometh the doing of these things? truly from pure love, whereof his heart is most full. This he poureth forth abundantly upon all, omitting no man, whether he be good or evil, worthy or unworthy; and this is called true,
true, divine, entire, and perfect love, which loveth no one, neglecting the rest, neither cutteth nor divideth itself, but imbraceth all indifferently. The other is love of thieves and publicans, if I love him, which is for my turn, and may do me a pleasure, and which esteemeth well of me, and despite him that contemneth me, and which is not on my side; for that doth not proceed from the heart which ought wholly to be good and pure; indifferently toward all, but he that is indued with such love, seeketh his own things; and is full of love himself, and not of love towards others; neither doth he love any man, but for his own advantage sake, regarding only that which may serve for his own use, seeking his own profit by every man, and not the profit of his neighbour, if he be praised and honoured, he laugheth, but being looked upon with lower countenance, or an unthankful word being spoken unto him, he stomacketh, curseth and findeth fault, so that all friendship forthwith ceaseth; on the contrary, he that hath a pure heart must be so affected according to the word of God, and his example, that he favour every one, and bestow liberal and friendly benefites upon them, even as God hath favoured him, and of his divine love hath bestowed benefites upon him; but some men will say, he is mine enemy, and doth evil unto me. Surely he is an enemy also to God, unto whom he doth many more things displeasing unto him, than he can do either to me or thee; but my love ought not to be extinguished or cease, because he is evil, and altogether unworthy thereof; if he be evil, he shall at the last suffer punishment according to his deeds, but his wickedness must not overcome me; But if I can through love rebuke and admonish him, or pray for him, that he may amend, and escape punishment, I must do it readily, I must not be an enemy unto him, or do evil unto him in any wise: for what profit should redound unto me thereby? neither am I made better thereby, and I make him so much the worse: this therefore ought to delight me, if I shall favour him, and bestow benefites upon him, if so be that he will suffer them to be bestowed on him,
and pray unto God for him, so I may enjoy peace, and have no trouble or contention with any man, and perhaps I may so profit him, that he will change his life unto the better, and amend. Otherwise surely love being divided or separated, I have more bitterness and sorrow by them whom I hate, then I have joy and profit by them, whom I love and keep company with. And this is said to trouble the fountain or water, from whence pure love cannot flow; as it is certain that the Jews also did, against whom Paul speaketh in this place; for they loved them only of whom they were loved, whereby they defiled the sincerity of love with man's affections, and therefore their heart could not be pure; but whereby is the heart purified? I answer, it cannot be purified by any other thing better, than by that sovereign purity, which is the word of God; receive that into thy mind, and order thy life according to the rule thereof, and thy heart is purified; as in this place, see thou set the word before thee, 'Thou shalt lovethyneighbour as thyself;' and follow that which it commandeth, and by and by thou shalt see whether it purgeth and cleanseth whatsoever desire there is in thee of thine own profit, or whatsoever love of thyself; for commanding thee to love thy neighbour, it maketh exception of none, either friend, or foe; altho' some men be evil and hath been oftentimes injurious unto thee, notwithstanding he doth not therefore lose this name, that he is not to be called thy neighbour, but nevertheless remaineth thy flesh and blood, and is comprehended in these words, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, &c. Therefore I say if thou shalt consider him and so behave thyself toward him, as the word teacheth thee, then is thy heart made pure, and love sincere, so that thou makest no false difference of persons, neither otherwise considerest him, than another, which is good, and one of thy familiaris. Indeed, we cannot deny this to be true, that an honest man is more worthy to be loved, unto whom also every one doth more willingly apply himself by nature, than unto the conversation of wicked men, whose familiarity there is no good man that doth not abhor, howbeit flesh and blood is the cause that true and Christian love is not
among us; for a Christian must not derive his love from the person, as the world doth; as some young men seeing a maid, is in love with her because of her fairness and beauty, and a covetous man taketh his love and desire of his money, a lord or prince of honour and power, &c.: for all such love is said to be feigned and proceeding not from whence it ought, cleaving to the good things, wherewith he seeth the person adorned, neither doth it continue any longer, than that which he loveth, continueth, and as long as he may enjoy it; but true love ought to be such as floweth out of a continual fountain, and proceedeth from the bottom of the heart, as a fresh and continual water always springeth forth, which cannot be stopped, and is never dried up. This love faith after this sort; I love thee, not for thy honesty or dishonesty, for I do not derive my love from thy honesty, as from a strange fountain, but out of mine own fountain, that is, out of the word of God which is planted in my heart, which commandeth me to love my neighbour, from hence love plentifully floweth open to all, which have need thereof, watering all both friends and foes; yea, chiefly prepared and ready for foes, inasmuch as they have more need, that they may by my means be brought to amendment, I praying for them, and doing according to my ability that which I am able, that they also leaving their evil ways, may be delivered from sins, and the snares of the devil; and this is said to be love flowing from the heart, and not derived from without; for he that is endued with such love, findeth no such thing in him whom he loveth, from whence he should derive it; but because he is a Christian, because he layeth hold of the word, which is altogether pure by itself, by the power of it his heart also is made pure and replenished with true love. Whereupon he poureth forth the treasures of his love toward every man, neither is he moved or turned away with the person of any whether he be good or evil. Behold should they preach, which will rightly teach love required of the law, whereof our babblers know nothing, neither have any regard thereof, altho' they talk many things of the law, and dispute
Of the Christian Life.

pute much of love. They do not see, no they do not so much as once think, that love must be such, that it flow out of the heart, and that the fountain must be first pure and clean. This never descended into their heart, although they hear, read, and preach many things of it. They are occupied with very uncertain, and unprofitable cogitations, yea, rather with dead dreams. Wherefore whatsoever is preached of works and of a good life, that only is well done which proceedeth from the word of God, a pure heart, and a true faith; this thou mayest see in all states, how every one ought in his calling to do the office enjoined him, and exercise the works of love. A servant labouring, and thinking no more than thus, My Lord or master payeth me my wages, for which only I serve him, otherwise I would not vouchsafe to look upon him, &c. hath not a pure heart, for he doth not serve but for a piece of bread, or for his hire, which being taken away, his service also ceaseth. But if he were a right and true Christian, he would rather be thus affected: I will not therefore serve because my Master payeth me wages, because he is honest or dishonest, &c. but because the word of God doth speak thus unto me: 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters, as unto Christ,' &c. Eph. vi. 5. This service proceedeth of its own accord out of the heart, which layeth hold on the word, and greatly estimeth it, saying, I will serve my Master, and take my wages, but this shall be the chiefest thing for which I do this service, that I may serve my God and Lord Jesus Christ, who hath laid the condition and state of a servant upon me, which I know doth please him in me, &c. Here thou feest a true work, proceeding put of a pure heart; so also let a Lord or Prince, and they which have the charge of governing the common weal, think thus: God hath committed unto me the office of a magistrate, that I should be a ruler; now if I will have regard unto this, only, that I may enjoy my dignity, riches, and power, it is certain that my heart is not pure, and yet in the mean time I do the work of a ruler so, that the world cannot complain of me, neither Cæsar or the lawyers can blame or find fault with me by their laws.
Even as neither a servant serving only for wages can be reprehended of the world, whether he seeketh his own things or not. Surely the word of God is not regarded in the office of a ruler that doth so, but his own idol, his own glory, money and power, &c. But if this affection be in his heart: Because I am occupied in this office, wherein God hath placed me, and the word commandeth him that beareth rule to be careful, it is meet that I do execute the same with all faithfulness and diligence, to the praise and glory of my God: The execution of the office of such a rule, endued with such a mind, cometh out of a pure and sincere heart, where-
Of the Christian Life.

229
to be done, it remaineth, that I do with all diligence labour therein, to the glory of God and salvation of souls, which I do also for the love of the word willingly and from my heart. Hereby I seek neither love or friendship, nor honour, nor thankfulneſs of men, but my works come from the heart, which I first do, before I obtain any honour, glory reward, money, or favour, although if those come and follow, I may have and receive them without sin. Lo, thus the word is the caufe, foundation, ground, fountain and spring of love coming out of the heart, and of all good works that please God, which he can by no means away with, if the heart be not pure before; for neither are works acceptable to men, which are done without the heart, by diffimulation. Now if Cæfar and men require the heart, although they cannot see it, of how much greater estimation is that heart before God, which doth all things for the word's fake: Therefore he also suffereth his word to be preached, that we may order all our life according to the prescript thereof; and let us not suffer ourselves to be hindered, frayed from it, or discouraged with the let or hindrance of any thing, although for it we shall suffer all kinds of losses, unthankfulneſs, contemt, &c. but let us break and go through all brunts with a bold and manly courage, and say thus: We begin nothing for any man's fake, neither will we leave off any thing because of any man, but that we may do that which is acceptable to God, we will go on still, howsoever things fall out with us. They which do thus, become men excellent and most highly to be esteemed, who are ready to do all duties, and serve God with all readines of mind, and love not feigned; for the fountain and spring is good, not derived and brought in from without. These things I thought good briefly to speak of the first part, how the heart is purified by the word alone, and not as the monks have dreamed, by a fight taken upon them against evil cogitations, and by feigning of good thoughts; for what thoughts ever thou shalt feign, the heart shall remain unclean, if the word of God be not in it, although it pretend a great show of a godly life, as Paul witneſseth. But this pure-
Of the Christian Life.

nefs whereof he speaketh, doth extend farther than outward and corporal purenefs doth, which the Jews did use, eating and drinking their hands being often washed, which our religious men also use in their fasting diversity of apparel, orders and rites, &c. for this is called purenefs of the spirit, which we then have, when being instructed by the word of God, we know thereby how he is to be served in every state and calling, and endeavour to form our lives according thereunto. Now followeth the second part concerning a good conscience, whereof also we must treat, viz. that love must come from such an heart, as hath a joyful and quiet conscience both toward God and also toward men. Toward men so, as Paul glorifieth of himself, that he lived so, that he offended no man, troubled no man, was an evil example and burthen to no man, but all that did see and hear him must needs witness, that he indifferently served all, helped all, counceleil all, and dealt friendly and gently with all. Such a conscience Moses also glorifieth of against the seditious, Numb. xvi. 15. "I have not taken nor from them, neither have I hurt one of them. And Jeremiah, chap. xviii. 20. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them. Likewise doth Samuel, 1 Sam. xii. 2. I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold here I am, witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? or whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe?" Such boasting and glory every Christian must attain unto that he do so live toward every man, and so exercise and shew his love that no man can worthily complain any whit of him, whereby he shall trouble or dismay his conscience; but that all that will confess the truth, may be forced to say, that he hath so lived, that he hath been an example to every man of living well, which will only but follow him. And this is called a good conscience before men, or against the complaints and reprehensions of men. And altho' such a conscience is not able to stand before the judgment of God, no nor any
any pureness of the heart in the outward life and work of love (we continuing in sinning oftentimes before God) yet we must attain unto such a heart, that we may comfort ourselves before him also, and say, This God hath bidden and commanded to be done, therefore I do it with a pure heart and a good conscience, neither would I willingly do otherwise, neither of purpose hurt or trouble any man, but whatsoever I say or do, that is willed and commanded of God. Let no Christian suffer such a confidence to be wrested from him, that he may boast himself by the word of God against the whole world; for he that hath no regard how he leadeth his life, that he may stop the mouths of all blamers and accusers, and clear himself before all, and testify that he hath lived, spoken, and done well, he, I say, is not yet a Christian, having not in himself a pure heart and love; for we will not presume of the doctrine of faith, as though that being had, every man may do what he list, whether it be profitable or unprofitable to his neighbour, that we must in no case do; otherwise that doctrine should have the name to give licence and free liberty for every one to do what he will. But we must so behave ourselves, that we may obtain love out of a pure heart and good conscience, that no man may accuse us of any crime.

And although these things be spoken of our life and works, and a Christian is another manner of man before God, as we shall hear, yet we must earnestly endeavour ourselves in this also, that we may be without blame before God. And when we shall not attain thereunto, we must flee unto prayer, and say before God and man, 'Forgive us our trespasses, &c.' that at the least our life may remain without blame, and may obtain a good conscience before men; and if this cannot be brought to pass by perfect love and pureness of heart, yet let it be done by humility, that we may pray for, and desire of all men pardon of our offences, when as we have not purely and perfectly done our duty, or are not able to do it, so that thy neighbour may be enforced to say, altho' thou hast greatly hurt me, or hast not done thy duty toward me, as it was meet, yet forasmuch as thou
humblest thyself, I will willingly forgive thee, and take
it in the best part. And for this humility's sake, I say
thou art a good man, which dost not stand obstinately,
as though thou wouldst advisedly and on purpose offend
against me, but dost turn thyself unto love; therefore
that life is as yet said to be without blame, which altho'
it was subject to reprehension, is with humility covered
and reformed, that no man can worthily complain
thereof. Thus the law should he expounded and handled,
that both love toward every man may rightly proceed
out of a pure heart, for God's sake and the conscience
may stand before the world; and this ought to have
been practised of those vain talkers in their sermons,
their cold trifles and vain follies being neglected and left
off. But that all these things may stand and be of force
before God also, there yet remaineth one thing which
pertaineth hereunto, which is that, that followeth.
[And of faith unseigned.] For as I have said, altho' I
have a good conscience before men, and do exercise love
out of a pure heart, yet the old Adam, that is, flesh
and blood remain in me subject to sins, whereby it
cometh to pass that I am not altogether holy and pure.
And as Paul faith. Gal. v. 'The flesh lusteth against the
'spirit, &c.' And Rom. vii. he affirmeth that he must
fight a daily fight against himself, because he cannot do
that which is good, and yet he would willingly do it.
The spirit indeed would very willingly live purely and
perfectly according to the word of God, but the rebel-
lious flesh resistenth the desire thereof, affailing us with
many great temptations, that we should seek honour,
wealth, riches, pleasure, and should become slothful
and negligent in our state and duty. So their remain-
eth a continual fight in us, because of the impurity of
our person, wherein there is not yet sincere pureness,
nor a good conscience, and perfect love, unless there be
perhaps somewhat before men; but before God many
things are found lacking in us, many things are worthy
of blame, although all things be perfect before men.
For examples sake: Although David can obtain that
confidence before men, that he can be reprehended of
no man, and the holy Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c.
Of the Christian Life.

233

do glory and are sure, whatsoever they have done according to their duty, is right and well done, seeing it is the word and commandment of God, wherein they have exercised themselves with a pure heart and good conscience, yet can they not stand by this conscience before the judgment of God, but are compelled to say, If we should strive with thee in judgment, then no man shall have so good a conscience or so pure a heart, which doth not dread thy judgment, and acknowledge himself to be worthy of reprehension and blame; for God hath reserved that prerogative unto himself, that he may contend in judgment with every one, altho' he be holy, and accuse him of deadly sin, neither is there any so holy, whom he may not judge and condemn as worthy of destruction. Wherefore although both the heart be pure and the conscience good before men, yet must thou endeavour to attain unto this also, that the same may be likewise good before God, that he may not find fault with them, but that they may be safe and quiet from his judgment, as they are before men. Hereunto now pertaineth the third part, that is, faith; and this is the principle part and chief precept, containing all the rest in it, that we may know, that where love is not yet perfect, the heart not sufficiently pure, and the conscience not quiet, and God doth yet find something which is worthy of blame, where the world can find fault with nothing, faith must moreover come, and such a faith which is not feigned, and defiled with confidence of a man's own holiness: For wherewith ever this is not, there the heart is never purified before God, neither shall the conscience be able to stand, if they be examined by severe judgment and exact censure. Men indeed shall not justly blame me, altho' I glory, that I have served them by preaching, helping, governing, and by doing the duty of an overseer or ruler, &c. with all faithfulness; and if I have done any thing more or less than I ought, I am sorry at my heart, for I would very willingly have done all things that I ought. Wherefore I am quiet and already excused, neither have they any more, which they may rightly require of me, but are enforced to acquit and discharge me; but here I must attain
attain unto this also, that my heart be so pure, and my conscience so good before God, that he may not by any means accuse and condemn me. Howbeit we find not this in ourselves, although we may glory somewhat thereof before the world, I must therefore obtain some other thing whereunto I must trust, if I shall come into peril, and within the throwing of the dart, as it is commonly said; and I must say to my fearful and terrified conscience, I have done that which I have been able, and who knoweth how often I have done less than I ought? for I could not see and mark all things, as David also faith, Psal. xix. 12. 'Who can understand his errors?' Therefore I can lay no foundation of trust upon mine own holiness and pureness. Well, I have the word, or live, love, and have a good conscience, which is pure and holy; but this I want, that I cannot conclude, that that is in my heart; neither do I find so good a conscience in me, as the law requireth of me: For there is no man living in the earth, which can say this truly, I know that I have done all things, and that I do owe nothing before God. But the most holy ones must say thus: I have done surely according to my ability that which I have been able, but I have offended much oftner than I know; therefore our own conscience doth witness against us, accusing and convincing us, although before the world we are most free from reprobation or blame: For it must follow the word which faith, this thou shouldest have done, this thou shouldest have left undone. It cannot avoid the judgment of this, nor answer to the accusation thereof, but it is at the least enforced to stand in an uncertainty, being wholly wrapped in doubting; but if it doubt, then is it by and by convinced, for it standeth not before God, but flieth and trembleth.

Wherefore the principle part of our doctrine must here help us, to wit, that our Lord Jesus Christ being sent of the Father, bid come into the world, and hath suffered and died for us, whereby he hath 'reconciled the good will and favour of the Father to us, his wrath being appeased, and doth now sit at the right hand of the Father,
Father, having regard of us as our Saviour, and as a continual Mediator and Intercessor for us, making intercession for us, as for them which cannot have and obtain of themselves such puresness and a good conscience: Therefore by his help and benefit we may say before God, Although I am not pure, neither have a good conscience, yet I cleave to him by faith, which hath perfect puresness and a god conscience, which he engageth for me, or rather which he giveth unto me; for he alone is he, of whom we read written, as Peter and Isaiah, chap. liii. 9. 'He had done no violence, neither f was any deceit in his mouth.' And this praise belongeth only unto him, neither hath he any need to pray, 'For forgive us our debts,' neither of that article or the creed, 'I believe the forgiveness of sins, &c.' but he is free and quiet in perpetual, pure and perfect righteousness and puresness, unto whose charge none can lay any thing, nor accuse his conscience of any crime, not man, not the devil, nor not God himself; for he himself is God, who himself cannot accuse himself. And this is called faith neither coloured nor feigned, which the conscience striving and trembling, dareth come forth in the sight of God, and say, Almighty God, I am innocent before the world, and quiet in mind, so that no man can lay any thing to my charge, or find fault with me; for altho' I have not won all things, yet I ask pardon of every one, that he shall forgive me for God's fake, even as I again forgive all. By this means I have cut off the complaints of all, who have no more which they may rightly lay against me; but before thee I must lay aside this trust and confidence, and most wholly acknowledge the guiltiness of innumerable sins, and say as David said, Psal. cxliii. 2. 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified;' wherefore I cannot contend with thee, if thou requirest an account of my life, but I appeal from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat; I do easily suffer, that I be dealt with according to law and right before the judgment-seat of the world, and I will willingly answer, and will do what I am able: Howbeit before thee I will not come into judgment, but I desire grace, which I take hold of on every side; for thus
thus the scripture teacheth me, that God hath set two feats before men, the one a judgment feat, for them which are yet secure and untractable, and acknowledge not their sins, neither will confess and acknowledge them; the other a mercy-feat, for miserable and fearful consciences, which feel their sins, dread the judgment of God, and do earnestly make request for grace: And this mercy-feat is Christ himself, as Paul witnesseth, Rom. iii. whom God hath set forth unto us, that we might have refuge unto him, being not able to stand before God by our own power. Unto him I will apply myself, if I have done or do less than is meet; and how great pureness and goodness forever my heart and conscience have before men, I will have it here to be altogether nothing, and hidden, and covered as it were with a vault, yea, with a fair heaven, which may mightily defend it, which is called grace and remission of sins. Under the defence thereof my heart and conscience must creep, and remain safe and quiet; for so he commanded his apostles to preach and publish, that through his name all that believe in him, shall receive remission of sins. Again, 'He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved,' Mark xvi. 16. And John iii. 16. he faith, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Therefore God hath set forth the mercy-feat unto us, whereunto he leadeth as from the judgment-feat. Let us leave others before the judgment-feat, namely, those proud holy ones, contempters and persecutors of the word of God, where they shall hear sentence according to their deeds. We will suffer these to abide in their circle, until they have humbled themselves; but we will not abide in this circle, but will depart from it as far as we shall be able, into the circle of the mercy-feat, unto which we do appeal. Neither have we invented this of our own brain, but it is the word of God himself, which threatneth horrible judgment to them which come with their own holiness, and trusting thereunto, do hope that they shall be able to stand before God the judge, neglecting the mercy-feat of Christ; for the sentence standeth, that
that they shall be set before the judgment-seat, as Christ faith, John iii. 18. "But he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. He that believeth on him, is not condemned:" that is, shall not come to the judgment-seat, but to the mercy-seat, where there is no wrath or rigour, but grace and forgiveness of sins, all things being remitted which be not pure, yea, being blotted out and so consumed, as a drop of water, is consumed of the heat of the Sun. For where the mercy-seat reigneth, there is nothing else, but meer forgiveness and remission of sins.

This being known, we must exactly understand the difference between the law and the gospel, whereof we often teach. The law draweth us to the judgment-seat, requiring of us, integrity of life, love out of a pure heart and a good conscience, it maketh us also to exercise our selves therein, and must go no further. But when it shall come and accuse thee, and will reason with thee, and have those things to be performed which it requireth, then shalt thou be greatly troubled. For although thou hast done them, yet art thou not able to stand before God, before whose judgment-seat, many things are yet found wanting in thee, which should have been done of thee, and thou hast left them undone, neither are they known unto thy self. Whether then wilt thou turn thee? Here the law urgeth thee by all means, and thine own conscience being witness, accuseth thee, requiring the sentence of the judge against thee. Then must thou despair, there is no council or help to be had, except thou knowest to fly from the judgment-seat to the mercy-seat, as for example; admit some bishop die in his own holiness, who while he lived was as it seemed of a good life, and acknowledged Christ, no otherwise than a cruel judge (as hath been hitherto preached of him, neither hath he been otherwise set forth, as he is also wont to be unto such, not of his own nature, for indeed, he is most gracious and comfortable, but because they esteem him for no other in their heart) behold this man is a hindrance unto himself that he
Of the Christian Life.

he cannot obtain any grace; for he knoweth no difference of the judgment-feat and the mercy-feat, yea, he is altogether ignorant whether there be a mercy-feat, from which he do estheth, and must be bound to the judgment-feat. But we teach thus, that Christ is so to be learned and considered, that we be most certainly persuaded that he seteth before miserable and trembling consciences, that believe in him, not as an angry judge which commandeth forthwith to carry violently them that be guilty into punishment, but as a gentle, loving, and comfortable mediator, between my fearful conscience and God, which faith unto me, if thou be a sinner, and astonished, and the devil laboureth to draw thee to the judgment-feat, then see that thou flee unto me, and fear no wrath or anger. Wherefore? Even because I sit here, that, if thou believe in me, I may make intercession for thee to my father; that no anger and severity may hurt thee; for all anger and punishment shall be sooner laid upon me, than be born of thee. Howbeit that cannot be; for he is the only beloved Son, in whom all grace and favour dwellth, whom as often as the father doth behold, he cannot but replenish both heaven and earth with grace and favour, and forget all wrath and displeasure; and whatsoever he shall ask of his father, that he shall forthwith obtain without all repulse or denial. So by faith we are made wholly blessed and safe, subject no more to any damnation, yet not for our own holiness and pureness, but for Christ's sake, to whom we cleave by faith as to our mercy-feat, being assuredly persuaded, that with him there remaineth no anger, but mere love, and pardon, and forgiveness of sins. Thus the heart is purified before God, and the conscience made good and quiet, not in respect had of mine own pureness or life led before the world, but by trust and confidence of that excellent treasure, which my heart apprehendeth, which is unto me instead of a pledge and fulness, when as before God I am not able to pay.

But herein the whole force of the matter consisteth that we do again and again take heed, that our faith be not false, or as St. Paul speaketh, feigned; for if this err,
Of the Christian Life.

err, and deceive as, all things deceive us; for there have been many in all ages, as there be also at this day, which can speak many things of faith, and will be masters not only of the Law, but even of the Gospel also. Who say the same that we do, that faith performeth and and doth all things, but that the law and good works are also to be joined unto it, and that otherwise, if these be not added, faith availeth nothing, in which words they mix and mingle together our life and works, and Christ. But this is not purely and sincerely to have taught faith, but to have coloured, defiled and corrupted faith, so that it can no more be called faith, but a feigned colour and counterfeiting of faith, the trust and confidence of the heart standing not purely toward Christ, as the only mercy-seat, but being grounded upon our own holiness, as being able to stand before the judgment-seat. Wherefore doing thus, we are most rightly cast off before God, and condemned unto destruction, whereof we are most worthy. For if faith must be pure and void of all counterfeiting and feigning, then these two things, Christ and my works must be rightly discerned and severed one from the other. For this is plain even to him that is blind, that Christ and his works are not my life and my works, but are separated from the Law, and from the works of all men, yea, and that by the greater distance, than man is unlike or different from man. For neither can I say that I and Cæsar, or the bishop of Rome are the same thing, yet I am much nearer and more like unto either of them, than a moral man and a sinner unto Christ the Lord, who is not only a pure and holy man, free from all spot and blot, but is moreover God also. Therefore let the law and the urenness of thy heart, yea, and thy good conscience avail in earth only toward men: but where the mercy-seat is, to wit, at the right hand of the Father, and the Mediator between thee and God, neither no man’s works and merits ought to have access, much less be they there of any force or value. Wherefore Christ is purely to be separated from all my life, deeds and works, and we must without exception conclude
conclude, that he is another thing than our life led before men with a pure heart and a good conscience, al-
though it be led even perfectly and without blame; for it being presented before God, and by the law brought to
the judgment-seat, I am condemned and lost. But Christ is the mercy-seat, and all that cleave unto him by faith,
cannot be condemned and judged. So the judgment seat together with the law and all my life go into one part, but my faith must fly and leap far unto another part, and join itself unto him which is pure, and hath
no sin, of whom the scripture speaketh, 'he that believeth in him shall not be confounded,' because he is present
in the sight of the father, and maketh intercession for me. Moreover he giveth me his own pureness and
holiness, that being clothed and adorned therewith I may be able to stand before God, and all wrath and
displeasure may be taken away, instead whereof I may enjoy meer love and favour. Lo, thus faith remaineth
pure and free from counterfeiting, for it resteth not upon my works, that because of them it should behove God
to be gentle and favourable unto me, as a false and feigned faith doth, which mingleth together man's merits and the grace of God, and although it holds the words of Christ, yet hath it the confidence and trust of the heart reposed in itself, so that it is certain, that it is only a colour which cannot long continue; for the matter cometh at the last to this point, that believing that God is favourable unto thee because of thy life led without fault or blame, thou must despair and say, who knowest what I have done? whereby am I certain that I have neglected nothing through carelessness, or that nothing is wanting in me? in this doubtfulness of mind the foundation faileth, sliding away under thee like unto sand moved and stirred, and so faith is of no force or value at all: Wherefore it is not unfitness called feigned and painted faith, through which one feeth as it were through a lattice or painted glass, through which the thing that is seen representeth the colour of the glass, and yet is not indeed of that colour; so they believe
that that affection is in God, that he vouchsafeth to re-
gard
gard our works and merits; which they paint forth according to their own opinion and dreams, which are utterly false, rash and unadvised. And so judging God and all things according to them, they see only as it were through a lattice or painted glass. But thou shalt only behold him with pure and clear eyes, if thou do well, separate the judgment seat and the mercy-seat one from the other, that heaven with the stars thereof may remain pure to grace and remission of sins obtained by the Mediator, where Christ reigneth with his works, and the earth also with her trees and herbs, whither we must be referred with our works. The matter I say must be brought to that pass, if we will stand with a right and unfeigned faith before God, that we do purely distinguish and sever ourselves, our life and Christ or the mercy-seat; and he that will not do this, but presenteth himself before the judgment-seat with a bold courage, shall feel the reward of his rashness. I myself have been in that danger, and as it were a mouse having tasted pitch have run away, rejoicing greatly that liberty was given to me to attain to the mercy-seat, and now I am enforced to say, that altho' I have lived very well before men, yet all things committed of me on the contrary, do remain beneath under the judgment-seat, to be punished according to the sentence and judgment of God. Now I have no other comfort, nor no other help and council of my salvation, than that Christ is my mercy-seat, who hath never offended, hath defiled himself with no sin, who died and rose again for me, and sitteth now at the right hand of the father, and defendeth me under his shadow and protection that I need not doubt, that I am by his benefit and intercession safe before God from all wrath and terror of judgment. Thus faith remaineth in all things pure setting no other thing before itself, whereunto it may boldly trust, but Christ alone. Now he that knew this well, should be a man of a resolute mind; for all other have to do with a feigned faith, boasting many things of faith, but mingling all things together, like as vintners mix wine with water; by this they say, if thou live thus, God will be favourable unto thee, and they make the judg-
Of the Christian Life.

ment-feat of the mercy-feat, and the mercy-feat of the judgment-feat, which by no means can be, for the judgment-feat shall remain, &c. Wherefore separate these two, one from the other as far as thou shalt be able, that they come not together, namely the life and holiness, together with the judgment-feat into one place, which may drive and enforce thee to have a good conscience, and to lead an upright life before men. But offer thy sins to the mercy-feat to be transferred into another place, where God lovingly receiving thee, will embrace thee as a beloved son, and will never remember more any wrath or sins. If such doctrine of faith were set forth unto men, then should it be excellently well done, and all other things should follow of their own accord, as pureness of heart, and goodness of conscience through right and perfect love. For whosoever is by faith quieted in his heart, and assured that he hath God favourable unto him, who is not angry with him, altho' he hath deserved his wrath divers ways, he doth all things with a glad and cheerful mind. Moreover he liveth so also toward men, that he is loving and beneficial toward all, although they be not worthy of love. He is quiet toward God through Christ the mediator, who will not throw him down headlong into hell, but doth lovingly favour him, and lifteth him up into heaven. And this is the chief quietness, and principle point and foundation of our salvation. Afterwards he doth in his life shew himself dutiful also towards his neighbour, doing all the best things he is able unto him, whatsoever his state or duty commandeth or requireth; and when he doth less than is meet, he asketh pardon of his negligence before God and men, so that there is left occasion neither to him, nor the world afterward to rebuke him, power also to devour him is taken from hell, and to tear him in pieces, from the devil. Thus a man is said to be in all things perfect, toward men-by love, and toward God, not by the law, but by Christ, whom he apprehendeth by his faith as the mercy-feat; which engageth his holiness for the believers or rather giveth it to them, so, that in him they have all things that are ne-
necessary to salvation. Now this is right and pure doctrine, which should be exercised and taught unto men distinctly, that they might know how they may be able to stand both before God and man, that faith and love be not mingled together, or life referred both to God and men. This ought to have been performed of those glorious and arrogant teachers, seeing that they will be counted masters of the law, that the difference of the law and faith might be well known unto all. For altho' it be taught and repeated with never so great diligence, yet notwithstanding it is very hard to be well and thoroughly learned, especially to us which have been instructed and trained up in the doctrine of works, and led only to the law and our own works. To these may be added our nature also very prone and ready by itself hereunto, and now brought into a custom, whereby it is confirmed, and in continuance often turneth the heart also into exercise and use, so, that we cannot abstain, nor think otherwise, but, that God will be favourable unto us, which have done so great works, and have led our life so without blame or fault. Therefore we must strive against both our nature and custom. For surely it is a very hard thing to think or be persuaded otherwise, and so purely to put a difference between faith and love, the faith still hanging upon us and cleaving unto us, altho' we be now in faith, so that our heart can scarce rule itself, that it say not, So long time have I taught the gospel, so I have lived, such great works have I done, &c. And we would very willingly have God to regard our life, and turn his mercy-feat for our cause into a judgment-feat. Thou mayest use this boasting toward men, I have done well to all as I have been able, and if any thing be wanting, I as yet will endeavour to make a recompence; but if thou be minded to go to God, I advise thee to cease from such arrogant boasting, and to think to appeal from judgment to grace.

Let who will begin and prove this thing, he shall at length see and try how grievous and hard it is for a man that hath been occupied all his life time in the works of his own holiness, to escape out, and with all his heart by
faith to cleave to this one Mediator, I myself have now preached the gospel almost twenty years, and have been exercised in the same daily, by reading and writing, so that I may well seem to be rid of this wicked opinion, notwithstanding I yet now and then feel the same old filth cleave to my heart, whereby it cometh to pass that I would willingly so have to do with God, that I might bring something with myself, because of which he should for my holiness sake give me his grace. And I can scarce be brought to commit myself with all confidence to mere grace, which I should do; for we ought to fly only to the mercy-seat, forasmuch as God hath set it before us for a sanctuary, which must be the refuge of all them that shall be saved. Wherefore is not to be marvelled at, if it be grievous unto others, so purely to apprehend and lay hold of faith; but especially to such as be yet hindered and entangled of devilish preachers, of whom St Paul speaketh, which cry out against the doctrine of faith, and in these words urge the works of the Law, 'Do this and thou shalt live: Alfo, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments,&c.' whichindeed are true and right, if thou didst also rightly understand them. Declare unto me the true meaning of these words, otherwise I know sufficiently already, that I ought to be righteous and keep the commandments. But how must I attain hereunto? or what is it to be righteous? If thou sayest that it is to have a good conscience and a pure heart, and to do all things that God hath commanded; well, be it so, but hear ye then: go to, perform me that, or at least shew one, that darest say, that he hath performed it; for thou shalt not yet so purify my heart and conscience with thy doctrine, that God cannot accuse and condemn me. But now the law (as it hath been sufficiently declared) requireth such a heart, as hath a good conscience before God. How therefore do we obtain such a conscience? This is the question and the cause, whereof the controversy is. Truly it cometh not hereof, because thou teachest the judgment-seat, that is, the law, but from hence, for that we have a pure and unfeigned faith, which layeth hold
hold of Christ, in whom it most fully obtaineth all things which the law requireth. So at length all things are brought to pass in me, having a good conscience, inasmuch as I am now made righteous and justified before God. For although that many things be as yet found wanting in me, yet he standeth on my side, who hath to much righteousness as wherewith he is able to supply both mine and all mens defects. Thus we shew the way whereby we are made righteous before God, when as they, when they teach best of all, shew only the way to attain to honesty, and righteousness, which is of force and value before men, contending that it ought to be of force before God also, mingling together all things in one, inasmuch as they have no certain knowledge thereof, understanding not what they say or what they affirm. For to what end tendeth this thy immoderate try? 'He that will enter into life, let him keep the com-
mendments, &c.' in which words thou shalt not shew the way to attain righteousness; for descend a little into thy self, and examine thy self diligently, then shalt thou find thy self to have been in time past conceived and born in sins, and to live in the same now, and not able to perform that which the law requireth. Why therefore dost thou seduce other with vain words, saying, be thou righteous, and thou shalt be saved; which is to no purpose, neither followeth there any fruit thereof, the way being not shewed by which we attain to justification? I hear the words well, what things the law requireth, but how shall we attain unto ability to fulfil them? Then speakest thou to me again, and sayest, thou must do good works. But how shall I stand before the judgment of God, if I have long and much wrought good works, and am righteous before men, as thou teachest me? How shall I be certain, that I seem such a one to God also? For here my heart and conscience are ready to witness the contrary against me. Howbeit I should have been thus taught of thee, as St. Paul commonly teacheth, that righteousness must proceed from faith unearned, and before all things the mercy-seat must be laid hold of, from whence all things that are wanting in us are to be taken. And so indeed these words,
words, keep the commandments of God, are rightly to be understood. For the law requireth perfect righteousness in thee, being of force as well before God as before men; thou having obtained this, go forth into the company and assembly of men, and exercise love, and do good works. By this order and means, something is brought to pass, and such sayings of the scripture are fulfilled. For fo man doth that which the law requireth, first, before God, not by his own strength or virtues, but by Christ without whom we can do nothing before God, and secondly, by his own endeavour before men, and he is now perfectly righteous, inwardly by faith in Christ, and outwardly also by his works, yet so that there is no place among men for mutual pardoning of offences. Therefore the righteousness of Christians doth much more consist in forgiving, than in their own works. Those vain praters do pervert the order of this doctrine, and without preaching of forgiveness, do teach that works only are to be urged. Lo, thus St. Paul reprehendeth the error and ignorance of them, which speak much of the law, and repeat it in daily sermons, and yet they themselves do not understand to shew the way, how the law must be fulfilled, knowing nothing so well as to babble forth and often to repeat these words, that the Law, the commandments are to be kept, if thou wilt be saved, good works must be done, &c. As they do at this day, fill all books with such confusion of words, and in all sermons utter nothing else, than such vain babbling, which they themselves understand not. But they never say a word of those things, whereof St. Paul here speaketh, namely of the sum of Christian doctrine, how love must flow out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, they say no more, but keep the commandments. They levelling at the true mark do never hit it; therefore they corrupt and falsify all things, love the heart, the conscience, &c. For the head of the fountain is wanting, that is, sincere faith, which if it be not right and found, all things must needs be corrupt, which shall flow and proceed from it. And whatsoever they teach, it is a conceit of their own imagination,
Of the Christian Life.

247

Imagination, and like to delusions, not unlike also to those things, that are seen through a lattice or glass, which resemble the colour of the clear glass, and yet indeed are not of that colour. They think that God will regard them, when they live so before men, as it seemeth good to their obscure opinion; but if God were of that opinion, he might then have well kept still Christ and the Gospel; for what need or necessity should move him, to send Christ from heaven, who should purchase that unto us with his precious blood, which we ourselves have before with us? He surely should be the foolishest of all men, which would pour forth a precious treasure, which no man needeth. Thus thou seest how these men teach their own dreams, whereof they themselves know or have tried no certainty, neither do any thing else but fill men with errors, being not able to declare, how that which they teach is to be attained unto. They draw men unto works, whereby they confirm them in their old nature and custom, out of which they were to be drawn. These truly are grievous and odious men, and not unworthily sharply accused and reprehended of St. Paul: and it appeareth that they were of no small authority and estimation, seeing that he pronounced of them, that they were called and would be counted doctors of the law, and far greater and worship than the apostles themselves: Wherefore we must endeavour to lay up and print this text even in the bottom of our heart, for it is excellently well ordered, and is pure and perfect doctrine, teaching how we must be righteous before God and men, as the law requireth, that these three may be as it were conjoined in us, namely, a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; and that our life may flow out of all these, and be occupied and led in them, then have we attained, and fulfilled the meaning of the law. Howbeit, we must most diligently take heed, and endeavour to draw Christ unto the law, who is the end and fulfilling of the law, and our righteousness and fulness before God, which we find not in our selves, and without faith shall never find, altho' the law be taught and often repeated with-
Of giving Tribute to Cæsar.

out understanding and knowledge; and these things may suffice to have been spoken at this present for the exposition of this place.

SERMON XVI.

Of the Question of the Pharisees, and Answer of Christ concerning giving Tribute to Cæsar.

Mat. xxii. 15. to the 22. Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might intangle him in his talk, &c.

In this text is set forth unto us, how subtile reason and man's wisdom agree with the wisdom of God and how fully reason stumbleth when it striveth to be even most subtile and wise, as it here falleth out with the Pharisees, who notwithstanding were the best and most wise of the Jews, which even by this their subtilty they declare nevertheless their wisdom is here proved to be foolishness; they could blame Christ neither for his preaching not for his works, and yet would they willingly have had occasion to put him to death wherefore they thought to set upon him most craftily; and wildly, propounding a subtile question unto him, the subtilty whereof was such, that man's reason was not able to comprehend it, than which a subtler could not be invented; and thus they speak unto him: Mat. xxii. 16, 17, "Master we know that thou art true and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou reardest not the person of men, Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?" Here think they, we shall intrap him, for he shall be compelled to answer that tribute is either to be given or not to be given. If he affirm that it is to be given, we have overcome him, but if he deny that it is to be given, then is he guilty of death. Whereas they say, master, they will thereby move him, and
and as it were constrain him to answer the truth. But whereas they say, 'We know that thou art true,' they do thereby put him in mind of his duty. Whither therefore should Christ turn himself? for there seemeth to be no way for him to escape, yet he would not for all that fall into their net. Was not this a subtile question? Do they not shew themselves to have been sufficient crafty, and wily ones? for which way forever the Lord had answered, he had been taken. Was not this done also full warily and circumspectly? for they associate to themselves the ministers of Herod, thinking no other but to intrap him with deceit, that he should not by any means escape, thus casting in their minds, Now we will meet with him well enough, if he deny that tribute is to be given, the Herodians are present, which shall forthwith put him to death as a seditious fellow, and one that resistent the Roman empire; but if he affirm that tribute is to be given he speaketh against the liberty of the Jews, then will we stir up the people against him. For the Jewish people would be free, and have their king of their own flock, even as it was promised them both of Moses and God, that their kingdom should continue until the time of the true king, that is, of Christ; even as the patriarch did prophesy thereof: 'The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come,' Gen. xlix 10. And therefore God did choose this people especially to himself and made a kingdom of them, only for Christ's cause. Moreover, there were many sentences in the Scripture which declared, that they should serve none, 'For they should be the chiefest and not the lowest, &c.' Deut. xxviii. 13. This and such like sayings the Scribes had beaten into the peoples heads, wherewith they were greatly disturbed; even as at this day it is put into the peoples mind, that the church cannot err, Hereupon the Pharisees thought thus: If he affirm that tribute must be given, he blasphemeth God, he shall be guilty of death, as one injurious to God, and then shall be stoned of the people. For God hath granted and promised liberty unto this people, and they were all even
Of giving Tribute to Caesar.

in the midst of captivity the people of God. Howbeit at that time they wanted a King, as they do at this day, wherefore divers tumults, seditions, and uproars were stirred up among them; for they were taught by the law, that they should have a King of their own flesh and stock, as it is said before, wherefore they did incessantly strive against strange kings and governments, until not a few of them at times were beaten and slain; neither did this happen seldom for they were a stiff-necked, obstinate, and unruly nation, and therefore the Romans, which at that time did bear rule over them, did very circumspectly govern them, and divided the land into four charges of government, that being on every side kept in awe by the governors, and presidents, they might not so soon flock together and move sedition, and that they might also be more easily resisted if at any time they should rise against the Roman empire. Wherefore Pilate was appointed of the Romans lieutenant of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip, tetrarch of Itarea, and of the country of Trachonitis, and Lysamas the tetrarch of Abilene, as Luke rehearseth them; and all this was done that they might keep the Jews under, whereupon the Jews were inflamed with anger, and in a rage and fury, but especially in the time of Christ they would willingly have a king. Wherefore the Pharisees, having found out this device, thought thus with themselves, Well, we have the matter now at a good stay; the Romans callenge to themselves the government, now if he answer unto the question that tribute is not to be given, the lieutenant is at hand, and ready to put him to death; if he answer that it must be given, he shall stir up the people against himself, and so we shall assuredly by this means intrap him; thus they supposed that either they should find cause of death in the Lord, or at the least make his doctrine to be nothing set by of the people: As the Jews here do, so also do we, the chief and necessary things being left, we are occupied about other matters not necessary. The Pharisees here move a question, whether they be free or otherwise; forasmuch as they had the law and the word of God, they supposed that they ought to be subject to
none, but to their own king, yet they were now compelled to obey Cæsar emperor of Rome. They had scripture concerning the love of God and their neighbour, but that being left, they are occupied about other matters. It was promised unto them, if they obeyed the precepts and commandments of God, that they should be a free people; they disobey and neglect God's commandments, and yet notwithstanding they will be free, and have their own king. In like manner falleth it out with us, we earnestly challenge to our selves Christian liberty, and yet we think, that if we do those things that seem good in our own brain and fancy, we are thereby Christians, both faith and charity being of us neglected. But what doth Christ, the Pharisees so subtilly setting upon him? He striketh them with their own sword, and intrappeth them in their own device, whereby they thought to have intrapped him, answering neither of those things which they hoped he would, as the Evangelist doth more at large describe, saying; "But Jesus perceived their wickedness and said. Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he faith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's." Here thou plainly seest the wisdom and marvellous dexterity of Christ, he willeth the tribute money to be shewed unto him, and asketh of the image and superscription thereof; They answering that it is Cæsar's, he very well and most freely inferreth, that they are under Cæsar, unto whom they were compelled to pay tribute: as if he said. If ye have so let in Cæsar, that his money is coined with you, surely he beareth rule over you, as though he should say, It is come to pass through your own fault that Cæsar ruleth over you. What should they say or do unto this question? They marvelled and went their ways, they thought that they should notably have overcome him, but for all their subtlety and wisdom they were deceived. This is written for our comfort, that we which are Christians may know that we have such wisdom, as exceedeth all wisdom, such strength and righteousness, as whereunto no strength and righteousness of man is like; for against the holy Ghost there is
Of giving Tribute to Caesar.

no council; this power and strength we obtain through Christ, that we may tread sin under foot, and triumph over death. When Christ dwelleth in us by faith, we have him which bringeth to pass such things, howbeit, they are not throughly felt but in time of temptation. Wherefore when I stand in need, he is present, and giveth unto me strength, that I may courageously pass through. We must not therefore be afraid that our doctrine shall perish and be put to ignominy and shame. For let all the wise men of the world rise against the word of God, yea, and be never so circumspect, and set themselves against it, yet shall they have the foyle and be overcome. It may be that they bark and bite, so that it seemeth unto men, as though they would destroy the gospel, but when they have set themselves against it to extinguish it, they shall no whit prevail, but in the snare that they have laid for others, they themselves shall at length be taken: as we hear in this text, and commonly in St. Paul, but especially in the history of St. Stephen, where we read how vainly his adversaries used the scriptures, yea, those that they used were against themselves. For the Jews did accuse St. Stephen, that he had spoken both against the temple, and against God which commanded the temple to be built, bringing and alledging scriptures, whereby they thought to convince and condemn him. But St. Stephen being full of the Holy Ghost, shewed them in order out of the scripture, how that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands: David would have built him a house, but God refused it. What was the cause hereof? A long time before David was born, God dwelt among his people. He surely should be a miserable God which should need a house, and so he confirmeth by many histories that God doth not dwell in houses or temples made with hands. What should the Jews do here? they did manifestly acknowledge their own scripture, which they had brought against St. Stephen. So all shall be put to shame and overthrown, which set themselves against the wisdom and word of God. Wherefore let no man be afraid, altho' all the wisdom and power of the world strive against the gospel, altho' it would extinguish it even by shedding of blood. For
For the more blood that is shed, so much more is the number of Christians increased. The blood of Christians, faith Tertullian, is seed whereof Christians grew. Satan must be drowned in the blood of Christians. Whereof it is not violence and force that is able to suppress the gospel; for it is like unto a palm-tree, which hath this nature and quality, that although a weight be laid upon it, yet it always riseth and lifteth up itself against the weight. Such a nature also hath the gospel, for the more it is driven against, so much the more are the room thereof spread abroad, and the more mightily that it is oppressed, by so much doth it more and more grow and increase: wherefore there is no cause that we should be afraid of power, but rather that we should fear prosperity and merry days, which are able to hurt us more than anguish and persecution. Neither let us be afraid of the subtilty and wisdom of the world, for they cannot hurt us, yea, the more that they strive against the truth, so much more pure and clear is the truth made. Nothing therefore can come better to the gospel, than when the world with his force and wisdom setteth itself against it; the more vehemently sin and Satan do fight against my conscience, so much stronger is my righteousness made: For if sins do agree and disquiet me, I do then more ardently pray and cry unto God, and so my faith is more and more increased and strengthened. This it that which St. Paul meaneth when he saith, 'My strength is made perfect in weakness,' 1 Cor. xii. 9. Forasmuch therefore as we have so great a treasure, which is increased and strengthened by persecutions and adversities, there is no cause that we should be afraid, but rather that we should with a cheerful mind rejoice in tribulation, as St. Paul faith, Rom. v. according as the apostles did, who with great joy departing from the councils, gave God thanks, that they were counted worthy to suffer rebuke for the name of Jesus, Acts v. 41. If the devil were endued with such wisdom, that he would be quiet, and suffer the gospel to have free course, he should not suffer so much loss; for when the gospel is not impugned, it is as it were wasted with rust, neither hath it occasion to shew forth the virtue and power thereof. We live therefore...
Of giving Tribute to Cæsar.

therefore here secure as yet, for no man striveth against us, wherefore we continue still as we were before, yea, alas, we become worse and worse; whereas some of our adversaries have set upon us by writing, that pertaineth to a few. Forasmuch as they have written against us, they have thereby done nothing else, but as it were blown the fire; but if we had been thrown into the fire, or slain with the sword, the number of Christians would be greater among us. Wherefore this is a comfort unto us, if we at any time be tempted, that Christ is ready to help us, and reigneth among us, yea; he is so near unto us, that always through him we may overcome, as long as we believe and trust in him: Howbeit when we are touched with no adversity, he doth little or nothing, but when we are fought against and oppressed, he is present; and bringeth all our enemies to confusion. We have moreover to learn here that they which are wise and mightier than other, which are endowed with the chief gifts of understanding and nature more than other, which excel in greater industry, learning, and readier capacity than other, which are fit to oversee other, and can govern all things best, that they, I say, do many times most of all other resist God and faith, and trust more to their own strength and reason than to God; for they are carried so far by their venomous nature, that they neither can nor will use those things to the advantage and profit of their neighbour; but trusting to their own gifts and ability, they hope that now they shall obtain this, now that, neither do they think that they shall have need of God's help also thereunto: As it appeareth here in the Pharisees and Scribes, who were certain, as they supposed, that if they so set upon the Lord, it could not be, but that they should then intangle him; for it is impossible thought they, that he should here escape us, we shall here hold him as it were fallen into a net, whether he affirm or deny that tribute must be given. Mark how subtle and perverse the wit of man's nature is, which is here very lively set forth. There is nothing else in man but wickedness, delusion, guile, deceits, lying, fraud,
fraud, and all kind of evil, yea, of nature man is but
lies and vanity, as the 116th Psalm faith. We must
not trust any man in anything, do not persuade thyself,
that any man speaketh the truth unto thee, for what-
soever man speaketh is a lie. Why so? The fountain
or spring head, that is, the heart is not sincere, where-
fore neither can the rivers be pure; and for this cause
the Lord doth commonly call men the generation of
vipers, and a brood of serpents. Is not this a goodly
title of man? Let any man now go, and glory of his
own righteousness, strength or free will. Before the
world indeed some man may be, and gloriously appear
godly, righteous and holy; but there is nothing else but
a generation of vipers and brood of serpents, but that
especially in those that seem most excellent, most pre-
cious, most wise, and of greatest understanding. If
thou go through even all the histories of the Greeks,
Jews and Romans, thou shalt find the best and wicest
princes of all, which have governed the affairs of their
empire prosperously, thou shalt find, them I say, to have
thought nothing of God, but only trusting to them-
selves, to have acknowledged nothing as received from
God; hereupon it is gathered, that the less a man ex-
celleth in wisdom before the world, so much les doth
he commit against God; for they that excel in counsel
and authority before the sight of the world, do for the
most part deceive and lie more than others, thinking
that if they deal by delusions and deceit, their fraud and
iniquity is not perceived, for they can after a pretty fort
cloak their craft and subtility. But the Holy Ghost hath
a most clear and bright sight, which they cannot avoid,
but they shall be espied. The scripture doth often
call such, lions, wolves, bears, swine, and cruel beasts,
inasmuch as they rage, devour and consume all things
with their fraud and deceit; wherefore in the Old
Testament the Jews were forbidden to eat of certain
beasts, as of those already rehearsed, and of others, for
this one cause especially, that it should be a type and
example to us; whereby we may perceive, that there
are some men which are strong, mighty, rich, witty,
learned, skilful and wise, which are to be avoided and
eschewed
Of giving Tribute to Caesar.

eschewed as a certain unclean thing, and as such as seduce and deceive others with their fair shew, might, and wisdom; for neither shall they be counted for such, neither will any man think them to be such, as do so much as think any evil in their heart, much les do it. Wherefore thou must put no trust and confidence in any man, trust not unto him, for he will deceive thee when ever he is able; again if thou trustest man thou art against God, in whom thou puttest not thy trust. It is written in the 17th chap. of Jer. ver. 5. 'Cursed be the 'man that trusteth in man;' and ver. 7. 'Blessed is the 'man that trusteth in the Lord.'

Some man may now say, How shall we do that? One man must have dealing with another, otherwise how can the life of man continue? We must buy, we must sell, we must utter and change our wares with men: Now if we should not trust one another, the whole trade of man's affairs should be in peril, yea, and perish. I say that no man can deny, but that there must be mutual dealings among men, and that one doth need the help and travel of another; but this I will have, that whatsoever dealing thou haft with men, either in buying or selling, count it for a thing uncertain, which thou must neither trust nor build upon, for it is certain, that as soon as thou shalt trust to man, he will seek to deceive thee, forasmuch as the nature of man, as it is of itself, can do nothing but lie and deceive; yea, all things in man are uncertain, both his works and words there is nothing in him but lightness and inconsistency, which thou mayest boldly believe to be true. Wherefore all our hope and confidence must be reposed in God alone, and after this sort we must say, Lord, give thou me grace that I may direct and order my life, my soul, my body, my substance and goods, and whatsoever is mine according to thy divine will, for I believe in thee, I trust in thee, do not thou forfake me in so perillous dealing with this or that man: I put no trust in man. If thou knowest that it is good for me: make him to deal faithfully with me; if thou knowest that it will be to my hindrance and hurt, help me to avoid, it for thy will only pleaseth me, which I wish always to be done. As
As soon as thou thinkest in thy mind, He is a good man, and one that will keep his promise, I am sure that he will not deceive me, but deal faithfully, even then halt thou fallen from God, and worshipped an idol, putting thy trust in a liar. Wherefore when thou hast any dealing with man, think boldly, If he deal faithfully it is well, if he do otherwise, in the name of God let him go, I will commit all things to the will of God, he shall prosperously bring them to pass. Of such a false and ungodly confidence reposed in men, that evil crept among Christians, namely, the worshipping of saints, whereby the Christian church, that is, the true congregation of the faithful, hath suffered exceeding great hurt, and incomparable ruin; for what other was the service and worshipping of saints but a devilish thing? When as men used to reason after this sort: This man was very holy, that which he taught he did, whom we will follow, and do the like; Hierome, Augustine, Gregory said thus, therefore it is true, and therefore will I believe it Francis, Benedict, Dominick, Bartholomew, lived thus, they did this and that, I will imitate their life and works; moreover, Augustine was saved by this rule, wherefore I also shall be saved by it. Fy, how unstable and miserable a thing is this, they are only lies and dreams of men, there is not in one word mention made here of Christ and his word, but they are only the vain inventions and trifles of men. I would utterly break the rule of Augustine, if he therefore ordained it, thinking to be saved thereby; so blind and without understanding is reason, that it receiveth the dotages and vain inventions of men, when as notwithstanding the word of God only is to be received in matters of salvation, as if Herod, Pilate, Caiphas and Annas should preach the gospel, I ought to receive it. Again, if those that are counted holy, should rise and preach lies, also rules, habits, shavings, ceremonies, and such like vain inventions of men, I ought in no wise to receive them, for we must here have respect not to the persons, but to that which they preach. Dost thou presume to be wiser than all the fathers and saints, than all the bishops and princes of the whole world? Thus may some object.
Of giving Tribute to Cæsar.

against me. Far be that from me, for I do not contend to be wiser than they; but this without controversy is thus, that whosoever is wise, great, liberal, mighty and strong before the world, doth seldom or never agree with the word of God; for so it falleth out, that they that are such do for the most part persecute the gospel, and if they were not so great, the gospel should not so greatly shine forth and triumph. The Roman Emperors Hadrian, Trajan, Dioclesian, were the most wise Cæsars of all, whose government was so liked of, that it was praised of the whole world, yet they persecuted the gospel, and could not abide the truth; the same we find written of the kings of the Jews, as of Ahaz and others, which governed their kingdom very well, yet despised the word of God, and disobeyed his commandments. We in our time had never such emperors or princes, as are comparable to them; but it ought to be verified in these, that God would by foolish preaching confound the wisdom of this world, as Paul faith, 1 Cor. i. All these things are shewed unto us in this text, which we have in hand, which hath a simple and slender show and appearance of itself, but it containeth many things in it most worthy the noting. Now how the Lord concludeth with the Pharisees, when they had shewed him the tribute money, and had answered that it was Cæsar's image and superscription, the Evangelist declareth, saying, 'Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.' Although they had deserved no such thing of the Lord, nevertheless he teacheth them the right way; and in these words he confirmeth the sword and office of the magistrate: They hoped that he would condemn and refilt him, but he doth nothing less, for he commandeth and praiseth him, commanding that they give unto him those things that are his. Whereby he plainly will have, that there be magistrates, princes and rulers, under whose government we must live; neither must we care whether they use and exercise their rule and authority well or ill, we must have regard only to their power and office, for their power and authority is good, inasmuch as
of giving tribute to Cæsar.

as it is ordained and instituted of God; neither is there any cause why thou shouldst find fault with power, if at any time thou be oppressed by princes and tyrants, for whereas they abuse the power given unto them of God they surely shall be compelled to give an account thereof. The abuse of a thing doth not make that thing evil, which is in itself good; a chain of gold is good, neither is it therefore made worse for that a harlot weareth it about her neck, or if one should put out mine eye with it, should I find fault in the chain therefore? In like manner the power of the prince must be born, for if he abuse his office, he is not to be counted of me as no prince, neither belongeth it me to revenge or punish it in him, I must obey him for God’s cause only, for he representeth the place of God. How grievous things ever magistrates shall exact, I must for God’s sake bear them all, and obey them, so far as they be not contrary to God’s commandments; if they do justly or unjustly, it shall in due time appear. Wherefore if thy substance, life and body, and whatsoever thou hast should be taken from thee by the magistrates, thou mayest say thus, I willingly yield them unto you, and acknowledge you for rulers over me, I will obey you; but whether you use your power and authority well or ill, see you to that; moreover, whereas Christ saith, ‘Render therefore unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar’s: and unto God, the things that are God’s.’ We must understand that unto God pertaineth honour, we must acknowledge him for the living, omnipotent and wise God, and ascribe unto him what good thing soever can be named; and altho’ we do not give him this honour, he notwithstanding easily keepeth it, for nothing is either added to, or taken from him by our honouring. Howbeit in us he is true, omnipotent and wise, when as we count him so, and believe that he is such an one, as he suffereth himself to be said to be. Now unto Cæsar and the magistrate fear, custom, tribute, obedience, &c. are due; God requireth especially the heart, the magistrate the body and goods, over which he executeth his office in the place of God, which St. Paul doth most notably in plain and manifest words declare, Rom. xiii. 1. “Let every
every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour." And therefore also are magistrates ordained of God, that they may defend and maintain public peace, which alone exceedeth all worldly good things: We felt a little in the last commotion of the common people, what loss, misery calamity and grievous sorrow, conspiracy and sedition bringeth in the world. God grant that it may so continue, that we try it no more. Thus much shall suffice to have been spoken for the exposition of this text.

SERMON XVII.

Of Salvation by Christ alone.

John vi. 44. to the 51. No man can come to me, &c.

The sum of the text.

1. Christ is known of none but of him whom the Father draweth, that is, except the Father teach us that knowledge inwardly in the heart. Therefore Christ faith unto Peter, Mat. xvi. 17. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven
heaven. 2. Christ is the wisdom of God which is of more price than precious stones, and whatsoever can be wished is not to be compared unto it, as Solomon faith in the Proverbs viii. 11. 3 The old heavenly bread, that is, the righteousness of the law doth not justify; but Christ, if we believe in him, justifieth for ever.

The exposition of the text.

This text teacheth us nothing else but Christian faith, and stirreth it up in us as surely. John, through his gospel, doth almost no other thing but instruct us, how we must believe in the Lord Christ, and such a faith as is grounded on the true promise of God, made unto us in Christ, shall save us, as this text plainly declareth. Also they are here all proved fools, which have taught us another way and means to obtain righteousness; whatsoever man's mind can invent, although it be holy, although it have a fair shew before men, it must needs utterly fall, if that he will have salvation to come thereby; for altho' man is exercised with the duties of godlinefs, he shall not be able to attain unto heaven, unless God prevent him with his word, which may offer his divine grace unto him, and lighten his heart, that he may walk in the right way. Now this way is the Lord Jesus Christ, he that will seek another way, as the most part of men with their outward works commonly do, hath now erred from the right and high way; for Paul faith, Gal. ii. 31. 'If righteousness come by the 'law,' that is, by the works of the law, 'then Christ is 'dead in vain.' Therefore I say, that a man must by the gospel be as it were bruised and broken, and humbled even from the bottom of his heart, as being frail and weak, which can move neither hands nor feet, but only lieth prostrate and crieth, Help me, O omnipotent God, merciful Father, I am not able to help myself: Help, O Lord Christ, mine own help is nothing. That so against this corner-stone, which is Christ, all may be broken, as he faith of himself, in Luke xx. 17 when he asked the Pharisees and Scribes, 'What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that
Of Salvation by Christ alone.

That stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." Therefore either let us fall upon it by our imbecility and weakness, by denying ourselves, and so be broken, or else he will break us for ever in his straight judgment. But it is better that we fall upon it, than that it fall upon us; upon this foundation Christ faith in the text, 'No man can cometo me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.' Now he whom the Father draweth not, shall surely perish; it is also concluded that he which cometh not to this Son, shall be damned for ever. But it is better that we fall upon it, than that it fall upon us; upon this foundation. Christ faith in the text, 'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.'

Now he whom the Father draweth not, shall surely perish; it is also concluded that he which cometh not to this Son, shall be damned for ever. Here is the only Son given unto us, which may save us, without him there is no salvation; if he help not, our case is most miserable: Of him Peter also speaketh, to the same effect, in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. iv. 11. "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Whither would our divines and schoolmen turn themselves here, which have taught us, that by many works we must attain unto righteousness? Here is that high master, Aristotle, confounded, who hath taught us, that reason endeavoureth to do the best things, and is always ready to the better; but this Christ doth here deny, for unlessthe Father possesseth and draw us, we shall perish for ever. Here all men must confess their imbecility and slowness to good things; if so be that any persuade himself that he is able to do any good thing by his own strength, truly he hath reproved Christ of falsehood, and with great arrogancy, presumeth to come to heaven, altho' he is not drawn of the Father, Wherefore, where the word of God is in his course, and soundly preached, whatsoever things are high and great, it casteth them down, it maketh all mountains even with the vallies, and overthroweth all hills, as the Prophet Isaiah faith; that all hearts hearing the word may despair of themselves, otherwise they cannot come unto Christ. The works of God are such, that while they kill they make alive, while they condemn they save; as Hannah, the mother of Samuel, singeth of the Lord,
Of Salvation by Christ alone.

Lord, 1 Sam. ii. 6. 'The Lord killeth, and maketh alive. He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.' Wherefore, if a man be thus stricken of God in his heart, that he acknowledgeth himself such a one as ought for his sins to be condemned, he surely is even that very man whom God by his word hath stricken, and by this stroke hath fastened upon him the bond of his divine grace, whereby he draweth him, that he may provide for his soul, and have care of him. He could first find with himself no help nor counsel, neither did he wish for any, but now he hath found the special consolation and promise of God, which is after this sort: 'Every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and him that knocketh, it shall be opened,' Mat. vii. 8. By such a promise man is more and more lifted up in mind, and conceiveth a greater trust and confidence in God; for as soon as he heareth that this is the work of God alone, he desireth of God, as at the hand of his merciful Father, that he will vouchsafe to draw him. If so be that he be drawn of God unto Christ, undoubtedly that also shall come unto him, whereof the Lord maketh mention here, namely, that he will raise him up at the last day; for he layeth hold on the word of God, and trusteth in God whereby he hath a certain testimony, that he is he whom God hath drawn, as John faith in his first Epistle, chap. v. 10. 'He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.' Hereupon it must needs follow, that he is taught of God, and in verity now knoweth God to be no other, but a helper, a comforter, and a Saviour. Hereby is it now manifest, that if we believe, God will be no other towards us but a Saviour, helper, and giver of all felicity, who requireth and asketh nothing of us, but will only give and offer unto us, as he himself faith unto Israel, Psal. lxxxii. 10. 'I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.' Who would not love such a God, which sheweth himself gentle and loving unto us, and offereth so readily his grace and goodnes? They shall
shall not be able, to escape the severe and eternal judgment of God, who do unadvisedly neglect so great grace, as the epistle to the Hebrews faith, If they that transgressed the law of Moses, escaped not unpunished, but died without mercy, how much more grievous shall God punish them, which count the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing, and tread under foot the Son of God? O how diligent is St. Paul in all his epistles to teach how the knowledge of God may rightly be conceived? O how often doth he wish increase in the knowledge of God? as if he would say, If ye only knew and understood what God is, ye should then be safe: Then ye would love him, and do all things that are approved of him. Thus he faith, *Colof. i. 9.* ‘We do not cease to pray for you, and do desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, That he might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened withall might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:’ And Psal. cxxix. 34. David faith: ‘Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law, yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.’ And thus ye have out of the first sentence of this text, that the knowledge of God doth come from the father, It is needful, that he lay the first stone in our building, otherwise we should labour in vain. But that is done thus, God sendeth unto us preachers, whom he hath taught, and provideth his will be preached unto us. First that all our life and condition, although it have a fair shew and be holy outwardly, is of no estimation before him, yea, is abhorred and loathed of him. And this is called the preaching of the law; afterward he maketh grace to be preached unto us, to wit, that he will not have us utterly condemned and cast off, but that he will receive us in his beloved Son, and not simply receive us, but also make us heirs in his kingdom, yea, and Lords over all things which are in heaven and earth. This now is called the preaching of grace or of the
the gospel; and all this is of God, which raiseth up and fendeth forth preachers. This St. Paul signifieth, when he faith thus, Rom. x. 17. 'Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' This also the words of the Lord mean here in the gospel, when he faith, 'It is written in the Prophets; and they shall be all taught of God, every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, but the which is of God, he hath seen the Father.' Whenas we hear the first preaching, that is the preaching of the law, how we are condemned with all our works, then man sighed unto God, and knoweth not what to do, his conscience is evil and fearful, and except help should come in time, should despair for ever. Wherefore the other preaching must not be long deferred, the gospel must be preached unto him, and the way unto Christ must be shewed, whom God hath given unto us a Mediator, that through him alone we may be saved by mere grace and mercy, without all our own works and merits. Then the heart is made joyful; and hasteth unto such grace, as the thirsty heart runneth unto the water. David had a notable feeling hereof, when he said thus, Psal. xlii. 1. 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee: O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.' When therefore a man cometh to Christ, throe' the gospel, then heareth he the voice of the Lord Christ, which strengtheneth the knowledge that God hath taught him, to wit, that God is nothing else but a Saviour abounding with grace, who will be favourable and merciful to all them, which call upon him in his Son. Therefore the Lord faith moreover, John vi. 47, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you; He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' In these words
words the soul findeth a table daintily turnished, whereby it may slak all hunger; for it knoweth assuredly that he that speaketh these words cannot lie. Wherefore if it commit it self confidently unto him and cleave to the word, it resteth upon him, and so departeth not from this goodly table. This is that supper, to the preparing whereof, the heavenly Father killed his oxen and fatlings, and hath hidden us all unto it. The living bread whereof the Lord here maketh mention, is Christ himself, whereby we are so fed; if we lay hold but of a morsel of this bread in our hearts, and keep it, we shall be satisfied for ever, neither can we ever be pluck’d from God. Moreover, such an eating is nothing else, but to believe in the Lord Christ, that he is made unto us of God as St. Paul faith, 1 Cor. i. ‘wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.’ Wherefore by and by after the text; when the Jews were at contention about his words he faith, “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will arise him up at the last day.” Manna, which the fathers did eat in the desert (as Christ here faith) could not save from death, but this bread maketh us immortal; if we believe in Christ, death shall not hurt us any thing at all, yea, there is no more death. This the Lord meaneth by these words in another place, where he faith to the Jews; ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death;’ John viii. 51. Where it is certain that he speaketh of the word of faith and of the gospel. But some men may say, that the holy die notwithstanding, for Abraham and the holy prophets are dead, as the Jews said unto him, I answer, The death of Christians is only a sleep, as the scripture also commonly calleth it: For a Christian tasteth and feeth no death, that is, he hath the feeling of no death. For this Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom he believeth; hath overcome death, that afterwards he should not feel or taste it, but death is unto him only a passage and gate to life, as Christ himself wit-
Of Salvation by Christ alone.

witnesseth, John v. 24. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' Wherefore the life of a Christian is merry, and on every side replenished with joy, and the yoke of Christ easy and sweet. But that it seemeth heavy and grievous unto us, this is the cause, for that the father hath not yet drawn us; hereupon it cometh to pass, that we take no pleasure thereof, neither is the gospel comfortable unto us. If so be that we would lay up the words of Christ well in our heart, they would be unto us an exceeding comfort. And thus ye have heard how we must feed on this bread which came down from heaven, that is, on the Lord Christ, to wit, by faith, which we then do when we believe in him, that he is our Saviour. The whole chapter out of which this text is taken, commendeth unto us nothing else but spiritual meat. For when the multitude followed Christ, that they might again eat and drink, which the Lord himself signifieth, he taketh occasion of the corporal meat which they sought, and almost through the whole chapter speaketh of spiritual meat, as he said, 'The words which I speak are spirit and life.' Whereby he would signify, that he therefore fed them, that they should believe in him; and as they did eat the bodily meat, so they ought also to feed of the spiritual. Here let us weigh and mark this, that the Lord doth so gently and graciously apply himself to us, and offer himself in such gentle words that it ought worthily to move our hearts, to believe in him, to wit, that that bread was therefore given for us, inasmuch as it was behoveful that he should taste death and suffer helish pains; also should bear sins which he never had committed, as though he had committed them, and had been his own; and he did also the same willingly for our sakes, and took us as brethren and sisters. This if we believe, we do the will of the heavenly father, which is nothing else but to believe in his Son, and so be saved. As Christ himself faith a little before: 'This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which feeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life.' It now therefore appeareth,
peareth, that he that hath faith doth the will of God, and eateth of this heavenly bread, as St. Augustine faith, What dost thou prepare thy mouth? believe and thou hast eaten. Of this spiritual supper the whole new Testament speaketh, but especially in this place of John. The sacrament of Christ's body and blood is a certain testimony and pledge of this true supper, whereby we ought to strengthen our faith, and to be assured, that this body and this blood, whereof we feed of the sacrament, delivereth us from sin, death, satan, and all evil. But how may a man perceive and know, that he also doth pertain to this heavenly bread, and is called to this spiritual supper? let him consider the case in his own heart, which is we find so affected, that he doth as it were feel the sweetness in the promise of God, and is undoubtedly persuaded, that he is of the company of them which pertain to this supper, he is assuredly such a one indeed. For as we believe, so cometh it unto us. Such a man hath also by and by a regard of his neighbour, and helpeth him as his brother, careth for him, giveth unto him, lendeth him, comforteth him, briefly doth no otherwise to him than he desireth to be done unto himself; and all this proceedeth from hence, for that the bountifulness and goodness of Christ hath replenished his heart with sweetness and love, that it is a pleasure and joy unto him to do good to his neighbour, yea, and he is grieved if there be none toward whom he may be serviceable. And beside all this, he is tractable and lowly towards all men, he doth not esteem the temporal pleasure and pride of life, he judgeth no man, he defameth no man, he interpreteth all things in the better part. When as he seeth that the matter goeth not well with his neighbour, as that he fainteth in faith, waxeth cold in love, and that his life is not on every side approvable, he prayeth for him, and is sore grieved if any commit any thing against God and his neighbour. In fine, the root, and sap are found, for they are in a flourishing vine, to wit, Christ, and therefore such fruits come forth. But if any be void of faith, and not taught of God, such a one doth not feed on this heavenly bread, neither
neither bringeth forth these fruits, for where a right faith is not, there such fruits are always wanting. And therefore St. Peter teacheth us to make our calling unto salvation, sure by good works: where he speaketh properly of the works of love, namely, that we do good to our neighbour, and be affected toward him, as toward our own flesh and blood. Thus much shall suffice concerning this text. Let us call to God for his grace.

SERMON XVIII.

Concerning good Works the Fruits of Faith.

Rom. xiii. 11. to the 14. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, &c.

The apostle in this text teacheth, not of faith, but of works the fruits of faith, sheweth how the life of a Christian ought to be ordered and framed according to the flesh outwardly among men. For how we must live in the spirit and before God, faith doth teach, whereof St. Paul a little before this place hath at large, and even apostolicly treated. Yea, if we consider this text well, it doth not so much teach as provoke exhort, move, and stir up them which are already taught, what they must do. For St. Paul divideth the office of preaching into two parts, into doctrine and exhortation, Rom. xii. Doctrine is, when one teacheth that which was not known before, whereby men are instructed and come to understanding. Exhortation is, when the preacher moveth and provoketh unto that which is already known, either is necessary to be done of him, who will Christianly perform the duty of preaching. Wherefore St. Paul doth very earnestly apply himself to both, and that his exhortation may be more effectual, and may more acceptably enter into the minds of them whom he hath purposed to exhort, he useth certain elegant and figurative speeches, and doth with an adorned manner of speaking, allure their minds
unto him. For the words sleep, darkness, light, walking, armour, works, the day, the night, which he here useth, are all spoken figuratively, by which other things are signified, than their nature and propriety do bear: for he speaketh not of the natural night, day, darkness, armour, walking and sleep, &c. but he resembleth by these natural things a certain likeness to our mind, whereby he may more forceably provoke and bring us to those spiritual things; as if he said, ye see how men to get the riches of the present time, which do soon perish, rise early, and laying aside the works of darkness; apply themselves to the works of the day, after the night is past, and the day is come; with how much greater diligence ought we, shaking off our sleep, to rise early, and casting away the works which we did while it was yet dark, to apply ourselves now to those works which are agreeable to our light, forasmuch as the night is now passed, and the day of our salvation hath appeared?

By sleep he signifieth evil works which are void of faith: for sleep is a work properly meet for the night, and that he meaneth thus, he sufficiently declareth, when he by and by after addeth: 'Let us cast away the works of darkness.' So on the contrary, to awake and to rise, signify good works which come of faith. For as sleep pertaineth properly to the night, so to rise is properly agreeable to the morning and day. Whereupon it is said, 1 Thess. v. 4. 'But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should not overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober.' For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast plate of faith and love, and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath; but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.' It is sufficiently manifest, that the apostle doth not in these
these words, forbid us the sleep of nature, nevertheless he draweth a similitude from natural sleep and waking, to spiritual, that is, to a good and evil life; and to be brief, to rise out of sleep is here the very same thing that the apostle writeth, Titus ii 11. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; Teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." For that which he called in these words, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, he calleth in this text which we have in hand, to arise from sleep, and that which he termeth to live soberly, and righteously, and godly; that he calleth in our present text, to watch, and to put on the armour of light, and whereas he faith, the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared, that he calleth here the day and light, of which we will hereafter speak more at large. Now let us see what likeness there is between natural and spiritual sleep. He that sleeppeth naturally, neither seeth nor feeleth any of those good things that are in the world, but lieth among those things which are even next adjoining unto him as it were dead, serving to no use, neither regarding any thing at all. For altho' he live in himself, yet is he as dead to all other. Again instead of true things, he is in dreams wholly occupied with vain images and forms of things, which appear true, and is so foolish, that he embraceth those vain forms, and thinketh them to be true things; but when he waketh, those images do together vanish away, and the man beginneth to be occupied with true things. After the same manner almost it is, when one is as it were swallowed up of ungodliness, for he sleeppeth and is like a dead man before God, neither seeth he, neither feeeth any of the good things, which are good things indeed, namely, those spiritual good things, which are promised, and offered him by the gospel, altho' they be just by him; for those things are seen and felt by faith alone, otherwise they are removed from all sight and feeling. Therefore so long as
as by reason of the sleep of his unbelief, he can have neither any regard or sense of true good things, which are very near him through the gospel, he busieth himself with the false good things of this world, as riches, promotions, and pleasures, which being compared unto eternal life, unto heavenly joy, and that perfect salvation which cometh to the goodly, and altogether as dreams and as those vain visions, compared to natural things, whereof they are only representations; but when a man awaketh, and hath received faith, all regard and desire of those false good things of this present life vanisheth away, and he acknowledgeth that they are nothing else but mere vanity and fallhood, even as those visions do fade away quite as soon as a man awaketh out of a natural sleep. Hereof the 76th Psalm speaketh, "They have slept their sleep; and none of the men of might have found their hands, and Psalm 73. As a dream when one awaketh; so O Lord, when thou awaketh, thou shalt despise their image. And Isaiah 29. It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh and behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite; so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion." See how contemptuously and disdainfully the prophets speaketh of the chief power, riches, pleasures, and promotions of the world, and likeneth them to dreams and most vain visions, wherewith they which are asleep are deluded. What other durst say, that the good things, riches and power of these kings, princes, and rich men are nothing else but dreams, when as for them, men mingle earth with heaven, fire with water, raging without measure and end in the world? but the cause hereof is, for that they yet sleep, therefore they do yet see nothing hereof, as they want faith, so also are they destitute of the light. For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. What mean these words? Did we believe before and do we not believe now? Herewemustcall to mind that which Paul writeth, Rom. i. 1. that God promised the gospel "by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord," that all should by him be saved according
Good Works the Fruits of Faith.

according to that which was said unto Abraham, Gen. xxii. 18. 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' This blessing promised to Abraham in his seed, is nothing else but grace and salvation in Christ offered to the whole world by the gospel, which Paul so interpreth, Rom. vi. and Gal. iii. For Christ is that seed of Abraham, that is, as he is man, his flesh and blood, by whom and in whom shall be blessed, as many as believe in him, and call upon him. This promise was afterward by the prophets continually more and more declared and preached, for they did all write of the coming of Christ, of the grace which he should bring, and of the gospel, which Peter also witnesseth, Acts iv. This promise of God all the faithful believed which died before Christ was born, who by this faith were saved, and obtained salvation in Christ and through Christ. Hereunto Paul now had respect when he said, 'Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed;' for that which he faith is this much in effect: We believed in time past, that the promise made unto Abraham should be fulfilled, now it is fulfilled, and those things that we believed shoulcl come to pass, are now present: Christ is come, the gospel is revealed and published, and the blessing which we looked for is spread over the world; all things which we tarried for and believed, being promised, are come. And hereby the Apostle signifieth the spiritual day, whereof he speaketh afterward, which is properly the beginning and manifestation of the gospel, whereof we will hereafter speak. Now by this that those things which we believed should be fulfilled are now fulfilled, our faith is not any whit made void or frustrate, but much more sound or perfect; for as they of the old time before Christ's incarnation believed the promise of God which should be fulfilled, so we believe that the same is fulfilled, and the faith is altogether the same in itself, but that our faith followed theirs, as the fulfilling followeth also the promise; for either faith trusted in the seed of Abraham, that is, in Christ, theirs before his incarnation, ours after it. Wherefore he that should at this day believe with the Jews that Christ is to come, should make God a liar, as though
though he had not fulfilled his promise, which he hath fulfilled, and being fulfilled would have it published and preached; so also should salvation be yet far from the believers, which we should look for being as yet to come, in the time that shall hereafter follow. Of this double faith Paul speaketh, Rom. i. 17. 'Therein (that is, in the gospel) is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.' What meaneth this, from faith to faith? Nothing else, but that although the faith of the Fathers and our faith is the same, whereby it is believed in Christ either to come, or which hath already appeared; yet the gospel doth lead from their faith to our's, so that it is now necessary not only to believe the promise that was to be fulfilled, but also that it is fulfilled, which it did not behove Abraham and the other father's to believe, although they had the same Christ which we have; for there is one faith, one spirit, one Christ, one communion of all saints, this difference only there is between us, that they went before Christ, we follow him. We have therefore believed, and we do also believe, viz. the fathers and we, with a like and common faith in the same Christ, although not after the same manner, as it is said. And as by reason of this communion of faith which we have alike in the same Christ, we say, We have believed, or we did believe, when as not we, but the fathers have believed, or did believe; so they again did say, that they should hear, see, and believe in Christ, when as not they, but we do live in that time. We read not in a few places of the scriptures, that they which were before the incarnation of Christ, took upon them the person of them which are after it, and they which are after it, of them which were before it, because of the communion of faith, and the same Christ, which they have in common, and so there as it were one company of believers. Now whereas the Apostle faith, that salvation is now nearer unto us than when we believed, that is, when our fathers those antient believers did look for it to come, we must not understand it of the nearness of possession, as though we now had it nearer and more certainly than they, for the fathers had
had altogether the same faith, as it is said, and the same Christ, wherefore salvation was as near unto them as unto us; 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday to day, and for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8. Christ continueth the same from the beginning of the world even unto the end, by whom all are saved alike. But Paul speaketh of the nearness of revealing, that whatsoever things were said before concerning Christ, they were now fulfilled; death being overcome, The Lord did sit at the right-hand of the Father, the gospel was preached abroad in the world, by which Christ did come unto all in the whole world; for this cause Paul faith, that our salvation is nearer than when it was hidden, and known unto few men, because that Christ being not yet glorified, it was not meet that the preaching of salvation should be made public or common. Whereas therefore the Apostle faith, Our salvation is now nearer us, he fyeth the same thing in the Epistle to Titus, chap. ii. 11. in other words: 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared, that is, hath sprung forth, and is every where commonly preached; although it was not hid before in any of the saints, notwithstanding it was not commonly known unto the world. After the same sort the scripture speaketh in many places, when it sometimes faith that Christ is to come, sometimes that he is come, although he always hath been, and is in all the elect; howbeit because he had not before his resurrection come to all by public preaching, the scripture speaketh diversely of his coming; for because of his public preaching he came in the flesh, being made man, for his incarnation had not been profitable to any, if the gospel had not thereupon been preached, by which he came into the whole world, and whereby it is commonly known why he was made man, whereby that blessing promised to Abraham is now published, and made common to all which by the gospel believe in Christ. Hereupon Paul faith very well, Rom. i. 2. that the gospel was promised of God, &c. as though he would say, although God hath promised every where in the writings of the prophets his son in the flesh, yet forasmuch as all that should be done, that the gospel might be preached abroad in the world,
whereby he cometh spiritually to the minds of the believers, (which coming only bringeth salvation, and is far to be prefcred before that coming in the flesh, inasmuch as it was done because of this) I say rather that God promised by the prophets in scripture the gospel concerning his son; for God considered the gospel and our faith in all these things; for which he would also have him to be made man, that the gospel might be preached of him, that being made man, he hath saved us by his death, and that the salvation which he hath wrought, might go into the whole world, and be made near unto all. Some have taught for comings of Christ, according to the four Sundays in Advent, as they call it, but this coming of Christ by the gospel, which is most necessary of all, and of which all do depend, of which Paul here speaketh; this coming I say they could not see, inasmuch as they are ignorant both what the gospel is, and to what end it was given. They babble many things of the coming of Christ, and nevertheless they drive him further from themselves, than heaven is distant from the earth; for what can Christ profit any man which doth not possess him by faith? Or how can any man possess him by faith, where the gospel is not preached?

The night is far spent the day is at hand:" His meaning in effect is, that salvation is at hand; for by the day Paul understandeth the gospel, namely, that it is that day whereby our hearts and minds are enlightened; therefore such a day being sprung, our salvation is certainly at hand, that is, Christ and his grace promised in time past to Abraham, hath shined forth by preaching in the whole world, giveth light unto all men, raiseth all out of deep sleep, sheweth true and eternal good things, wherein we may be hereafter occupied, and may walk honesty in this day. On the contrary, by the night all doctrine is to be understood, which is not the gospel, beside which none can bring salvation; but if thou do a little more exactly weigh the words, thou shalt see that Paul describeth that part of the day which is most delectable of all, and most full of all pleasantness, namely
nately, the joyful and amiable morning, and the rising of the sun; for it is the morning when the night is gone and ended, and the day is now come, whereupon all things are marvellously cheered and recreated, the birds sing, other living creatures do stir up with alacrity and joyfulness; men being as it were made alive again, do go forth to their labours; all things, the day springing, and the morning shining, are so affected, as though the world were renewed, and all things restored to life again. Wherefore in many places of the scripture, the joyful, prosperous, and quickning preaching of the gospel, is likened to the morning, and to the rising of the sun, as it is here by Paul, who calleth the gospel day springing or arising. Also Psal. cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." Here also the gospel is plainly called the womb of the morning, and the day of the power of Christ, where in we are conceived and born the children of God, as dew, to wit, without the labour of men, by the only grace of the Holy Ghost from heaven: the most pleasant comfortable sun Jesus Christ maketh this day, whom the scripture hereupon calleth the sun of righteousness. God faith, Mal. iv. 2. 'Unto you that fear my Name, shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;' for as many as believe in Christ, do receive of him the beams of his grace and righteousness, and do obtain salvation under his wings. Whereupon it is said, Psal. cxviii. 24. 'This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it;' as tho' he had said, thus corporal sun maketh the corporal day, but God himself maketh this day, even he is that sun, from whence those beams and that day come, wherewith the whole world is enlightened. Finally, hereupon he calleth himself 'the light of the world,' John ix. 5. And Psal. xix. 1. 'The heavens declare the glory of God,' that is, even as these bodily heavens do bring the sun and the day, and the sun is carried in them, so the apostles have in themselves, and bring by preaching, the true sun, which is Christ, &c. Whereupon it followeth: "In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out
out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." All this is said of the exceeding pleasant beginning or rising of this day, that is, of the gospel, which the scripture everywhere marvellously sitteth forth; for it is a word which quickneth, maketh glad, willing, cheerful, and ready to do good works, and finally it bringeth with it all good things. Wherefore it is called the gospel or glad tidings, for that it is a pleasant and prosperous message of the grace of God, and of all good things; but who is able to rehearse all those things, which this day revealeth and maketh manifest unto us? For it teacheth all things, what God is, what we are, whatsoever is past, and to come, of heaven, hell, the earth, angels and devils; by this lamp is shewed unto us, how we ought to behave ourselves in all these things, and toward all, from whence we are, and whither we go. Yet nevertheless Satan hath deceived us miserable creatures, that neglecting such a day, whereby all things might be clear and manifest unto us, we seek the truth of philosophers and heathen men, who have not so much as by a dream known any whit of these things, and so we have suffered ourselves to be blinded with men's traditions, and to be thrust back again into the night; for it is not light, whatsoever is not this day, otherwise Paul and the whole scripture should in vain extol this day alone, and call all other beside it the night. Surely the burden of God's displeasure must needs be most grievous, for that, contrary to so plain and manifest places of scripture, we have sought another light, although the Lord himself calleth himself the light and sun of the world; and if other proofs were wanting, this one is sufficient, that universities do so impudently both set up and glory of Aristotle as a light unto them, in whom they exercise themselves much more than in Christ, yea, nothing in Christ, but altogether in Aristotle.

'Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.' As Christ is the sun, and
and the gospel the day, so faith is the light whereby to see and watch in this day; for it would not profit, altho' the sun did shine and make the day, if the eyes did not perceive the light. Wherefore although the gospel be begun and preached in the whole world, yet none are lightened, but they that receive it, and by faith being made capable of the light, do arise out of sleep; but to them as yet sleep this sun and day bring no profit, of which they receive no light, no more than if no sun or day had shined. And this is that reason and hour, whereof he speaketh: 'And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, &c.' It is a spiritual time and season, altho' begun in this outward time, as it doth daily also come, wherein we ought to arise out of sleep, and lay aside the works of darkness; whereby Paul sheweth that he doth not speak to them which are yet void of faith, for, as it is said, he teacheth not faith here, but the works and fruits of faith, when he faith. We know that the time is come, and that the night being passed, the day is at hand; they which believe not, cannot know these things. Now if thou object and say, what reason or cause is there that he should write these things to the faithful, inasmuch as they know that it is time? &c. Thou must call to mind that in the beginning of the exposition of the text of the Apostle, we have said that the office of preaching is of two sorts, one of teaching, another of exhorting and moving; now a man cannot attain unto that knowledge, that it should not be needful that he is always moved, and kept in a continual and fresh meditation of those things which he hath learned, least the devil, the world and the flesh [which are enemies that never grant truce, neither slack their assault] which do make him weary and slothful, that he may at the last sleep, and become altogether negligent in good things; for the devil, faith Peter, is such an enemy, as goeth about continually like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Wherefore he faith, 1 Pet. iv. 7. 'Be ye therefore sober, and watch, Paul also will have us do the same thing here for seeing that the devil, the flesh, and the world keep no mean, nor make any end of fighting against
against us, neither must there be any mean kept, or end made of exhorting, provoking, and moving us to watch and work. Hereupon the Holy Ghost is called an exhorter, inasmuch as he inviteth and moveth us unto good; for the same cause Paul also useth here chosen words: The works of darkness he calleth not armour, but the works of light he calleth armour, not works; undoubtedly that he might shew, that there is a fight, that labour and travel is required; and that it cannot be obtained without peril, to watch and live well, forasmuch as so mighty enemies, the devil, the flesh, and the world do without ceasing fight against us, wherefore Job faith, "The life of man upon earth is a fight and temptation." Now it is not a small matter to stand all our life long in the battle, wherefore there is need of very shrill trumpets and warlike drums, that is, of earnest admonitions and exhortations, whereby we may be stirred up and encouraged to persevere valiantly in the fight. Hereupon now it appeareth, why he calleth good works armour or weapons, and calleth not the works of darkness so, which notwithstanding, if we consent unto them, are also weapons, Rom. vi 13. ' Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness. Again, it is before said, that by light is here signified faith, which from the day of the gospel, by the sun Christ, shineth into our hearts, and enlightneth them, therefore the armour or weapons of light are nothing else but the works of this faith; on the contrary, darkness is infidelity or unbelief, which is by reason of the absence of the gospel as of the day, and of Christ as of the sun. This darkness the devil doth rule, which cometh from the doctrine of men, and the judgment of man's own reason; wherefore the works of darkness are the works of infidelity, for as Christ is the Lord and governor of the light, which we said to be faith, so Paul, Ephef. vi. calleth Satan the prince of darkness, that is, of them which are without faith, and refuse to be obedient to God, as the same Apostle witnesseth, 2 Cor. iv. 3. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world (namely, the devil) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not," left the light of the glorious
Glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. "But what both this armour or weapons of light, and works of darkness are, it is now taught of the Apostle, 'Let us walk honesty as in the day.' No man worketh those things in the day, which he is wont to work in darkness; every one feareth another, and endeavoureth himself to live honestly. It is commonly said, the night is void of shame, which is true, and therefore men do those things in the night, which they would be ashamed to do in the day; but the day is not without shame, and requireth an honest conversation. After the same sort ought a Christian life to be: A Christian ought to commit nothing whereof he may be ashamed, although the whole world should see his works and doings; for he that liveth and worketh so, that he is unwilling that all his works and doings should be seen and heard of all men, and his whole life be manifestly known unto all, liveth a life unworthy of Christ, according to that which our Saviour himself faith, John iii. 20. 'Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, left his deeds should be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.' Hereby it appeareth how necessary it is, that we should be provoked and exhorted to watch, and to put on the armour of light; for what one is there at this day among Christians, which can abide that all his works should be published openly in the night. Now what a Christian life is this, how hypocritically do we live, when as we cannot suffer our life so much as to be disclosed before men, which now is disclosed before God and all his Angels, and in the last day shall be disclosed before all creatures? Wherefore it behoveth a Christian to live so, as he desireth to appear in the last day, and before all. Hereupon Paul faith, 'Walk as the children of light: the fruit of the spirit is goodness and righteousness and truth.' And Rom. xii. 17. 'Provide things honest in the sight of all men.' And 2 Cor. i. 12. 'Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." Howbeit such
such a life shall nothing at all appear, where faith is not, but where a lively, a cheerful and a strong faith is, there such a life cannot be wanting, forasmuch as such a faith is not wearied with well doing, neither sleepeth; wherefore it is no less necessary, to preach to them that have received the doctrine of faith, whereby they may be provoked and stirred up to go on in the good life which they have embraced, and that they suffer not themselves to be overcome by the assaults of the raging flesh, the crafty world, and most subtile Satan. Then it is meet that the doctrine of faith be preached to them that be as yet ignorant of Christ.

'Not in rioting and drunkenness, and in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.' Here he rehearseth the works of darkness by name, one of which he named also before, to wit, sleep, according to that saying, 1 Thess. v. 6. 'Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober.' Not that he forbiddeth natural sleep, but spiritual, which is infidelity, whereof those works of the flesh proceed; howbeit, natural sleep also is a work of darkness, if it be used for pleasure, and through immoderate filling of the belly, so that it is a hindrance to the light, that is, faith, and to the armour thereof. Moreover, these six works of darkness which he here rehearseth, do comprehend all the rest; for, Gal. v. and Colos. iii. he reckoneth up more of them, but we will divide those, which he here rehearseth into two sides, the right and the left. On the right side these four fight with the spirit, gluttony, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness; on the left side forasmuch as the left side in the scripture signifieth adversity) those things which proceed from thence do fight, as are wrath, contention and such like, but the right side signifieth prosperity, and those things which ensue thereof, as delights, gluttony, drunkenness, and overmuch sleep, &c. Now it is sufficiently manifest, that Paul under two works of darkness here rehearseth, namely, contention and envying, doth comprehend the rest also of that sort, among which are 'bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking,' Ephes. iv. 31. And those
Cod Works the Fruits of Faith.

those which he rehearseth in the epistle to the Galatians: 'Hatred, debate, emulation, sedition, heresies, murders, &c.' In fine, hereunto pertaineth whatsoever come of evil anger, either in words or deeds, all which cannot be numbered. After the same sort under those four, gluttony, drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, he committed all well in words and works, which also no man is able to number. And so the present words of the apostle do shew, neither needeth it any further declaration, that by these six works all things are to be understood, whereby they that are void of faith, and are yet in darkness, do live unpurely as concerning themselves, and unjustly toward their neighbours; whose whole life is disordered and out of course both toward themselves and toward others; for there is no man that knoweth not what it is to be gluttonous and drunken, that is, either to eat or drink above a measure necessary for the body; it is well known what it is to sleep in chambers, and to be wanton, that is, to follow the pleasure of the body, both with sleeping above measure, and with other lewd and unchaste gestures and works, which are wont to be committed in chambers of full fed, well tippled, idle and slothful bellies, as well in the day, as in the night, as well when they are alone, as in the resort and company of others. All which things do require even natural darkness, and secret places, and are signified of St. Paul, by chambering and wantonness.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. In these words as it were in fine, he sheweth all the armour of light, when as he exhorteth us, to put on Christ. Now Christ is put on of us after two sorts; first when we are clothed with his righteousness, which is done by faith, wherewith he that is endued, believeth that Christ for him died, and fulfilled all things. For not ours, but Christ's righteousness hath reconciled us to the Father and delivered us from sins; and so to put on Christ pertaineth to the doctrine of faith, which teacheth that Christ was given unto us, and is unto us instead of a pledge. Whereof St. Paul speaketh, Gal. iii. 27.

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ,
Christ have put on Christ." The other manner of putting on Christ is, when we weigh and consider, that he is given unto us, also instead of an example, that we should shew ourselves serviceable, toward our neighbours, being endued with the same virtues, with which we by faith acknowledge that he being adorned, did serve us, that so we may resemble him in all points: and of this manner of putting on Christ St. Paul speaketh here. The same also he willeth us to do, 1 Cor. xv. when he faith, 

"And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." And Ephes. iv. "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness." Now in Christ we see nothing but the armour of light, no gluttony, no drunkenness but fasting, temperance; keeping under the flesh by divers labours, travelling, preaching, praying, and doing well to all men, in him was no place for slothfulness or superfluous sleep, much less for wantonness; but a marvellous chastity and purity; he accustomed himself to watch, to rise early, to lye on the ground in the field, having neither house, chamber, nor bed; in him was no wrath, contention, or brawling, but altogether goodness, sweetness, meekness, charity, mercy, patience, &c. Wherefore as St. Paul faith here briefly, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;' it is as much as that we should set him before us as an example to follow: He teacheth the Colossians the same thing in somewhat more words after this sort: Col. iii. 12. "Put on therefore (as the elect of God holy and beloved) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." And Philip after that he had exhorted them to love one another; and that every man should esteem other better
Good Works the Fruits of Faith.

better than himself, and seek to pleasure, and do for other, he also setteth Christ before them as an example who shewed himself to us our servant, and faith: Phil. ii. 5. "Let this mind be in you, which also was 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." The sum thereof is this: the armour, or weapons of light are good works, contrary to those works of darkness gluttony, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, contention, and envying, such works are, to fast, to watch, to pray, to labour, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, heat, to be chaste, to use modesty, temperance, goodness, and that I do not thrust in too many of mine own words, let us hear St. Paul himself rehearsing them in order, Gal. v. 22. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. But he reheareth them farmore at large, 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2 saying, "We beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain; for he that hath sown the seed in the field is the Son of God: And in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation;" as if he said, Our salvation is now nearer unto us than when we believed; for it would cometopass, that these days of salvation, in which the gospel is preach-ed abroad to the whole world, should appear. It is time therefore to arise out of sleep, ver. 3, 4, &c. "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blam-ed: But in all things approving ourselves as the mini-sters of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the holy Ghost, by love unfeigned; By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live, as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing...
possessing all things." See what a plentiful and verygold-
en stream floweth out of the mouth of St. Paul. Hereof
I think we most plainly perceive, what is the armour of
light, wherewith we must be fenced and fortified both
on the right hand and on the left. Now this most fully
agreeeth with the matter, whereas he setteth before us a
most excellent and perfect example, namely, the Lord
himself, saying, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;' for he
is a sluggishe beast, and not a man, who when he seeth
his Lord fast, suffer hunger, labour, watch and to be
weary, yet giveth himself to gluttony, sleep and plea-
sures. What Lord could take these things at his ser-
vant's hand, nay, what servant durst presume to do these
things. So it cannot be, that a Christian man should not
be ashamed, when he beholdeth Christ, and seeth himself
so unlike unto him, yea, occupied in quite contrary
things. For whom the example of Christ himself doth not
stir him up, exhort, and move, who can bring or stir up
him unto goodness? What would the leaves of words
do with their small noise, if these thunderings of the
example of Christ do not move; and surely for this
cause, St. Paul of purpose adjoined this word, Lord,
saying, 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,' as if he said,
count it no great nor burthensome thing, to stand and
fight in this armour of light, ye that are servants, behold
your Lord, who when he had no need, did notwithstand-
ing, so well and valiantly use this armour, and fought
in it for you. ' And make not provision for the flesh, to
fulfil the lusts thereof.' The apostle in these few words
hath noted two cares of the flesh; one is natural, whereby
necessary food and apparel is provided for the body, that
it may live, and be able to sustain his labour, least that
it be by overmuch abstinence weakened, and made un-
profitable to work; the other care is joined with sin,
when the body is provided for to fulfil the lusts thereof,
and that it may be delighted; this care the apostle here
forbideth, for it ingendreth the works of darkness, so
to pamper and make of the flesh, which is continually
so to chastised, that it may be obedient to the spirit,
and may not shake off the fitter, like unto an untamed
horse
Good Works the Fruits of Faith.

The body, altho' that chastising is so to be tempted, that the body notwithstanding may do his duty, and bear theitter. For as the 'fodder, a wand, and burdens, are for the as; and bread, correction, and work for a servant,' Ecclesiast. xxxiii. 24. He doth not say that thou shalt flea or slay the as; neither that thou shalt kill the servant, or cast him into prison; so unto the body, thechastising and labour thereof is due, and necessary food is not to be withheld from it. St. Paul himself faith, 'I keep under my body, and bring it unto subjection.' He faith not, I cast it into sickness, or I kill it, but I subdue it to the spirit, that it may serve; and be obedient thereunto. Moreover these words, 'to fulfil the lusts thereof,' St. Paul added because of two sorts of men, whereof thefirst under a pretence of natural necessity, do satisfy theirpleasure, and cover that practice under this false pre-tence. We are so prone and ready unto this, that evenmany of the saints have very much complained of thisevil, and because of it, have oftentimes above measure,afflicted their bodies; for the flesh is so crafty and mar-vellous subtle to prepare delights for itself, that no man can sufficiently take heed of it, yea, it is needful thataman here do never leave to care and fear. The other sort of men are those blind holy ones, which think that the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof con-sisteth in meats and drink, and in chosen apparel, and dobesides their own works regard nothing; when theyhave so fasted, that they have made their head diseased, and their stomach distempered, and do bring unto theirbody some great infirmity, or sickness, they then thinkthat they have been marvellous holy, and have wroughtincomparable good works. But St. Paul faith, 'meatcommendeth us not to God, for neither if we eat are we thebetter; neither if we eat not are we the worser.' AndColos. ii, he writeth thus much in effect: Beware of wor-shipping of angels, which have a shew of wisdom, because of humbleness and superstitition, whereby they spare not the body, while they withdraw from it the measure offood due unto it, bestowing nothing upon it whereby itmay be fed. This preposterous worshipping of angels, yea, indeed superstitition, did so deceive Germain, other-
wife a notable man, that he praised the charter-house monks, for that they did so constantly abstain from flesh, that even when they were sick, they would eat none, although they might preserve themselves even from death thereby. But what if God should judge them as killers of their own body? For there can be none at all either ordinance or order, yet, or vow, contrary to the commandment of God, and if there be any such, surely it ought to be of no force, even as if thou hadst vowed adultery. Now God both here by St. Paul, and elsewhere, hath commanded that necessary provision should be made for the body, and hath forbidden, that we should procure the death of it: wherefore those things that are profitable to preserve it, whether they be flesh, or eggs, or any thing else, must be given unto it, in what day or time soever, whether it be the first or first day of the week, whether it be in Lent, or after Easter, in the mean season, whatsoever orders, laws, and vows, yea, even of the Pope being neglected. For it is not lawful for any man, no not for the angels to forbid any thing against the commandment of God. Howbeit, this madness proceedeth from that darkness and blindness, whereby miserable men do regard the work only, and think that they shall obtain salvation through the greatness and multitude of works. But St. Paul willeth, that our fasting and other chastings of the flesh be the weapons of light, whereby the works of darkness may be overcome, and not the body destroyed; wherefore there ought to be no other use among Christians of fasting, watchings and labours. As it is alone before God whether thou eat flesh or flesh; whether thou drink wine or water; whether thou wear red or green garments; all these are the good creatures of God, made unto this end, that we may use them have regard only to this, that thou mayest usethem with a mean and mayst abstain thy self so much from them, as shall suffice to overcome the works of darkness. Wherefore it is impossible, that a common manner of this abstinence should be appointed indifferently to all, for the constitution of all men's bodies is not alike, it is above measure to one, which
Good Works the Fruits of Faith.

289
to another is under measure; one hath need of much, another of little, and therefore it is meet that every one have regard of himself, and govern his own body, according to the present doctrine of St. Paul, whereas he faith, ' Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof,' that is, obey the wisdom thereof so far that ye deny not the necessary things which it requireth, but grant it not those things, which it requireth to the fulfilling of the lusts thereof, more than necessity to pleasure only. If a better rule of moderation could have been given besides this, St. Paul would not have concealed it.

Hereby thou seest, that the popish ordinances, which forbid the eating of flesh and certain meats, are quite contrary to the gospel; which St. Paul hath plainly foretold, 1 Tim. iv. 1. "Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving." No man surely can deny that these words do briefly reprove the orders of Monks, and sacrificing priests, so clear and manifest are both these words, and also their preposterous religion. Moreover thou seest here also, godly reader, that St. Paul doth not teach that dotage and manfully holiness of certain, which choose unto themselves certain days, wherein to fast to certain saints, one to this, another to that, all which are blind proceedings, and builded upon their own works. True religion is without choice of meats and days, all the life long to use modesty and sobriety. For seeing that these must be the armour of light, and that it is requisite that our life be undefiled and chaste, it behoveth us surely never to put off this armour, but we must be found always sober, temperate, watching, labouring and praying. But those doting holy ones, one day eat nothing but bread and water, and afterward three whole months they daily be drunken and eat excessively, even until they be not well in their wits. Others fast so that at the evening they eat no meat, but in the mean time, they make themselves drunk with drinking: Who is able to rehearse all
Of rejoicing in God.

all their dotages, and all their works of darkness; all which proceed from hence, for that foolish men consider and regard the work, and not use the use of the work, they make their armour of glass, they are altogether ignorant whereunto it is profitable to fast and abstain; they are like unto him which carried a sword unto the end, that he might look upon it and knew not how to use it, when he was beaten. These things may suffice to have been spoken for the exposition of this text.

SERMON XIX.

Wherein is taught how the faithful ought to rejoice in God, and let their patient Mind be known unto Men.

(Phil. iv. 4. to the 7.) Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice, &c.

This text indeed is but short, nevertheless it doth most plentifully abound with right Christian doctrine, instructing first how we ought to behave ourselves toward God, secondly, how toward our neighbours, saying, first, 'Rejoice in the Lord alway.' This joy is a fruit of faith, most certainly following it, as St. Paul witnesseth, Gal. v. 22. where he faith: 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.' Neither can it be, that that heart should rejoice in the Lord, which hath not yet believed in him. Whereupon it cometh to pass, that where no faith is, there can be nothing but fear, trembling, horror, and sadness, as often as such either remember God, or hear him named, yea, hatred and enmity of God remaineth in such hearts, the cause whereof is, for that the heart void of faith, findeth itself defiled with sins, whereby it doubted not but that it hath deserved the vengeance of God, that sins cannot be but hated of God, which is just, and so when it doth not believe that God will be merciful and favourable unto it, how can it not but de-
Of rejoicing in God.

Of all memory of him? so far is it off that it can rejoice in the Lord, the revenger of sins. These two things, the knowledge of sin, and the vengeance of God prepared for sins are in the heart of the unbeliever, which heart as it is unbelieving, so hath it no hope of pardon, and therefore what other thing can these things work in it, but cause it to be troubled, cast down, always fearful, and greatly terrified, and to think that the vengeance of God doth every moment hang over it, that so that may be verified, which Solomon faith: 'The ungodly fleeth when no man pursueth him.' And that which is said, Deut. xxviii. 65: 'The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee.' If a man will much persuade such a heart, to have joy in the Lord, he shall do even as if he persuaded the water that it should burn like unto the fire, for it can taste none of this joy, it always feeleth in conscience, that the revenging hand of God, is heavy upon it. Whereupon the prophet faith, Psal. xxxii. 11: 'Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.' For this joy in the Lord cannot but be in the righteous and them that are upright in heart; and therefore it is manifest, that this part of scripture was written not for sinners, but to the righteous and saints. Sinners must first be shewed, how they may be delivered from sins, and may obtain God to be favourable unto them, which when they have learned and so obtained, it followeth, that they do of their own accord rejoice in the Lord, being delivered from remorse of conscience. But if any demand, how one may be delivered from remorse of conscience, and have God merciful unto him, that is declared before at large, and shall be hereafter copiously spoken of. He which seeketh to have a free and glad conscience, and God gentle and favourable, let him not begin at his own works, as the deceitful Papists teach, only tormenting consciences, and increasing the wrath of God, but let him despair of himself and of all his own works, let him embrace God in Christ, having a sure faith the gospel, that he shall receive whatsoever it promiseth. But the gospel promiseth that
Of rejoicing in God.

Christ is given unto us, that he may take away our sins and be our High Priest, Mediator, and Advocate before God, that so we may nothing doubt, but that our sins through Christ only, and his works are forgiven us, and that we are reconciled to God, and that by this means our conscience is delivered and comforted.

When such a faith possesseth the heart, and the gospel is so received indeed, then God appeareth sweet and altogether loving, neither feeleth the heart any thing but the favour and grace of God, it standeth with a strong and bold confidence, it feareth not least any evil come unto it, it being quiet from all fear of vengeance and displeasure, is merry and glad of so incomparable grace and goodness of God given unto it freely and most abundantly in Christ. Wherefore there must needs forthwith proceed from such a love, faith, joy, peace, gladness, giving of thanks, praise, and a certain marvellous delight in God, as in a most dear and favourable father, which dealeth so fatherly with us, and poureth forth his gifts so plentifully and in such great a measure, upon them that do not deserve them. Behold of such joy, St. Paul speaketh here, which truly where it is, there can be no place for sin, or fear of death or hell, yea, nothing is there, but a joyful, quiet, and omnipotent trust in God, and in his favour. Wherefore it is called joy in the Lord, not in gold or silver, gluttony or drunkenness, delicacies or singing, health, knowledge, wisdom, power, glory, friendship, favour, nor in good works, holiness, or whatsoever is without God. Of these thou shalt take but a deceitful and vain joy, which cannot pierce the heart, or enter unto the bottom thereof, whereof thou mayest rightly say that which is wont to be spoken as a proverb among the Germans; This man rejoiceth, but he feeleth not any joy in his heart. There is one full and perfect joy, which the believers take of and in the Lord, which is nothing else, than to commit themselves unto him, and of him alone to rejoice trust and presume, as a most favourable and loving father. WHATSOEVER joy is not after this sort, the Lord
Lord doth contemn and reject it, whereof Jeremiah speaketh, ix. 23. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me." And St. Paul faith, 'Let him that rejoiceth rejoice in the Lord.' He addeth, that we must rejoice always, where he toucheth them, which only half the time do rejoice in the Lord, and praise him; that is, when all things fall out according to their desire, but when adversity cometh, they change joy with sadness and sorrow, of whom the 48th Psalm speaketh, 'So long as thou dost well unto him he will speak good of thee.' But the prophet himself faith, not so: 'I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth,' Psal. xxxiv. 1. And he hath just cause for, for who shall hurt him, unto whom God is merciful; surely sin shall not hurt him, neither death nor hell; wherefore the prophet faith in another place: 'Yea tho' I walk thro' the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,' Psal. xxiii, 4. and Paul faith, Rom. viii. 35. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Again I say rejoice." This repetition of the apostle confirmeth his exhortation, and truly not without a cause, forasmuch as we live in the midst of sins, and therefore in the midst of tribulation, both which do move us unto sadness and heaviness. Wherefore the apostle purposing to comfort us against these, exhorteth us that we should always rejoice in the Lord, altho' we sometimes fall into sins. For it is meet, the more God with his goodness exceedeth the evil of sin; so much more always to rejoice in him, when we are sorrowful because of our sins, which altho' by nature they bring sadness and sorrow with them, yet forasmuch as they cannot bring so much hurt, as Christ, if we believe in him bringeth profit and safety, joy in the Lord.
Of rejoicing in God.

ought always to have the first place with us, and for we must always think on that which John writeth; 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins,' 1 John ii. 1. Let your moderation be known unto all men.' He hath already taught, how men ought to behave themselves toward God, namely, that they must serve him with a cheerful heart and continual joy; now he declareth in few words, how the believers ought to behave themselves toward men, saying, 'Let your moderation be known unto all men.' Which words are thus much in effect; Be joyful toward God, always rejoicing in and of him, but toward men be of a patient mind, and pliant, applying yourselves to all, and so behaving yourselves, that ye be ready to do and suffer all things, and to yield in every thing, as much as may be by any means without transgressing the commandment of God, whereby ye may approve yourselves to all men, and please all in that which is good; not only hurting none, but also taking in good worth all things of all men, interpreting aright the sayings of all men, and accepting them in the better part, that men may plainly see you to be them, unto whom all things are alike, which take in good part whatsoever betideth you, which stick in nothing, which would not disagree with any man for any cause, which be rich with the rich, poor with the poor, rejoicing with them that rejoice, weeping with them that weep, and to be brief, be made all things to all men, that all men must needs acknowledge that ye are grievous to none, but agreeable, of a patient mind, pliant, and obedient toward all in all things. The Greek word ἐπιευές which the apostle here useth, meaneth the same, which signifies in our tongue a patient and pliant mind, whereby one doth so apply and shew himself indifferent to others, that he is the same to one that he is to another, applying himself differently to the will of all, not requiring himself to be counted for a rule, whereunto the rest ought to apply and order themselves. An old interpreter translateth it modesty, which, if thou understand it aright, and not
for the only moderation and temperance of meat and apparel, as it is want commonly to be taken, is not altogether unprofitably translated, namely, if thou understand it to be a virtue; whereby one thinking modestly of himself, endeavoureth to order and apply himself unto all, according to the capacity and ability of every one, ready to permit, to take in good part, to obey, to give place, to do, to omit, to suffer all things, as he shall see it will profit his neighbour, altho' he must suffer hindrance and loss of his substance, name, and body thereby. That these things may be made more plain, it shall be good to declare them by examples, St. Paul 1 Cor. ix. 20. writeth thus of himself: "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ; that I might gain them that are without law." Behold, thou seest here the patient and pliant mind rightly observing those things which are here commanded. For those things that he writeth of himself have this meaning; sometimes he did eat, drink and do all things as a Jew, altho' it was not necessary, that he should so do; sometimes he did eat and drink with the Gentiles, and did all things as free from the law; for only faith in God, and love toward our neighbour, are necessarily required, all other things are free, so that we may freely observe them for one man's sake, and omit them for another man's sake, as we shall perceive it to be profitable to every one. Now it is contrary to this modesty or meekness, if one having an impatient mind, trusteth to his own wit, and contendeth that one thing among the rest is necessary, which thou must neither omit or observe, and so applying himself unto none, but contending to have all others to apply themselves unto him, he neglecteth and perverteth the softness and meekness which is here taught, yea, and the liberty of faith also; such some of the Jews were, unto whom we must give no place, even as St. Paul yielded unto them. We see the same example commonly in Christ, but especially Mat. xii. and Mat. ii. where were read
read that he suffered his disciples to break the sabbath, and he himself also, when the case so required, did break it; when it was otherwise, he did keep it, whereof he gave this reason, 'The Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath.' Which is as much to say as the sabbath is free, that thou mayest break it for one man's sake and advantage, and for the sake and advantage of another thou mayest keep it; so Paul caused Timothy to be circumcised because of the Jews, for that they thought that it was of importance to their salvation; again he would not have Titus circumcised, because certain Jews did unjustly urge it, so that the circumcision of Titus would have been rather a confirmation of error unto them, than have profited them any thing. Paul therefore would keep circumcision free, that he might sometimes use it, and sometimes not use it, as he should perceive it to be profitable to every one.

So, to come to other matters, when the Pope commandeth to make confession, to fast, to abstain from, or use this or that kind of meat, &c. and exacteth these things as necessary to salvation, they are utterly to be contemned, and those things that are contrary to these, are most freely to be done; but if he should not command them as necessary, if any man might be helped or edified in any thing by the observation of them; surely they were to be observed, but freely and of love only, as also they are to be omitted, if the omitting of them may be profitable to any. The reason of this liberty is this. The Son of man is Lord of the sabbath; if of the sabbath, how much more of the traditions of men? Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon this liberty, it cannot hurt any, but to observe them of necessity, it extinguisheth faith and the gospel; likewise if one live, yet as in a monastery, if he observe the vows and ordinances of that life upon Christian liberty, and of love to his brethren that he may edify them, and of no necessity, neither with the hindrance of his own or other men's salvation, he shall do godly for he is free; but if those things he straightly required as necessary to salvation, then before thou suffer thyself to be brought into this error, monasteries, shavings, hoods, vows, rules,
rules, ordinances, and all such like must be left, and the contrary must be done, to witness, that only faith and love are necessary for a Christian, and that all other things are free, so that he may either omit or do them for the edifying and cause of them with whom he liveth. Whatsoever thou shalt observe upon liberty and love, is godly; but if thou observe any thing of necessity, it is ungodly. The same is to be said, of all other ordinances and decrees of men, which are want to be observed in monasteries, that whatsoever doth not agree with the word of God, thou mayest being free either observe or omit it, according as thou shalt know it to be profitable and acceptable to them, with whom thou art conversant; but if they be required as necessary, reject them all utterly, and tread them under thy feet. Hereupon thou now seest what a devilish thing the papacy and monasteries be; for whatsoever things be free and to be permitted to free love only, they make them necessary, and say the keeping of them is of importance to salvation, whereby truly as much as is in them they together pervert and extinguish the gospel and faith. I pass over with silence, that they hereupon set and fell the care of the belly instead of the service of God; for how many among them at this day do for God's cause, and not rather for their belly's sake, take upon them to be monks or clerks do frequent the choir, sing, pray, say mass, or do any such thing, wherein they counterfeit and corrupt the true worship and service of God? The common subversion of all monasteries were the best reformation of all these things, from which so much disadvantage, and no whit of profit, may be looked for. Before our monastery could be persuaded concerning true Christian liberty, infinite thousands of souls in others should perish; wherefore forasmuch as they bring no advantage at all, neither is there any need of them, and they are a cause of greater hindrance to a Christian common wealth, than can be thought, and cannot by any means be reformed, what can be more profitable, than that they be utterly overthrown and abolished? Moreover, that we may admonish here concerning the civil
Of rejoicing in God.

civil magistrate, when he commandeth or requireth any thing, yea, if he compel thereunto we must obey, for there cometh no loss of Christian liberty or of faith hereby, forasmuch as they do not contend that those things are necessary to salvation which they do ordain or require, but only to maintain outward rule, public tranquility and government, and so the conscience remaineth free. Wherefore, forasmuch as it doth nothing hinder faith to do those things which the civil magistrate commandeth, but doth also profit the common weal, it shall be without doubt a point of Christian obedience to endeavour to do them with a willing mind, that we may be such as are pliant and agreeable to all men, willing to do all things, ready to observe well of every one, and to gratify all. Howbeit if any should contend that those commandments of the civil magistrate be necessary to salvation, then, as it is said of the traditions of the Papists, the contrary rather were to be done, or at the least it were to be witnessed, that thou dost them only for the common weal’s sake, because it is profitable to others, and not that thou mayest obtain salvation by them; which we have gotten by Christ Jesus alone, as many of us as believe in him. According to this doctrine and the example before-mentioned every one ought to behave himself in every thing and toward all men, as Paul here teacheth, that he stick not to his own judgment or right, and that he shew himself pliant to others, and have regard of those things, which he shall know will be acceptable and profitable to his neighbours. When therefore it doth nothing hinder thy faith, and profiteth thy neighbour to yield somewhat of thy own right if thou do it not, thou art without charity, and neglectefst that Christian softness and patient mind that Paul here speaketh of; yea, if thou haft regard hereof, as he that truly believeth in Christ ought to have, thou must take it patiently even when any man doth injury unto thee, or endamage thee; and so interpret it in the better part, and always think on that which that martyr when all his substance was taken from him, said, ‘But they shall not take away Christ from me.’ So whatsoever chanceth unto thee, say thou, I have as yet suffered no loss.
Of rejoicing in God.

loss of my faith, why should I not take it in good part, which my neighbour hath done? Why should I not yield unto him, and apply myself to his will? Thou canst scarce find a more manifest example hereof, than between two unseigned friends, for as they behave themselves one toward another, so ought a Christian to behave himself toward every one. Either of them endeavoureth to gratify other, either of them giveth place to other, suffereth, doth, and omittheth whatsoever he seeth to be for the profit and advantage of the other, and that freely without all constraint. Either of them doth diligently apply himself to the will of the other, neither of them compelleth other to follow his mind, and if one should use the goods of another, the other would not be offended, but would take it in good part, and would not grudge rather to give more, and that I may speak briefly, between such there is no exactation of law, no grudging, no constraint, no necessity, but liberty, favour, and good will. On the contrary, such as are impatient and obstinate, which take nothing in good part of any man, but go about to make all things subject to their own will, and to order all things according to their own judgment, such I say trouble the world, and are the cause of all discords, contentions, wars, and whatsoever difference there is, and say afterward, that they did those things for the love of justice, that they endeavoured to defend that which is right: So that that heathen man said not amiss, *Extreme rigour is extreme injury.* And Solomon also faith; Ecclef. vii. 16. 'Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself overwise;' for as extreme rigour is extreme injury, so too great wisdom is extreme folly; which also is meant by this common saying, When wise men dote they dote beyond measure, Surely if God should deal with us according to right, we should perish in a moment; wherefore, as Paul praiseth in him this moderation of right, and incomparable patience and gentleness, saying. 2 Cor. x. 1. 'I Paul myself beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ,' so it is also meet that we do observe a measure of our judgment, right, wisdom, prudence, and in all things apply
apply ourselves to the profit of others. But let us weigh the words of the Apostle, for they are placed not without a spiritual skilfulness; he faith, 'Let your moderation be known unto all men.' Where thou must not think that he commandeth thee to be made known unto all men, or that thou oughtest to tell thymoderation before all men; for he faith not, tell it forth, but let itbeknown, that is, endeavour to pra&ife it toward men; I do not command that ye should think or speak of it, but that ye labour that it may be known indeed; while all men do try and feel it, that no man may say any other thing of you, than that ye be of a patient mind, and pliant, and applying yourselves to all men, being enforced so to say even by manifest experience. So that if any man were never so much bent to speak otherwife of you, his mouth might be stopped by the testimony of all other, witnessing of your patient mind and meekness; so faith Chrift,Mat. v. 16. 'Let your light so shine beforemen, that they may seeyourgoodworks, andglorifyyourFather which is in heaven.' And Petersfaith, iPet.ii. 12. "Hav-}
thing at the best, and most gently bear whatsoever they say or do, but toward the poor they shew no gentleness or meekness, neither take any things of them in good part; so we are all ready to do for our children, parents, friends and kinsmen, and most favourably interpret and willingly bear whatsoever they have committed. How often do we even praise the manifest vices of our friends, or at least wink at them, and apply ourselves most fitly unto them? But to our enemies and adversaries we impart none of this favour; in them we can find nothing that is good, nothing that is to be born, nothing that can be interpreted in the better part, but we dispraise every thing and take it at the worst. Against such imperfect patient minds Paul here speaketh, saying, 'Let your moderation be made known unto all men;' he will have our patient mind, and right Christian meekness, to be perfect and entire toward all, whether they be enemies or friends; he will have us suffer and take in good part all things of all men, without all respect either of persons or deserts. And such without doubt will our patient mind be, if it be true and not counterfeit; no otherwise than gold remaineth gold, whether a godly or ungodly man possesseth it; and the silver, which Judas who betrayed the Lord had, was not turned into ashes, but remained that which it was, as truly all the good creatures of God, whosoever have them; do continue toward all things that which they are: So a patient mind which is sincere, coming of the spirit, continueth like itself whether it light upon enemies or friends, poor men or rich. But our nature, which is full of deceit and plainly corrupt, doth so behave itself, as if that which is gold in the hand of Peter, were turned into a coal in the hand of Judas, and it is wont to be patient and pliant toward rich men, great personages, strangers, friends, and not toward every one, wherefore it is false, vain vile, hypocritical; and nothing but deceit and mockery before God. Hereof now learn how far from being found and entire, spiritual meekness and a patient mind is unto nature, and how few there be which mark this evil, by reason of that deceitful meekness and patient mind, though in outward shew very goodly, which
which they shew unto some, thinking that they do well and justly, in that they are more hard and impatient toward others; for so their defiled and filthy nature teacheth them, by her goodly reason, which always judgeth, and doth against the spirit and those things that are of the spirit, because, as Paul saith, Rom. viii. 5. 'They that are after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh.' But to conclude, it is manifest that the Apostle hath comprehended in these few words the whole life worthy of a Christian, which he ought to lead toward his neighbour; for he that is of a patient mind, pliant and meek indeed, studieth to deserve well of all men, as well concerning the body as concerning the soul, as well in deed as in words, and doth also bear with a patient mind, the offences and malice of others. Where such a mind is, there is also love, joy, peace, long-suffering 'gentleness, goodness,' and whatsoever is the fruit of the spirit, Gal. v. 22. But here flesh murmureth: If we should endeavour to be so meek and patient, faith the flesh, that we should take all things in good part of all men, it would come to pass, that no man should be able to keep a piece of bread safely and in peace, for the unjust which would abuse our meekness and patient mind, they would take away all things, yea, they would not suffer us to live. Mark how comfortably and abundantly the Apostle doth satisfy this distrusting and foolish thinking even from this place unto the end of this text, 'The Lord is at hand; as though he said, If there were no Lord or no God, one might fear, when by his meekness and patient mind he counteth all things alike, and taketh all things in good part, that that would be damage and hurt unto him; but now there not only is a Lord, which governeth all things most justly, but he is also at hand, he cannot forget or forsake thee, be thou only of a patient mind and gentle toward all, let him have the care of thee, nourish, and preserve thee. He hath given Christ the eternal good, how should not he also give things necessary for the belly? He hath far more than can be taken away from thee, and thou forasmuch as thou hast Christ, hast much more than the whole world; here-
hereunto pertaineth that which is said, Psal. Iv. 22. 

'Caft thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustaine thee. 

And i Pet. v. 7. 'Cafting all your care upon him, for he careth for you. And Christ faith, Mat. vi. 26. 'Behold the fowls of the air, consider the lilies of the field, &c.' 

All which agree with the present consolation of the Apostle, and have the same meaning which these words here have: 'The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing.' That is, take no care at all for yourselves, let God care for you, who knoweth and is able to do it, whom ye have now known that he is good and gracious. 

The heathen have not without a cause care of this present life, inasmuch as they are ignorant, and do not believe that they have a God who hath care of all, as Christ Mat. vi. 31. said, "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Wherefore let the whole world take from thee, and do thee injury, thou shalt always have sufficient, and it cannot be that thou shouldst perish with any adversity, unless they have first taken from thee thy God; but who can take him from thee, if thou thyself dost not cast him off? There is no cause therefore that we should be careful seeing that he is our Father and provideth for us, which hath all things in his own hand, even those which seem to take away those things that be ours from us, and to endamage and hurt us wherein forever they are able. But we have exceeding great cause always to rejoice in the Lord, when we are of a patient mind toward all men, forasmuch as we are certain, if so be that we believe, that it can by no means come to pass, that good things should be wanting unto us, having Almighty God our favourable and careful Father; whom they that have not, let us suffer them to be troubled with care. It ought to be our only care, how we may be void of care, and be found always joyful in God; and meek, and of a patient mind toward men: So without doubt we shall try that which David tried, Psal. xxxvii. 25. saying, "I have been young and now am old: yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his feed
feed begging bread;” and that which he faith, Psal. xl. 
‘The Lord careth for me. But in every thing by prayer 
and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests 
bemade known unto God. In these words the Apostle 
teacheth, how our care is to be cast upon God, and the 
meaning of that which he faith is this, Only be not care-
ful, but if any thing chance which may make you care-
ful (as indeed innumerable such are wont to come unto 
those that live in the world) so behave yourselves, that 
ye attempt nothing at all with your care, whatsoever 
that shall be which chanceth unto you, but calling off 
care, turn yourselves with prayer and supplication into 
God, and desire him that he will bring to pass and fi-
nish that which yourselves otherwise should in vain have 
attempted with, your care to accomplish. Howbeit desire 
this with giving of thanks, forasmuch as ye have such 
a God as hath care of you, and unto whom ye may 
safely commit all care for you; but he that will not so 
behave himself when any thing happeneth, but will first 
weigh all things by his own reason, and order them 
according to his own judgment, and so take to himself 
the care of his things, he shall wrap himself in inna-
merable disadvantages, he shall lose all joy and quietness 
thereby, and yet shall prevail nothing but labour in 
vain, and plunge himself so much more in troubles and 
miseries, that he shall not be able to escape out of them 
again, which we learn daily both by our own and by 
other men’s experience. Now that which Paul here 
admonisheth concerning prayer tendeth unto this end, 
left that any man should neglect all things and commit 
them to God, and he himself sleep and do nothing at 
all, no not so much as once pray for them; for he that 
should use this slothfulness, altho’ he were now quiet, 
shall easily be wrapped in cares, whereof he shall not be 
able to rid himself; we must do our endeavour and not 
sleep, and therefore it is that many things be incident, 
which are wont to bring carefulness, whereby we might 
be as it were compelled to pray unto God. Wherefore 
Paul hath not in vain joined together those two: “Be 
careful for nothing: but, In every thing by prayer and sup-
plication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made 
known
Of rejoicing in God. Nothing and every thing do indeed greatly differ, howbeit the Apostle therefore put them together, that he might signify that it cannot be but that many and innumerable things be incident, which are wont to bring care, but that in all them we ought to admit no carefulness, but always fly unto prayer, and commit them all unto God and desire of him those things whereof we have need. Now we must here see how our prayer must be framed, and what is the true manner of praying. The Apostle setteth down four quefts or petitions. Prayer is those words or speech, wherein as sometimes something is desired, so also other things are declared, as is the the Lord’s prayer and the Psalms. Supplication is when the petition is urged or made more earnest by something, as when one prayeth for his father, or for some other thing which is dear and excellent unto him, as when we pray unto God by his mercy, by his Son, by his promise, by his name, &c. As Solomon, Psal. cxxxii. 1. ‘Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions. And Paul, Rom. xii. 1. I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God.’ And 2 Cor. x. 1. ‘ I Paul myself beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ,’ &c. A petition or request is, when we name that which is desired, and for which prayer and supplication is made, as in the Lord’s prayer, all that composition of words is called prayer, but those seven things for which we pray, as hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, &c. are petitions, according to that saying, Mat. vii. 7. ‘Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.’ Giving of thanks is when the benefits of God are rehearsed, whereby faith in God is strengthened, and stirred up so much more confidently to look for that which is desired, and for which we do pray; wherefore prayer urgeth or earnestly asketh by supplication, but is strengthened and made sweet and acceptable by giving of thanks, and so by this strength and sweetness it prevaleth, and obtaineth whatsoever it asketh. This manner of prayer we read to have been used in the church, and among the
of rejoicing in God.

holy fathers of the old Testament, which were wont always in their prayers to ask with supplication and giving of thanks; the same also we see in the Lord's prayer, which beginneth with giving of thanks and with praise, when as even in the beginning thereof we confess God a father, unto whom the godly mind hath access by his fatherly love, and by the love of his Son, unto which supplication nothing may be compared; wherefore it is both the best and most excellent prayer of all which may be had. Moreover in these words Paul hath very well expressed the mystery of the golden censure in the old Testament, whereof we read many things in the books of Moses; it was lawful for the priests only to burn incense, now all we which believe in Christ are priests, wherefore it is lawful for us all, and for us only to burn the incense of prayers. The censer that golden vessel, is the words which we utter in prayer, surely golden and precious, as those are whereof the Lord's prayer consisteth, the Psalms, and other prayers of the scripture; for commonly in the scripture vessels signify words, for that our meanings are contained in words as in a vessel, and by words are uttered and received as out of a vessel, as wine, water, burning coals, and such like, are contained in vessels, and taken out of vessels; so by the cup of Babylon, Apoc. 17. the doctrine of men is understood, and by the cup wherein the blood of Christ is drunk, the gospel. Furthermore burning coals, whereupon the frankincense was laid, signify giving of thanks, and rehearsing of benefits in prayer, which we are wont to do in making supplication; for, that by fiery coals benefits are signified, it is manifest even out of the 12th to the Rom. where the Apostle reciteth the saying of Solomon, Prov. xxv. 21. If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. And benefits may be rightly called coals of fire, forasmuch as they inflame the heart with love, although it be cold. In the law it was prohibited to lay the frankincense upon any other coals, but them that were of the altar of the Lord, which signifieth that we must not rehearse our own good deeds in prayer, as that Pharisee
Of rejoicing in God.

Pharisee did, Luke xv. but only the benefits of God bestowed upon us in Christ. He is our altar, by him we must offer, for the benefits received by him we must give thanks, and make mention of them in prayer for the increasing of our faith. This St. Paul teacheth, Colos.iii.17. where he saith, "Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him." For God cannot suffer, that thou shouldst glory in any thing else in his sight, which he declared in type or figure, Levit. x. where we read that Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron were taken and consumed of the flame from the Altar of God, because they burned incense, taking other fire than of the altar of the Lord. The works of Christ only are acceptable to God, wherefore for these only we must both give thanks and rejoice in prayer. The incense signifieth the Petitions made in prayer; for petitions are, whereof prayer consisteth, and which ascend unto God, according as St. Paul faith, "Let your requests be made known unto God," wherein he seemeth to have considered and interpreted them as a favour ascending from the center. As though he had said, when ye shall burn incense sweet and acceptable unto the Lord, make, that your petitions be shewed unto God with supplication and giving of thanks, this incense and this favour as it is most sweet unto God, so doth it ascend straight unto heaven like vapours of smoke, and entereth even unto the throne of God; and as burning coals do give a strong favour, and make it ascend upward; so the memory of the benefits of God, which we rehearse by giving of thanks, and whereof we do as it were advertise God and ourselves both, make prayer stedfast and bold, which cheerfully and gladly ascendeth into heaven, without which, truly prayer faineth, is cold and of no force. Wherefore whosoever thou art, before thou pray with faith and effectually, thy heart must be inflamed with the memory of the benefits, which God hath bestowed upon us in Christ. But perhaps some men will demand how our petitions are made known or become manifest unto God, seeing then they are not only known unto him before we pray, but he also doth send us that, U 2 which
which we ask? Whereunto I answer; the apostle adjoined this, that he might teach, of what true prayer ought to be, viz. assured and having confidence and trust in God, which passeth not away into the wind, neither is made at adventure, as their prayer is, which pray, and have no regard whether God hear or not, yea, rather believe, that he doth not hear, which undoubtedly is not to pray or to ask of God, but to tempt and mock God. For if any man did desire money of me, whom I certainly knew, not to persuade himself that he should receive it, I could not suffer such an asker, of whom I might assure myself to be mocked; how much more is God offended at our much crying out and babbling, when we do continually babble much, and cry out, and do not think at all whether he heareth us. Learn therefore here, that thy petitions must be shewed unto God, that is that thou must so ask, that thou doubt not, that thy petitions be known and accepted of God, and believe certainly that thou shalt obtain whatsoever thou dost ask, with which faith if thou be endued, it shall so come unto thee indeed. For as we believe, so it cometh unto us. Wherefore, as the smoak carrieth favour upward from the censer; so faith carrieth the petitions of the believers into the sight of God, whereby we assuredly believe that our petitions shall come unto God, and that we shall undoubtedly obtain those things that we ask. St. Paul by these words (be made known) did undoubtedly mean that which is often in the Psalms; `God hath heard my petition, Give ear Lord unto my prayer,' and such like. Hereof Christ speaketh, Mat. xxii. 22. and Mark xi. 24. `Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing ye shall receive. And James faith, chap. i. Ask in faith and waver not, for he that wavereth shall receive nothing of the Lord.' Who may not now hereof perceive, that that much babbling, and crying out which is made commonly through the world in monasteries, is a mocking and deluded of God? The prayers of these, if they may be called prayers, are abundantly shewed before me, for they cry out and babble too much, but there is no regard of them with God, they
Of rejoicing in God.

they are not known of him, neither come they unto his ears, that is, he doth by no means hear them, for that they do not believe, or are assured, that their crying out or much babbling is heard of God, wherefore as they believe, so do they receive. It was time therefore long since, that those mocking and blasphemies of God should be abolished. But if we pray as we are here taught, there shall be nothing surely which we may not obtain. Now we pray for many things continually, and receive nothing, neither is it any marvel, seeing we pray so, that our petitions be not shewed unto God, for that we do not believe that they be manifest unto him. Wo to our dis-"
Not be preserved by it, but it is thus to be understood; when tribulation cometh upon them, which know not to flee unto God with prayer and supplication, but trust to their own wisdom and care, whereby they seek peace, but that which reason is able to know, which is that whereby tribulation taketh an end, and is changed with outward tranquility; this peace doth not pass reason, but is agreeable unto it, inasmuch as it is sought and found out of it; wherefore they that are void of faith are exceedingly disquieted, and troubled until according to the reason of the flesh they obtain this peace by hardly delivering or ridding themselves of adversity, not regarding whether they bring that to pass by force or by craft, as he that hath received a wound seeketh to have it healed, &c. But they that rejoice sincerely in the Lord, it is sufficient for them, that they know that they have God favourable unto them, and have assured peace with him, they abide willingly in tribulation, being nothing careful for that peace of reason by the removing of outward troubles, but they endure them valiantly, looking to be strengthened inwardly by faith, taking no care whether the adversities which they suffer, shall remain a short or a long time, whether they shall be temporal or continuing, neither are disquieted with caring what end they shall have; they commit all things to God, seeking not to know, when, how, where, or by whom he will give them quietness; wherefore God again sheweth them this favour, that he maketh the end of their trial to be such, and so great advantage, as no man could either suspect or wish for; Lo, this is that peace of the cross, the peace of God, the peace of conscience, true Christian peace, which maketh that a man outwardly also, as much as in him, leaveth quietly and peaceably with all men, and troubleth no man. This peace, reason is not able by any means to know or comprehend, that a man under the cross may have quietness of mind and joy of heart, and peace even in the very invasion of his enemies; this is the gift and work of God known to none, but to him that hath it, and hath tried it. Whereas St. Paul saith, 'Now the God of hope fill you
you with all joy and peace in believing,' Rom. xv. 13. That which he called in these words peace in believing, he calleth in our present text the peace of God. Moreover, St. Paul signifieth in these words, that whoever will rejoice in the Lord by faith, and be meek and of a patient mind toward all by love, the devil undoubtedly is against him, and will raise up some cross, that he may drive him from so Christian a purpose, wherefore the apostle will have every one to be prepared against this assault of Satan, and to place his peace there where Satan cannot trouble it, namely in God, and not think how he may cast off the cross, but suffer the adversary to take on, and rage as he list, he in the mean time patiently looking for the Lord, that he coming may make an end of adversities and troubles, for by this means, his mind heart, and conscience are preserved and kept in peace. Neither can patience endure, where the heart is not confirmed with this peace, for that he only which hath this peace doth throughly persuade himself that God is favourable unto him, and careful for him, and maketh no account what changeth unto him from creatures. Moreover let no man understand here the hearts and minds, to be the will and knowledge of nature, but as St. Paul himself interpreteth, the hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, that is, such as we have in Christ, of Christ and under Christ. These are the hearts and minds which faith and love cause, with which they that be endued, do behave themselves most godly towards God, and most lovingly and gently toward their neighbour; toward God they so behave themselves, that they believe in him, and love him with their whole heart; and are also most ready, with their whole heart and with all their cogitations to do those things which shall be acceptable to God and their neighbours, as much as, yea, more than they are able. Such hearts and minds the devil goeth about with the fear of death and other troubles to terrify and drive from this godliness, erecting a false hope, by the devices and imaginations of men, wherewith the mind is seduced, that it may seek to be comforted and helped of it self or other creatures,
Of rejoicing in God.

creatures, which if it do, surely, he hath drawn such a man from the care of God, and wrapped him in his own vain care. Thus hast thou, godly Reader, out of this short text a most plentiful instruction of Christian life, how thou must live toward God and thy neighbour, namely, that thou must believe that God is all things unto thee, and thou again must be all things unto thy neighbours, that thou must shew thyself such a one to thy neighbour as God hath shewed himself unto thee, that thou must receive of God and give to thy neighbour; all which are contained in faith and love, the whole sum of all Christianity.
XX.

Concerning them that are under the Law, and them that are under Grace.

Gal. iv. 1. to the 7th. Now I say, that the heir as long as he is a child, &c.

This Text toucheth the very pith of St. Paul's chief doctrine, the cause why it is well understood of so few, is not, for that it is so obscure and hard, but because there is almost no knowledge of faith left in the world, without which it cannot be that one should rightly understand St. Paul, who every where treateth of faith with such force of the Spirit as he is able, I must therefore speak somewhat, that this text may be made plain, and that I may more conveniently bring light unto it in expounding it, I will speak a few words in manner of a preface. First therefore we must understand that that treatise, wherein is treated of good works, doth far differ from that wherein is treated of justification, as there is very great difference between the substance and the working, between a man and his work. Now justification is of man, and not of works: for man is either justified and saved, or judged and condemned, and not works. Neither is it in controversy among the godly, that man is justified by no work, but righteousness must come unto him from some otherwhere, than from his own works; for Moses writeth of Abel after this sort; 'The Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his oblation.' First he had respect to Abel himself, then to his oblation, because that Abel was first counted righteous, entire, acceptable unto God, and then for his sake, his oblation also was allowed, and not he because of his oblation. Again, God had no respect to Cain; and therefore neither to his oblation, where again thou seest, that regard is had first of the worker then of the work. Of this place it is very plainly gathered, that no work can be allowed of God, whereas he which worketh
worketh that work was not first acceptable to him; and again, that no work is disallowed of him, unless the author thereof be disallowed before. I think that these things will be sufficient concerning this matter in this place, of which it is easy to understand, that there are two sorts of works: some going before justification, and some following it, and that these last are good works indeed, but that those others do only appear to be good. Hereof cometh such disagreement between God, and those counterfeit holy ones, for this cause Nature and Reason rise and rage against the holy Ghost; this is that, whereof almost all the whole Scripture treateth. The Lord in his word defineth, that all works that go before justification are evil, and of no importance, and requireth that man himself before all things be justified. Again, he pronounceth all men, which are yet regenerate, and have not changed that nature, which they received of their parents, with the new creature of Christ, to be unrighteous and wicked, according to that saying, Psalm 116, 'All men are liars', that is unable to perform their duty, and to do those things, which by right they ought. And Gen. vi. 5. 'And that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, whereby undoubtedly it cometh to pass, that he is able to do nothing that is good, which hath the fountain of actions, that is his heart corrupted; and if he do many works which in outward show seem good, they are no better than the oblation of Cain. Against this cometh forth reason, our reverend mistress, seeming to herself marvellous wise, yet indeed, is unwise and blind, and is not ashamed to gain by her God, and to reprove him of lying, he being furnished with her false and very strawye armour, to wit the light of nature, free-will, the strength of nature, all with the books of the heathen, and with the doctrines of men. She darest with her evil founding strings make a noise against God, that the works of a man even not yet justified are good works, and not works like unto Cain's, (which God pronounceth) yea, and so good, that he that worketh them is justified by them, for so Aristotle hath taught, that he that worketh well is made good. Unto this saying she leaneth and sticketh unmoveably
moveably, and wresteth the scripture clean contrary, contending that God will have respect first to the works, then to the worker; such very devilish doctrine beareth the sway now every where in schools, colleges and monasteries, wherein no other saints than Cain was, have rule and authority. Now of this error another immediately springeth; they which attribute so much to works and do not accordingly esteem the worker and sound justification, go so far, that they ascribe all merit and sovereign righteousness to works done before justification, making almost no account of faith, alleging that which James faith, 'that without works it is dead:' which sentence of the Apostle when they little understand, they attribute almost nothing to faith, they always stick to works, whereby they think they do merit exceedingly of God, and are persuaded that for their works fake they shall obtain the favour of God, and by this means do they continually disagree with God, chusing themselves to be the right posterity of Cain. God hath respect unto man, these to the works of man; God alloweth the works for his sake that worketh, these require that for the works fake the worker may be crowned. Now God goeth not from his sentence, as it is meet and just, and these will seem nothing less than to err in any respect; they will not have their good works contemned, reason to be nothing esteemed, free-will to be counted uneffectual, or surely, if thou dost here strive against them, they begin to be angry with God, and count it a small matter to kill their brother Abel. But here perhaps thou wilt say, What is needful to be done? By what means shall I first of all become righteous, and acceptable to God? How shall I attain to this perfect justification? The gospel answereth, preaching that it is necessary that thou hear Christ, and repose thyself wholly in him, denying thyself, and disfrusting all thine own strength; by this means thou shalt be changed from Cain to Abel, and being thyself acceptable, shalt offer acceptable gifts to the Lord. This faith, as it is preached unto thee for no merits of thine own, so is it given unto thee for no deserving of thine, but of meer grace; and this faith justifieth thee, thou being endued
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

Endued herewith, the Lord remitteth all thy sins, and that by the contemplation of Christ his Son, in whom this faith believeth and trusteth. Moreover he giveth unto such a faith his spirit, which doth throughly change a man and make him new, so that now he hath other reason, and another will, than before, namely, that which is ready unto good; such a one worketh nothing but good works, neither can it be but good, which he being good before, shall do, whereof I have spoken somewhat before. Wherefore nothing else is required unto justification, than to hear Jesus Christ our Saviour, and to believe in him, howbeit neither of these is the work of nature, but only of grace; he therefore that goeth about to attain hereunto by works, flutteth the way to the gospel, to faith, grace, Christ, God, and all things that help unto salvation. Again, unto good works there is need only of justification, which he that hath attained, doth work only good works, and beside such a one, none. Hereof it sufficiently appeareth, that the beginning, the things following, and the order of man's salvation, are after this sort: First of all is required, that thou hear the word of God; next that thou believe, then that thou do work, and so at the last become saved and happy. He which changeth this order, without doubt is not of God. Paul also describeth this order, saying, Rom. x. 13. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher. And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Therefore Christ teacheth us to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, that is sincere preachers. When we hear these preach the true words of God, we may believe which faith justifieth a man, and maketh him godly indeed, and he now calleth upon God in the spirit of the sons, and worketh nothing but that which is good, and thus becometh a man saved; which is no other thing, than if I say, 'He that believeth shall be saved.' Again, he that worketh without faith is condemned, as Christ faith: He that doth not believe shall be condemned, from which no works shall deliver him.
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

Coofer now herewith those things which are wont commonly to be spoken of honesty and righteousness. Are they not wont thus to say? I will endeavour, that I may yet become honest. It is meet surely that we study to lead an honest life and to do good works: Well, admit this to be so; but if one then ask them how we may apply ourselves unto honesty, and by what mean, we may attain unto it? They answer, that we must fast, pray, frequent temples, avoid sins, &c. Hereupon one becometh a Charter-house monk, another chooseth some other order of monks, another is consecrated a priest; some torment their flesh by wearing of hair cloth, others scourge their bodies with whips, others afflict themselves after other sorts. But these are even of Cain's brood, and their works are no whit better than the works of Cain; for the man himself continueth the same that he was before, ungodly, and without all justification, there is a certain change made only of outward works, of apparel, of places, &c. Neither are these any other than very apes of saints, for they do preposterously imitate the manner and work of saints, when as they think themselves nothing less than saints, they scarce think of faith, they presume only of such works as seem good unto themselves, thinking by them to come unto heaven. Of whom Christ said, 'Enter ye in at the straight gate;' for I say unto you, many seek to enter in at it, and cannot. Why is this? Because they know not what this narrow gate is; for it is faith which doth altogether annihilate or make a man nothing in his own eyes, and requireth that he put no trust in any of his own works, but that he lean only to the grace of God, and be prepared for it to leave and suffer all things. But those holy ones of Cain's brood think their good works to be the narrow gate, and are not therefore extenuated or made less, whereby they might enter; they do not leave confidence in their works, but gather them together in great clouds, they hang them about them, and go about to enter in, being burdened, and as it were swollen big, which is as possible for them, as for a camel with his bunched back to go through the eye of a needle.

When thou shalt begin to preach unto these of faith, they laugh and hiss at thee: Dost thou count us, say
they, for Turks and Heathens, whom it behoveth now first to learn faith? Is there such a company of priests, monks and nuns, and is not faith known? Who know-eth not what he ought to believe? Even manifest sinners know that. And being after this sort animated and stirred up, they think that they be abundantly endued with faith, and that the rest is now to be finished, and made perfect by works; whereupon they make a small and slender account of faith, as I have said, because they be ignorant both what faith is, and that it alonedoth justify. They call it faith; when they believe those things which they have heard of Christ, which kind of faith the devils also have, and yet are nothing therefore justified; but this deserveth to be called rather an opinion of men than faith; for as we do oftentimes admonish, it is not sufficient that thou mayest worthily be called a Christian, to believe those things to be true, which are preached of Christ; Which kind of faith they of Cain's brood also have. But thou must also nothing doubt, that thou art of the number of them unto whom all those benefits of Christ are given and exhibited; which he that believeth, must plainly confess that he is holy, godly, righteous, the son of God, and certain of salvation, and that by no merit of his own, but by the only mercy of God poured forth upon him for Christ's sake; which he believeth to be so rich and plentiful, as it is indeed, that although he be as it were drowned in sins, he is notwithstanding thereby made holy, and the son of God. Therefore if he should any thing doubt, he should procure exceeding ignominy and reproach to baptism which he hath received, and to the Lord's supper, and also reprove the word and grace of God of falsehood; wherefore take heed that thou nothing doubt, that thou art the son of God, and therefore righteous by his grace, let all fear and care be here away. Howbeit thou must fear and tremble, that thou mayest persevere such a one unto the end: Thou must not being in this case, be careful that thou mayest become righteous and saved, but that thou mayest persevere and continue; neither must thou do this, as though it consisteth in thine own strength, for all thy righteousness and salvation is only of grace.
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

grace, whereunto only thou must trust: But when thou knowest that it is of grace alone, and that thy faith is also the gift of God, thou shalt for good cause live in fear and care, lest that any temptation do violently move thee from this faith. Hereupon pertaineth that which is written in the 9th chap. of Ecclesiastes: "The righteous, and the wife, and their works are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love, or hatred, by all that is before them. All things come alike to all," &c. For the present time every one by faith is certain of our salvation, but constantly to stand and persevere as it is the gift of the Lord, and not in our own strength, so ought we always to have care and fear thereof. When they of Cain's brood hear faith to be treated of after this sort, they cannot sufficiently marvel at our madness, as it seems unto them. God turn this way from me say they that I should confirm myself holy and godly, far be this arrogancy and rashness from me; I am many ways a miserable sinner, I should be mad, if I should arrogate holiness unto myself, And thus they mock at true faith, and count such doctrine as this for execrable error, and go about with might and main to extinguish the gospel. These are they that deny the faith of Christ, and persecute it in the whole world, of whom Paul speaketh, 1 Tim. iv. 1. 'In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, &c. For we see it brought to pass by the means of these, that true faith lieth every where oppressed, is not only not preached, but also commonly disallowed and condemned, with all them that either teach or profess it. The pope, bishops, colleges, monasteries and universities have now above five hundred years persecuted it with one mind and consent, yea, and that marvellous stifly and obstinately, and have done no other thing unto the world, but every where as much as they were able driven many unto hell; which truly both hath been and is at that last most hurtful persecution of Antichrist: The Lord at the last bring it to an end. If any object against the admiration, or rather mad senseness of these men, that we do nothing but that that is meet, if we count ourselves even holy, trusting to the goodness of God justifying us, seeing that David prayed thus:
thus: 'Preserve my soul, for I am holy,' Psal. lxxxvi. 2. And for that Paul faith, 'The Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God.' They answer that the Prophet and Apostle would not teach us in these words, or give an example, which we should follow, but that they being particularly and special enlightened, received such revelation of themselves, that they were holy. And after this sort they misinterpret and wrest whatsoever place of scriptures affirmeth that we are holy, saying that such doctrines are not written for us, but that they are rather peculiar miracles and prerogatives as they call them, which do not belong to all; which forged imagination we account of, as having come from their sick brain, who when as they themselves void of faith, and favour nothing of the spirit, think and contend that there be none which have found faith and the spirit, whereby surely they believe themselves to be thorns and thistles, not Christians, but rather enemies and destroyers of Christians, and persecutors of the Christian faith. Again, they are of this belief, that they shall be righteous and holy by their own works, and that because of them God will give unto them salvation and eternal blessedness. But here see the madness of men: In their opinion and judgment it is a Christian thing to think that we shall be righteous and saved because of our works, and to believe that these things are given by the grace of God, they condemn as heretical. They attribute that to their own works, which they attribute not to the grace of God; they affirm that they do save us, and not this; they trust to works, they cannot trust to God's grace; which blindness worthily cometh unto them, inasmuch as they will not build upon the rock, let them build upon the sand, and so be drowned by their own means, that by their own works and satisfactions they may torment themselves even unto death, gratifying Satan herein, for that they will not rest upon the grace of God, and serve the Lord with a gentle and sweet service; for they that are endued with true faith and do rest upon the grace of the Lord, it is marvellous how they are in God, by his goodness, of most quiet minds, and greatly rejoicing with holy joy; whereasupon they
they do also with pleasure apply themselves to good works, not to such as these which Cain's brood do, as to feigned prayers, fasting, base and filthy apparel, and such like trifles, but to true and right good works, whereby their neighbour is profited, and from whence no small commodity redoundeth unto men. Moreover they are of most ready minds to suffer all things, inasmuch as they are certain that God doth favour them, and hath a care of them. These are right honest and profitable men, by whom both God is glorified, and men much profited; when as those of Cain's brood serve to no use, either before God or before men, no, an unprofitable lump of earth, yea, not only unprofitable, but exceeding pernicious and hurtful also both to themselves and to others: for inasmuch as they are destitute of true faith, they cannot give unto God his due glory, nor do those good works which may truly profit their neighbour; for those works that they apply themselves unto, are their own inventions, consisting in gestures, apparel, places, times, meats, and such like trifles, whereby their neighbour can be helped neither in body, nor mind, nor in any thing else; for what can it profit me that thy crown is shaven very broad; that thou wastest a grey coul; what profit bringeth it, that thou fastest to day, and keepest holy day to morrow; that thou abstainest from this meat, and eatest that; that thou remainest in this place; that thou readest and mumblest up daily so many words? Surely thou dost nothing else by these, but torment thyself to please Satan, and to be a pernicious and hurtful example to thy neighbour; for there is no Christianity in thy life, being such thou beliewest not as it behoveth a Christian to believe, and therefore neither dost thou pray Christianly: Thy fasting also is not true chastising of the body, but rashly taken upon thee instead of a good work: In fine, this thy service and study of religion is no other thing than, in time past among the Jews, was the religion of Moloch and Baal, in the honour of whom they did kill and burn even their own children. So pernicious and pestilent an example is this thy holiness, which seemeth so godly.
godly unto thee, which when it marvellously counter-feiteth a shew of godliness, it draweth miserable men to the following thereof, and utterly extinguisheth true religion. Here perhaps some godly man will think, If the matter be so, and our works do not save us, but only to hear Christ and believe in him, who is given unto us of the Father to be our righteousness and salvation, to what end then are so many precepts given unto us, and why doth God severely require that they be obeyed? The present text of the Apostle shall give unto us the solution of this question and upon this fit occasion we will now enter into the exposition thereof. The Galatians being taught of Paul the faith of Christ, but afterwards seduced by false apostles, thought that the matter of our salvation must be finished and made perfect by the works of the law, and that faith only doth not suffice; these Paul calleth back again from works unto faith, with great diligence, and words marvellously effectual, plainly proving that the works of the law, which go before faith, do make us only servants, and be of no importance to godliness and salvation; but that faith doth make us the sons of God, and that from thence true good works do without constraint forthwith most plentifully flow. But here we must accustom ourselves to the words of the apostle: He calleth him a servant that is occupied in works without faith, whereof we have already treated at large; he calleth him a son, which is righteous and lively by faith alone, without works. The reason hereof is this: The servant, although he apply himself to good works, yet he doth it not with that mind with which a son doth, that is with a mind that is free, willing, and certain that the inheritance and all the good things of the Father are his; but doth it as he that is hired with a stipend in another man's house, who hopeth not that the inheritance shall come unto him. The works indeed of the son and the servant are alike, and almost all one according to the outward appearance, but their minds do differ exceeding much, and their hope is nothing like, even as Christ himself faith, 'The servant abideth not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever,' John viii
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

323

111. 35. Thoef Cain’s brood want the faith of sons, which they themselves confess, for they think it a most absurd thing, and wicked arrogancy, to affirm themselves to be the sons of God and holy, therefore as they believe, even so are they counted before God, they never become the sons of God, or holy, nevertheless they are exercised with the works of the law, and are well wearied, wherefore they are and remain servants for ever. And they receive no other reward, but these temporal things, namely, quietness of life, abundance of goods, dignity and honours, &c. which we see to be usual among the followers of the Popish religion, than whom there is none at this day that liveth more pleasantly, more wealthily, more gloriously and honourably. But this is their reward, they are servants and not sons, wherefore in death they shall be thrust from all good things, neither shall any portion of the eternal inheritance come unto them, who in this present life would believe nothing thereof; so therefore it is that servants and sons are not much unlike in works, but in mind and faith they are most unlike. Now the Apostle endeavoureth here to prove (which indeed is the very matter) that the law with all the works thereof doth make us no other than servants, if this faith in Christ, whereof we have spoken be away; for that alone doth make us the sons of God. Neither the law nor nature can give it, only the gospel bringeth it, when it is heard with an holy silence of mind; it is the word of grace, which the Holy Ghost doth forthwith follow, as it is shewed in very many places, and especially Acts 10. where we read, that the Holy Ghost did by and by fall on Cornelius and his family, hearing the preaching of Peter. Moreover the law was given for this, that we might learn by it, how void we are of grace, and how far from being of the mind of sons, yea, that we are plainly of a servile mind, for we being left to ourselves, can in no wise be free from the law, neither if we do any good thing, do it willingly, forasmuch as that faith of sons is wanting, wherewith he that is endued, knoweth assuredly, that the eternal inheritance shall come unto him, and is of his own accord inclined and bent, with a willing and ready,
spirit, to do those things that are good. Now these men do willingly confess that they are void of this faith, and if they would confess the truth indeed, they should also plainly confess, that they had far rather be without all law, and that they are against their wills subject thereunto; wherefore all things are amongst them constrained, and void of faith, and they are in very deed compelled to confess that by the law they cannot attain any further; which one thing they ought to learn by the law, and know, that they are servants, and have nothing belonging to sons whereby they might be inflamed with desire to come from servitude to the state and condition of sons; and might take no account of their own things, as indeed they ought to do, that God of his grace might advance them unto another state by faith. Now this were a sound understanding of the law, and the true use thereof, whereof this is the office, to reprove and convince men hereof, that they are servants and not sons, as many as follow the law without faith, and that they do exercise themselves therein plainly against their wills, and with no confidence of grace; for it causeth and maketh such to be offended at it, and learn by it how unprepared and unwilling they are to that which is good, inasmuch as they are void of faith, whereby it moveth them to seek help some other where, and not to presume of their own strength to satisfy it; for it requireth a ready will, and hearts of sons, which alone can satisfy it, it utterly refuseth servants, and them that are unwilling. But these of Cain's brood do not only of their own accord confess that they want this faith, which maketh the sons of God, but also they perfecte it; they feel and know also full well, how unwillingly they bear the law, and had rather be free from it, nevertheless they think that they shall become righteous by these their unwilling and constrained works. They will continue servants, and will not be changed into sons, and yet they would enjoy the goods of a strange father. They do all things clean out of order, where by the law they ought to learn, that they are servants, and unwilling to do that which is good, and therefore should by faith aspire to the state of sons, notwithstanding they go
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

...go so far, that they seek to satisfy and fulfill it by their own works only; and thereby they do altogether hinder the end of the law, and strive against faith and grace, whereunto if they were not blind, the law would direct and drive them; and so they continue always a blind, blockish and miserable people. These things St. Paul teacheth, Rom. iii. and 7. and doth freely pronounce that no man is justified before God, by the works of the law, adding no other cause hereof than this, for that the knowledge of sin only cometh by the law. If thou wilt know how this cometh to pass, consider well some one of Cain's brood, and thou shalt by and by see it verified. First, he worketh his works according to the law, with great grief and labour, and yet he therewith confesseth, that he is uncertain whether he be the son of God, and holy; Yea, he condemneth and curseth this faith, as the most pernicious arrogancy and error of all other, and will continue in his doubting, until he be made certain by his works. Here thou seest plainly, that such a man is not good or righteous, seeing that he wanteth this faith and belief that he is counted acceptable before God and his son, yea, he is an enemy to this faith, and therefore of righteousness also; Wherefore neither can his works be counted good, although they pretend a fair shew of fulfilling the law. And thus it is easy to understand that which St. Paul faith; that no man is justified before God, by the works of the law; For the worker must be justified before God, before he worketh any good things, although before men, which esteem a man by outward things, and not by the mind, they are counted righteous which apply themselves to the doing of good works; For men judge the worker by the works, God judgeth works by the worker. Now, the first precept requireth, that we acknowledge and worship one God, that is, that we trust and rest in him alone, which indeed is the true faith, whereby we become the sons of God; But how easy is it by this precept to know, that sin is both in him of Cain's brood, and in thyself, inasmuch, as both of you want such a

X3
faith even by your own nature? which thou couldst not know but by means of this law. And this is that which St. Paul meaneth when he faith, 'That by the law cometh the knowledge of sin.' Now thou canst be delivered from this evil of infidelity, neither by thine own power, nor by the power of the law, wherefore all thy works whereby thou goest about to satisfy the law, can be nothing but works of the law, of far less importance, than that they are able to justify thee before God; who counteth them wholly righteous, which truly believe in him, for they that only acknowledge him the true God, are his sons, and do truly fulfil the law. But if thou shouldst even kill thyself with works, yet is it so far off, that thy heart can obtain this faith thereby, that thy works are even a hindrance that thou canst not know it, yea, they are a cause that thou dost persecute it.

Hereupon it is, that he that studieth, to fulfil the law without faith, is afflicted for the devil's sake, and not for God's sake, and continueth a persecutor both of faith and of the law, until he come unto himself, and doth plainly cease to trust in himself and in his own works, doth give this glory to God, who justifieth the ungodly, acknowledgeth himself to be nothing, and fighteth for God his grace, whereof he doth now know, being taught by the law, that he hath need. Then faith and grace come and fill him being empty, satisfy him being hungry, by and by follow good works which are truly good: Neither are they now the works of the law, but of the spirit, of faith and grace, and they are called in the Scriptures the works of God, which he worketh in us; For whatsoever we do by our own power and strength, and is not wrought in us by his grace, without doubt, it is a work of the law, and availeth nothing to justification, but is both evil and hated of God, because of the infidelity wherein it is done. Again, whatsoever he of Cain's brood worketh, he doth nothing from his heart, nothing freely, and with a willing mind, except he be as it were hired with some reward, or be commanded to do some such thing whereunto he ought otherwise
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

otherwise to be ready of himself; even as an evil and unthrifty servant suffereth himself to be brought to no work, unless he be hired with a reward, or commanded, whereunto he ought otherwise to be willing of himself. Now how unpleasant is it to a man to have such servants! But they of Cain's brood be plainly such, they would do no good works at all, if they were not either compelled by the fear of hell, or allured by the hope of present good things; whereby again thou seest, that these have no mind to the law, they gape only for gain, or are moved with fear, whereby they bewray themselves that they do rather hate the law from their heart, and had rather that there were no law at all: Wherefore it is plainly manifest, that they are not good, and consequently that neither their works be good: for how should evil men work good works? Moreover those their works, which in appearance and shew, seem to be good, are either wrested from them by fear, or are brought with promises. An evil heart can do nothing that is good. But this naughtiness of the heart and unwillingness to do good, the law bewrayeth when it teacheth, that God doth not greatly esteem what the hand doth, but what the heart doth, which, seeing it hateth the law that is good, who will deny it to be most evil? Surely it is a sin to be against the law, which is very good. Thus therefore sin is known by the law, according as St. Paul teacheth, forasmuch as we learn thereby, how our affection is not set on that which is good, which ought to terrify us, and drive us to cease to trust to our selves, and to long after the grace of God, whereby this naughtiness of the heart may be taken away, and our mind may become such, as is of it self ready to do good things, and loveth the law, which voluntarily, not for fear of any punishment, or respect of reward, but because it doth of its own accord like the law, and love righteousness, and worketh those things which are truly good; By this means only one is made of a servant a son, of a slave an heir; which mind and spirit thou shalt receive by no other means, than by faith in Christ, as it is before spoken at large. X 4 Now
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

Now let us come to treat of the text of St. Paul, Ver. 1.

'The heir as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all.'

He propoundeth a similitude taken of the custom of men; for we see that children, unto whom their parents have left some substance, be brought up no otherwise than if they were servants, they are fed and clothed with their goods, but they are not permitted to do with them, nor use them according to their own mind, but are ruled with fear and discipline of manners, that so even in their own inheritance they live no otherwise than as servants; after the same sort is it also in spiritual things; God made unto the elect a covenant, when he promised that it should come to pass, that in the seed of Abraham, that is in Christ, all nations should be blessed, Gen. xxii. That covenant was afterwards confirmed by the death of Christ, and revealed and published abroad by the preaching of the Gospel; for the gospel is no other thing, than an open and general preaching of this grace, that in Christ blessing and grace is laid up for all men, which so many only shall receive as shall believe. Now before that this covenant is truly opened and made manifest to men, the sons of God live after the manner of servants under the law, and are exercised with the works of the law, although they cannot be justified by them, inasmuch, as they are servile and do nothing avail to justification, as it is said before; notwithstanding, because they are even then predestinate to life, when they are after the manner of servants held under the law, they are true heirs of heavenly good things, that is, of this blessing and grace of this covenant; although they as yet do not know, or enjoy it, but are wearied with works no otherwise than others that are void of faith. So at this day thou mayest find not a few, which now having faith, as they are the sons of God, so do they also enjoy the grace of God in the liberty of sons, when as a little before being drowned in works, they knew nothing at all of faith, being in all things like unto other hypocrites. Nevertheless, because they were before the foundation of the world appointed
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

appointed of God unto this faith and state of sons, they were even then the sons of God before, when they were as yet altogether ignorant of faith. Where are some also which being, as yet, as it were, drowned in works, are like to servants and those of Cain's brood, who notwithstanding before God are sons and heirs, which shall be brought unto the faith of sons, leaving the state of servants, and shall embrace the liberty and right of sons, shall cease from the works of the law, and come unto the inheritance of justification, that being justified by grace, they may work freely those things that be good, to the glory of God, and advantage of their neighbours, being far from all fear, to hope, as well of justification, as of all other good things; for they shall then have and possess it by the covenant of the Father confirmed by Christ, and revealed, published, and as it were delivered into their hands by the gospel, through the only grace and mercy of the Father. This covenant both Abraham and all the fathers, which were endued with true faith, had no otherwise than we have, although before Christ was glorified, this grace was not openly published and preached. They lived in like faith, and therefore they obtained also like good things. They had the same grace, blessing and covenant with us, for there is one Father, and the same God of all. Thou seest therefore that St. Paul, as almost in all other places, so here also doth treat much of faith, that we are not justified by our works, but by faith alone, whereby not certain good things by piece-meal, but all good things at once do come unto us, for there is no good thing, which this covenant of God doth not contain in it, it giveth and bringeth righteousness, salvation, and God himself; works cannot be done at once, but by faith the whole inheritance of God is together received. From thence also good works do come, thou not meritorious, whereby thou mayest seek salvation, but which with a mind already possessing righteousness, thou must do with great pleasure to the profit of thy neighbours; for thou shalt now have need of nothing, being endued with faith, which bringeth all things, yea, surely more things than one dare with,
with, much less can deserve; wherefore it is no marvel if such work all things freely, and so do unto their neighbour, as they both believe and rejoice, that God of his goodnes, and by the merit of Christ hath done unto them. What reward shall they hope for which already have all things? the shadow whereof those most miserable ones of Cain's brood seek by their works, but they shall never find it, they follow it but they shall never come unto it. Ver. 2. 'But is under Tutors and Governors, until the time appointed of the Father.' Tutors and Governors are they which do bring up the heir and so rule him, and order his goods, that neither he waste his inheritance by riotous living, neither his goodnes otherwise perish or be consumed. They permit him not to use his goods at his own will or pleasure, but suffer him to enjoy them as they shall be needful and profitable unto him. First, whereas they keep him at home, and inform him with good manners, what do they else but prepare and instruct him, whereby he may most commodiously and long enjoy his inheritance? Again, the most straitly and severely they bring him up, so much greater desire they stir up and enflame in him to come to, and enjoy his inheritance. For as soon as he beginneth to be of any discretion and judgment, it cannot be but grievous unto him, to leave at the commandment and will of another. After the same sort standeth the case of the elect, which are brought up and instructed under the law, as under a Master, to the liberty of the sons. First the law profiteth them in this, that by the fear of it, and of the punishment, which it threateneth, they are driven from sin, at the least from the outward work, least that the liberty of sinning encrease overmuch, and remove them from all religion of God, that hope of salvation being past, and God quite contemned, they should run headlong without all fear into all kinds of evil, as some desperate persons are wont to do. Again, the law is profitable to them in this, that by it they are brought unto knowledge of themselves, and learn how unwillingly they live under the law, and that they do no good at all with a willing
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

ing and ready mind as it becometh sons, but with a ser-
vile and unwilling mind; whereby they may easily see,
what is the root of this evil, and what is especially need-
ful unto salvation, to wit, a new and a willing spirit to
that which is good; which surely neither the law, nor
the works of the law, are able to give, yea, the longer
and the more that they apply themselves unto them, so
much more unwilling shall they find themselves, and
with so much more grief to work those things that are
good. Hereupon now they learn, that they do not sa-
tisfy the law, although outwardly, they live according
to the prescript rule thereof; for as they do pretend to
obey it in work, so in mind they do hate it, where-
fore in mind also they remain sinners, although they
pretend themselves righteous by works, that is, they are
like unto those of Cain's brood, and to hypocrites.
whose hand indeed is compelled to good, but they have
a heart, which as it is an enemy to the law, so doth
it verily consent unto sins, and is miserably subject un-
to them. To know this concerning themselves is not
the lowest degree to salvation. Hereof also we may
see, how fitly St. Paul calleth such constrained works
the works of the law; For they flow not from a ready
and willing heart, but are inforced by the law, the
heart declining another way. Howbeit, the law doth
not require works alone, but much rather the heart it
self, that we might say, not only the works, but ra-
ther the heart of the law; not only the hands of the
law, but rather the mind, will, and all the strength of
the law. ' Whereupon it is said in the first Psalm of
the blessed man, ' But his delight is in the law of the
' Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.'
Such a mind the law requireth indeed, but it giveth it
not, neither can it give it of its own nature, whereby it
cometh to pass, that while the law continueth to ex-
act it of a man, and to condemn him as long as he
hath not such a mind, as disobedient to God, he is
in anguish on every side, his conscience is grievously
terrified, and without all counsel and help. Then in-
deed, he is most ready for grace, and this is that time
appointed.
pointed of the Father, when his servitude shall end, and he should enter into the state of the sons. For being thus in distress and terrified, seeing that by no other means he can avoid the condemnation of the law, he turneth himself wholly to pray to the Father for grace, he acknowledgeth his frailty, he confesseth his sins, he ceaseth to trust in works, and doth altogether, as it is meet, humble himself, perceiving now full well, that between him and a manifest sinner, there is no difference at all but of works, that he hath a wicked heart, even as any other sinner hath; yea, it may be that such hypocrites do far more hate the law in the heart, than those famous sinners, which are even as it were drowned in sin. For while these are even wearied with the works of sins, and do try the filthines of them, it oftentimes cometh to pass, that they do in some part, loath and detest them, when as those righteous ones do always think those things that they have not tried, to be more sweet, neither can they believe that there is so much gall in sins, whereof they are by nature inflamed with such a desire, and therefore as they do more earnestly love sin, so consequently, they do much worse hate the law, which as a certain school-master, is always against their desire. Moreover, forasmuch as the condition of man's nature is such, that it is able to give to the law, works only, and not the heart, who doth not see how greatly it is contemned of us? An unequal division truly, to dedicate the heart, which doth incomparably excel all other things, to sin, and the brutish hand of the law, which is nothing else, but to offer chaff to the law, and the wheat to sin, the shell to God, and the kernel to Satan. So it cometh to pass which is in the gospel, that the wickedness of him, which is in thy judgment a desperate sinner, are counted as a mote; and thine, which so playest the hypocrite, are counted as a beam. If this evil he added hereunto, that such hypocrites do not see a beam in their own eye, but being blinded, do persevere in their accustomed works, not marking this their inward abomination of the heart, they by and by burst
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

burst forth to judge and condemn others, they despise sinners, as he did in the gospel, they think themselves not like unto them, they are not as other men are; they think themselves alone godly and righteous; whose ungodliness if one reprove, and as it is meet, bewray, they by and by, are in a rage and fury, and flock not to kill innocent Abel, and to persecute all those that follow the truth; and they will seem to do that to defend good works, and to obtain righteousness; neither do they promise to themselves a small reward for this, inasmuch as they do, as they say, persecute heretics, blasphemers, them which be seduced and do seduce with mischievous error, which labour to seduce and pluck even them from good works. Here thou mayest see that that sheweth it self, whatsoever the scriptures attribute to these men being surely most pestilent spirits, to wit, that they are a generation of Vipers, and Serpents. They are no other but Cain's brood, and so they do continue, servants they are, and servants they do remain. But they whom God hath chosen Abels and sons, do learn by the law, how unwilling a heart they have unto the law, they fall from their arrogance, and are by this knowledge of themselves which the law bringeth, brought even unto nothing in their own eyes. Then by and by cometh the gospel, and lifteth them up being humbled, whereby the Lord giveth his grace unto them, thus casting down themselves, and endueth them with faith. Hereby they receive that covenant of the eternal blessing, and the holy Ghost, which reneweth their heart, that now it is delighted with the law, hateth sin, and is willing and ready to do those things that are good; and here now thou mayest see not the works, but the heart of the law. And this is the very time appointed to be heir of the father, when he must be no longer a servant but a son, and doth now begin to be led by a free spirit, being do more kept in subjection under tutors and governors, after the manner of a servant; which is even that that St. Paul teacheth in the words following, Ver. 3. "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

By
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

By the word elements, thou mayest understand here the first principles or law written, which as it were the first exercises and instructions of holy learning, whereof it is spoken also, Heb. v. 12. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God."

And Colos. ii. 8. "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world." Again Gal. iv. 9, 10. "How shall ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months, and times, and years." Here as it were in contempt he calleth the law elements, he addeth also, impotent, and beggarly, both because it is not able to perform that righteousness, which it requireth, and also for that it maketh men indeed poor and omnipotent. For whereas it earnestly requireth a heart and mind given to godliness, and nature is not able to satisfy it herein, it plainly maketh man feel his poverty, and to acknowledge his infirmity, that that is by right required of him, which he not only hath not, but also is not able to have. Hereunto pertaineth that which St. Paul hath left written, 2 Cor. iii. 6. 'For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.'

Moreover, St. Paul calleth them the elements of the world, for all that observing of the law, which men not yet renewed by the spirit do perform, doth consist in worldly things, to wit, in places, times, apparel, persons, vessels, and such like. But faith resteth in no worldly thing, but only in the grace, word, and mercy of God, neither doth it make a man righteous and save by any outward thing, but only by the invisible and eternal grace of God; wherefore it counteth alike, day, meats, persons, apparel, and all things of this world; for none of these by it self doth either further or hinder godliness and salvation, as it doth the righteousness of those of Cain's brood, which is as it were tied to those outward things. Faith therefore deserveth nothing less, than to be called the elements of the world, by which we obtain the fulness of heavenly good things;
things: and altho' it be occupied also in outward things, yet it is addicted to no outward thing, but doth freely in all things, that which it seeth may be done to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbour, always continuing true and the same, and yet is made all things to all men, that so the conversation thereof may want all peculiar respect and difference. With those of Cain's brood it agreeeth neither in name nor in any thing; one of them eateth flesh, another abstaineth from it; one wear eth black apparel, another white; one keepeth this day holy, another that; every one hath his elements, under which he is in bondage; all of them are addicted to the things of the world, which are frail, and perish. Wherefore they are no other but servants of the elements of the world, which they call holy orders, godly ordinances, and ways to go to heaven, against these St. Paul speaketh, Colos. ii. 20, to 23.

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world; why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? Touch not, taste not, handle not: Which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." By this and other places above-mentioned, it is plain, that all monasteries and colleges, whereby we measure the state of spiritual men as we call them, do plainly disagree with the gospel, and Christian liberty, and that therefore it is much more dangerous to live in these kinds of life, then among most prophane men; For all their things are nothing but rudiments, and ordinances of the world, consisting in the difference and use of apparel, place, times, and other present things, whereunto seeing they are so addicted, that that hope by them to attain righteousness and salvation, faith is made no account of amongst them, neither are they Christians but in name, wherefore all their life and holiness, is meer sin, and most detestable hypocrisy. It is needful therefore, that they that are occupied in such ordinances, should above all other men most diligently look unto themselves, that they trust not
not to these ordinances, that they be not too much addicted unto them, but that they do persevere in a free faith, which is tied to none of these outward things, but resteth in the only grace of God; For the fair shew of life and feigned holiness, which is in those ordinances, doth with a marvellous and secret force withdraw from faith, more than those manifest and gross sins, whereof open-sinners are guilty, and doth easily make men such as St. Paul here speaketh of, 'When we were children, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the world,' that is, when we were as yet ignorant of faith, and were exercised only with the works of the law, we did these outward works of the law, consisting in worldly things, but with an unwilling mind, and with no faith, hoping that by these rudiments of the world we should obtain salvation, wherefore we were no other than servants. Now this false and servil opinion, faith alone taketh away, and teacheth us to trust unto, and rest upon the only grace of God, whereby at once is given freely, that which is needful to work all things. For these works of the law, if that false opinion were away, were not ill of themselves. Verse 4. 'But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law.' Verse 5: 'To redeem them that were under the law,' that we might receive the adoption of sons.' After St. Paul had taught, that righteousness and faith cannot come to us by the law, neither can we deserve it by nature, he sheweth him by whom we obtain true righteousness and faith, and which is the author of our justification. Now this could not come unto us without any price, for it cost a very great price, even the Son of God; The apostle therefore faith, 'When the fulness of time was come,' that is, when the time was ended, that time, I say: wherein it behoved us to live children and servants under the discipline of the Law. Wherefore the master of sentences hath erred here, who interpreted the fulness of time, the time of grace, which began at the birth of Christ, plain contrary to the apostle, who whereas he hath written, the fulness
fulness of time, this man hath interpreted, the time of fulness; for Paul speaketh of the time, which was appointed of the Father to the Son, wherein he should live under tutors. Now as this time was full come to the Jews and ended, when Christ came in the flesh, so is it daily fulfilled to others, when they come unto the knowledge of Christ, and do change the servitude of the law, with the faith of the sons. And this indeed is that coming, whereby alone we obtain the liberty of sons, without which that corporal coming would avail nothing; for Christ even for this cause hath come unto us, that believing in him, we may be restored to true liberty, by which faith they of the antient time also obtained the liberty of the spirit. And so whereas he should come to the holy men of old time, he came even then, forasmuch as by faith they felt him to be their true Saviour and Deliverer, howbeit he is not yet come to our Jews, although he is gone away again in body long since, for they do not believe in him. All from the beginning of the world to the end, must trust unto the coming of Christ, whereby alone servitude is hanged into liberty, but yet by faith, either in Christ being to come, as it was before he was born, or in him being come, as it is now; wherefore as soon as thou beginnest to believe in Christ, he cometh unto thee a Deliverer and Saviour, and now the time of bondage is ended, that is, as the Apostle speaketh, the fulness thereof is come. This place surely is very copious and containeth in it divers things most worthy to be known, so that I greatly fear, that it shall not be handled by us according to the worthiness thereof; for it teacheth that it is not sufficient to believe that Christ is come, but that we must also believe that he was sent of God, is the son of God, and also very man, born of a virgin, who alone hath fulfilled the law, and that not for himself, but for us, that is, for our salvation's sake. Let us weigh and consider these things in order: First, it is sufficiently taught in the gospel of John, that Christ is the son of God, and was sent of God, which he that believeth not is in a most miserable case, as Christ himself pronounceth, John viii. 24. 'If ye believe not that I
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

' am he, ye shall die in your sins. And John i. 4. In him ' was life, and the life was the light of men.' For this cause the mind of man neither may nor ought to enjoy any other thing than that sovereign good, so that it should be satisfied with any other than with it, whereof it was made, and which is the fountain of all good things; wherefore it is not the will of God that we should believe or repose our trust in any other thing, neither doth this honour belong to any other, and therefore God himself joined himself to man, being made man, that he might more forcibly allure men into him, and stir them up to believe in him. No good could come unto God hereby, but it was necessary for us that he should be made man, lest that we should believe in any other thing than in God alone; for if we should believe in Christ and not in God, as God should be deprived of his honour, so should we be deprived of life and salvation; for we must believe in one God, who is the very truth, and we without him can neither live nor obtain salvation. Whereas therefore the Apostle saith God sent forth his Son, it is thereby manifest that he was before he came, and was made man. Now if he be a son, he is more than a man or an angel, which seeing they are the highest creature, surely he is also true God; for to be the Son of God is more than to be an angel, as it is else where declared. Again, seeing that he is sent of God and is his son, he must needs be another person; and so the Apostle teacheth here, that the Father and the Son are one God, and two Persons. Of the Holy Ghost it shall be spoken hereafter.

The second thing which ought here to be considered, is, that Christ is very man and the son of man. This Paul teacheth, when he faith made of a woman; for surely that that is made or born of a woman, is man; A woman by nature bringeth forth nothing but very man. Thus it is necessary that we believe, as the Lord himself declareth, John vi. 53. ' Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.' But to eat and drink his flesh and blood, is nothing else but to believe that Christ took these upon him indeed, and did also yield them to death for our sake. This is that
that covenant which was promised to Abraham, 'In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed,' Gen.xxii. 18. Christ is this seed, and therefore the true son of Abraham, his flesh and blood. Hereupon it appeareth that they prevail nothing, which make a proper way unto themselves to God, by their own works and godliness, and neglecting Christ strive to come directly unto God, as the Turks and Jews do. This Christ alone is the Mediator the blessed Seed, by whom thou must receive blessing, otherwise thou shalt continue for ever in malediction; this covenant of God shall not be violated because of any. Thus Christ himself saith, John vi. 'No man cometh to the Father but by me.' The nature of God is otherwise higher than that we are able to attain unto it; wherefore he hath humbled himself unto us, and taken upon him that nature which is best known and most familiar unto us, viz. even our own. Here he looketh for us, here he will receive us: he that will seek him here, shall find; he that will ask here, shall be heard; here is the throne of grace and the true mercy-seat, from which none is driven or thrust, which with true faith resorteth unto it. They which do here neglect him, as though he were made man for nought, and in the mean season do without a Mediator pray unto God, who hath created heaven and earth, they shall pray indeed, but none shall help them; they shall cry, but none shall hear them. The third thing which is here set forth unto us to believe, is, that Mary the mother of Jesus is a virgin; this Paul affirmeth, when he saith, that he was made of a women, and not of a man, as others are wont. This is that one man, which was born only of a woman: He would not say of a virgin, for that a virgin is not a name of nature, but a woman signifies a sex and certain condition, whereunto it belonging to be with child, and bring forth, that is, to do the parts of a mother. Seeing therefore that Mary was a mother indeed, she is rightly called a woman; for she brought forth fruit unto us, which belongeth to a mother, and not to a virgin, although she brought it forth alone, without the means of man, wherein she was declared
declared both a singular virgin and woman. But because it is of greater importance to the Apostle and unto all us, that Mary is a woman, and thereby the mother of Christ, than that she is a virgin, for that is only an ornament unto her, but in that she was a woman, she brought forth him which was salvation unto all, for this cause, I say, the Apostle calleth her rather a woman than a virgin: Neither was it considered in choosing her, that she was a virgin, but that she was a woman; for that she being a virgin became a mother, the cause was, for that it behoved that Christ should be born without sin, and therefore without the commixion of man; for of the seed of a sinful man, nothing could be born but that which is defiled with sin; but it behoved that Christ should be that blessed Seed, whose blessing should be poured forth upon all, as the manner of the divine covenant required. Whereupon it is gathered, that Christ could not be born of the seed of man, for that all men are by nature under the curse; for how should blessing be promised to come unto all by Christ, if all were not subject to the curse? Forasmuch then as the covenant of God promised to Abraham, did require these two things, both that Christ should be the true Son of Abraham, that is, his seed, his true flesh and blood, and that also he should be born pure from sin; this mean was invented, that he should of Mary, being very woman and the daughter of Abraham, be born very man, and the right off-spring of Abraham; and that also he should be born without the commixion of man, a virgin being conceived with child by the only means of the Holy Ghost, that being full of blessing, he might derive the same unto all believers. So was the covenant of God fulfilled on either side; and it came to pass, that Christ became both the true seed of Abraham, and yet free from all contagion of Adam, and is also the author of eternal blessing to them that believe. Wherefore although Mary be holily to be reverenced by the name of virgin, yet by no comparison greater reverence is due unto her than by the name of woman, for that her most holy members, inasmuch as she was a woman, were advanced unto this dignity, that they were as means toward
toward the fulfilling of the holy covenant of God, and
by them he was brought forth, which was to put away
all curse from them that believe in him, that so he
might be both the blessed Seed of Abraham, and the
blessed Fruit of the womb of Mary. Unto which be-
nefit the virginity only had not been sufficient, yea, it
had been even unprofitable. The fourth thing whereof
the present place of the Apostle doth admonish us, is,
that Christ hath satisfied the law for us; which he also
witnesseth of himself, Mat. v. 17. "I am not come to
defroy, but to fulfil." This also the reason of the
covenant requireth; for by this Seed of Abraham all men
must be delivered from the curse, it is necessary that by
it the law is fulfilled; for as men are by nature the chil-
dren of wrath, and subject to the curse, so it must needs
be accursed, whatsoever they do, for it is before proved
at large, that he which is evil himself, can work nothing
that is good; likewise that we can do nothing that God
will approve, unless we ourselves be approved of him
before: And seeing that the law requireth the heart,
which cannot be performed by them which are not as yet
regenerate by the Spirit, it must needs be that all the
sons of Adam are guilty of transgressing the law, and
unless, whereas they themselves are not able, another,
viz. Christ, should perform that which the law requir-
eth, and to satisfy the law for them, they should alto-
gether perish by the curse of the law. But when as Christ,
going about to shew that the heart is required of the law,
did condemn the works which proceed not from a heart
that is godly and consenting unto the law, he was ac-
cused of the Pharisees, that he was come to destroy the
law. Because therefore he would take away this false
opinion of himself, he said, 'Think not that I am come
to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to
defroy, but to fulfil;' yea, and I will give a spirit unto
them that be mine, which shall justify their heart by
faith, and incline it unto true good works. The same
is usual with Paul also, who, Rom. iii. 21, when he had
rejected the works of the law, and extolled faith, an-
wering such an objection, faith, 'Do we then make void
the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the
law.'
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

For we teach, that the true fulfilling of the law is by Christ. The like also is wont to be objected to us, as though we did forbid good works, when we disallow monasteries with their works, and teach that they must first by faith become good and approved of God, whereby they may afterward do true good works, by which both their flesh may be chastised, and their neighbours edified. Here we must note moreover, that the law can be fulfilled by no man, but by him which being free from the law is no more under it; we must accustom ourselves also to the manner of Paul's speech, that we may know assuredly who is under the law, and who is not under the law. As many therefore as work good works, because the law hath so commanded, being brought thereunto either with fear of punishment, or hope of reward, are under the law, and are compelled to do good things and to be honest, being not brought hereunto of their own voluntary will. Wherefore the law hath dominion over them, whose servants and captives they are; now such are all men, that are not yet regenerate by Christ, which every one may easily learn with himself by experience, every man's own conscience shewing it unto him. We all find ourselves so affected, that if no law did urge us, and both the fear of punishment, and hope of reward were away, and it were plainly free for us to do what we list, we would do altogether those things that are evil, and omit the things that are good, especially either temptation moving us, or occasion provoking us; but now, forasmuch as the law stayeth us with the threatenings and promises thereof, we do oftentimes abstain from evil things, and do those things that are good, howbeit we do them not for the love of goodness, and hatred of evil, but only for fear of punishment, and respect of reward; wherefore being left wholly to ourselves, we are servants of the law, neither do we hear it any otherwise than servants do their hard and cruel master.

But they that are not under the law, that is, are not so against their wills in subjection under the dominion thereof they of their own accord do good works, and abstain from evil, being neither terrified with the threatenings
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

343

nings of the law, nor allured with the promises thereof, but even for that they do of their voluntary will bear a love to honesty, and hate that which is dishonest, and are also from their heart delighted with the law of God, so that if there were no law made, notwithstanding they would desire to live no otherwise than the law commanded; as, to shun those things that are evil, and apply themselves to honest studies and exercises. They that are such, are sons; whom not nature, but that only blessed seed of Abraham, that is, Christ, could make such, renewing by his grace and spirit the hearts of them that believe in him; wherefore not to be under the law; is not to be free from the law, that they may do those things that are contrary thereunto, and omit those things that are good, but it is to do good things and abstain from wicked things, not through compulsion or necessity of the law, but by free love and with pleasure, even as if no law commanded them, and their own nature brought them hereunto, as indeed it doth, howbeit the new nature of the spirit, not that old nature of the flesh; for as there is need of no law for the body, which may compel it to eat, to drink, to digest, to sleep, to go, to stand, to sit, and to do the other works of nature, for that it is ready to do them of its own nature, when the case so requireth, and when it is meet, without all respect either of reward or punishment, and may not unfitly he said, as concerning these things, not to be under a law, notwithstanding thereupon nothing less followeth, than that it doth therefore abstain from such works, unto which indeed it so much the more applieth itself as they are less commanded, and are more natural unto it: After the same sort altogether doth the godly man behave himself concerning the works of godliness, he is carried to the doing of them by that his newnature of the spirit, altho' there were no law at all, and all both hope of reward and fear of punishment were away. This only is the true liberty of a Christian man, and the deliverance of him from the law, whereof Paul speaketh, 1 Tim. i. 9. 'The law it not made for a righteous man.' Which is as much as if he had said, A righteous
man of his own accord doth good things, abstaineth from evil, having no regard either of reward or of punishment. The same thing also he meaneth by that saying, Rom vi. 15. 'We are not under the law, but under grace.' That is, ye are sons, not servants: Ye live holily; being compelled or enforced with nothing, but of your free and of itself ready will. To the same effect pertaineth that saying also, Rom. viii. 15, 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption.' The law maketh a fearful, that is, a right servile and Cainish spirit, but grace giveth the free spirit of sons, like unto Abel's by Christ the blessed Seed of Abraham. Wherefore the 51st Psalm speaketh, 'Uphold me with thy free spirit.' Whereupon, in the 118th Psalm, Christian people are said to be of a free will; moreover Christ hath so fulfilled the law, that he only of all mankind hath of his own accord satisfied it, being with nothing compelled or enforced thereunto, neither is any other able to do the same, unless he receive it of him, and by him: And therefore Paul saith here, 'God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.' The fifth thing therefore that Paul here commendeth unto us to be believed, is, that Christ for our sake was made under the law, that he might deliver us from the bondage of the law, and of unwilling servants make us free sons; whereupon he saith, 'To redeem them that were under the law,' that is, might deliver them from the law. Now he delivereth from the law by the means aforesaid, not by destroying or utterly abolishing the law, but by fulfilling it, and giving a free spirit, which shall do all things willingly, without any respect either of the threatenings or the promises of the law, yo otherwise than if there were no law at all given, and is carried thereunto of his own nature. After which sort Adam and Eve were affected before they had sinned. But by what means is the spirit given, and liberty gotten? Now otherwise than by faith, for he that truly believeth that Christ came for this cause, that he might deliver us from the law, and that he hath delivered him already, he, I say, hath indeed
indeed received the spirit of liberty, and doth verily obtain that which he believeth; for both faith and this spirit of sons come together. Whereupon St. Paul faith here; that Christ hath delivered us from the law, for this, that we might receive the adoption of sons; both which come unto us by faith. Thus therefore we have those five things, whereof St. Paul admonisheth us in this so plentiful and fruitful a place. But here riseth a question forasmuch as to be under the law, is to be subject to the law by compulsion, and to obey the law no otherwise than unwillingly, so that none of them which are under the law, are able to satisfy the law. Why St. Paul faith, that Christ was made under the law, I answer, that the apostle maketh a very great difference between Christ, who was made under the law, and other men who are born under the law. For whereas he faith, that Christ was made under the law, he would signify, that Christ did put himself under the law of his own accord, and was with his will made subject unto it of the Father, when as he might not have been under the law; but we were under the law, being the servants of the law by nature, and bearing the dominion thereof unwillingly, as Christ was willingly, not by nature, and against his will. Wherefore there is as great difference between, to be made under the law, and, to be under the law by nature, as between these, to be subject to the law of free-will, and to be subject to the law by servile constraint. It was free unto Christ, to be under the law, or not to be under it, and he made himself subject to it of his own accord, that he might most diligently do all things that the law requireth; but we were under the law, even against our will.

Thou mayest see a resemblance hereof in St. Peter, and the angel which came into the prison to Peter, to deliver him. Both of them were then in the prison, but Peter was there being cast into it of Herod, not of his own accord, wherein he was also to abide, for he could not go forth when he would. But the angel went into the prison of his own accord, whereupon it was free for him
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

him also to go forth when he would; he was there only for St. Peter's sake, and not for his own, and freely even at his own will, whom when St. Peter heard and followed, it was free for him a so to go forth of the prison, whereas before it was not. This prison is the law; St. Peter is our conscience: The angel is Christ; Christ being absent, our conscience is hold captive of the law, and being unwilling of itself, is moved unto good things, by the threatenings and promises thereof, and is tied and bound unto honest things with these as with two chains. The keepers of this prison are the teachers of the law, which declare the force of the law unto us. So we being bound in the prison of the law, Christ cometh unto us, and willingly maketh himself subject to the law, and doth the works of the law of his own accord, which we did bend ourselves to do against our wills, yea, and doth them for our sake, that he may join us unto him, and also bring us out together with himself; for he may easily go forth, who is held in the prison by no necessity. If now we cleave unto him, and follow him, we also do go forth. But this cleaving to him and following of him is nothing else, than to believe in him, and not to doubt that he became man, and was made subject to the law, for thy salvation sake: together with this faith cometh the spirit, he by and by maketh thee ready and willing to do with pleasure all things that the law requireth; and so truly delivereth thee from the captivity of the law, those chains of threatening and promises fall off from thee, and thou mayest now go whether thou list, that is, thou mayest live according to thine own will, or rather according to the will of the holy Ghost ruling all things in thee; finally, what good things soever thou dost, thou dost them from the heart, and with great pleasure. Moreover, that it may be made more plain, after what sort Christ made himself subject to the law, we must understand that he was made under the law after two sorts, both for that he did perfectly perform the works of the law, and also for that he suffered and overcame the curse and punishment thereof for our sake. For he
he was circumcised, presented in the temple, and the time of the purification being furnished, was obedient to his parents. All which things he might have omitted, being Lord of the law, and over all; Howbeit he applied himself to these things freely of his own will, not being either compelled by any fear, or allured by any hope. In outward works he was in the mean season altogether like unto them which were under the law, that is, which did the works of the law against their wills, inasmuch, as his free spirit was hidden from others, even as also the servile and constrained will of others is hidden; and so he both was under the law, and not under the law. He behaved himself outwardly in works, as they which are unwillingly held under the law; when as notwithstanding he was not under the law as they, but of his own free will: Wherefore in respect of his works he was under the law, but in respect of his will he was free from the law; but we as well by will as by works are under the law by nature, for that we do works according to the rule of the law, of necessity, yea, and we do them with that will the law constraineth and urgeth, inasmuch, as we do not endeavour to do them of our own accord. Christ made himself subject to the punishment of the law also for our sakes of his own will. He did not only perform those works which the law commandeth, but he suffered the punishment also which was due to us being transgressors thereof. The law condemneth to death and the eternal curse, all those that continue not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them, as St. Paul, Gal. iii, reciteth out of Moses, Levit. xviii. Now it is declared at large before that the law is fulfilled by no man, but that all men are against their wills held captives of the law, wherefore every one is subject to death and the curse, so that there is no man subject to the law in respect of works, and will, which is not also subject to it in respect of the curse; for it curseth and condemneth all that do not perform it with their whole heart. But here Christ maketh intercession for them that are his, and the judgment which we have deserved, he taketh upon himself, he suffered.
suffered the punishment due unto us, willingly making himself subject to death and the curse, that is, to eternal damnation, no otherwise, than if he had transgressed the whole law, and had more than all, deserved the sentence thereof against transgressors, when as he did not only break the law, but himself alone fulfilled it; yea, and fulfilled it, when as he ought nothing to it, so that he suffered otherwise than he deserved, in two respects; both for that he ought nothing to the law, if he had not observed it, and also for that moreover he most diligently observed it, so that if the law had especial dominion over him, yet had he come in no danger thereof. But on the other side whereas we suffer, we suffer by double right; both for that by the transgression of the law, we have deserved all the punishment thereof, and also for that, if we had deserved nothing, yet being creatures, we ought to be obedient to the will of our Creator. Hereof it now plainly appeareth what this meaneth, that Christ was made under the law, that he might redeem them which live under the law; for our sakes, for our sakes, I say, and not for his own he performed that, and that of no necessity, but of his great love toward us, and thereby he hath declared both his unsurpassable goodness and mercy toward us, being made accursed for us, that he might deliver us from the curse of the law. He willingly made himself subject to the judgment of the law, and did himself bear the sentence pronounced against us, that as many of us as do believe in him, might be free for ever; whereby mark what an incomparable treasure faith bringeth unto thee, whereby thou enjoyest Christ, and all his works, that thou mayest trust unto them no otherwise than if thou thyself hadst done them; for Christ did them not for himself, whom surely they could profit nothing, he having no need of anything, but by them he laid up the treasure of salvation for us, whereunto we should trust, and being made blessed might enjoy it; with which faith also the spirit of the son cometh, which beareth witnesses with our spirit, that we are the sons and heirs of God. What should God now add unto these?
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

there? How can a mind hearing these things contain itself, that it should not love God again with a most ardent affection, and be most sweetly delighted in him? What in any wise may come to be done or suffered; which thou wouldst not willingly take upon thee with exceeding joy, and most high praise of God, with a rejoicing and triumphing mind; which mind if thou warest, it is a certain argument of a faint, or surely a dead faith; for the greater thy faith is, so much more ready also and willing is thy mind to those things, which God either lendeth or commandeth. This indeed is the true deliverance from the law, and the damnation of the law, that is, from sin and death, which deliverance cometh to us by Christ; yet not so that there is now no law or death, but that they do not now trouble the believers any thing, that is, they are as though they were not; for the law cannot convince them of sins, neither can death confound them; but by faith they must happily pass from sin and death to righteousness and life. Here Monks, Nuns, &c. were to be exhorted, if there were as yet left any place with them for counsel and admonition, that they would observe their ordinances, ceremonies, prayers, apparel, and such like, as Christ observed the law, by which means surely they should bring unto them no damnation; that is, that they would set the faith of Christ in the first place, and commit the rule of their heart unto him, acknowledging that by that faith only they do obtain righteousness and salvation; and that all their ordinances and works do avail nothing hereunto. Again that they would make themselves subject to them of their own accord, in no other respect than that by them they might serve their neighbours, and subdue the arrogance of the flesh. But now seeing they are occupied in them with his double erroneous opinion, as though they were necessary to salvation and righteousness, and if they did not observe them, they should grievously sin, they are unto them a most certain destruction, nothing but delusion and sin, whereby with their great affliction they draw unto hell, where they shall fully suffer the vexations and torments under the abbat the devil, which being miserable and foolish
foolish men they have here begun; for all their life doth utterly disagree, with the faith of sons, and that which belongeth only to faith, to wit, to justify and save us, they attribute to their works; wherefore these men cannot both thus stick unto their ordinances, and therewith all have faith, which suffereth it self to be addicted to no certain works, but that things foever the Lord either sendeth or commandeth, or the necessity and need of our neighbour requireth it suffereth and doth them with great willingness and joy. These he that is indued with faith, counteth his works, having in the mean season no regard of masses, or fasting, which some appoint to certain days, of choice of apparel, of meets, of persons, of places and such like; yea, he greatly disalloweth of these, inasmuch as they trouble Christian liberty. These things shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the exposition of this place of St. Paul, where about the matter itself required to spend so many words, forasmuch as the nature of faith is so unknown; for unless thou do well understand the nature of faith, thou shalt perceive nothing or very little in the writings of St. Paul ver. 6. 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.'

Here we see very plainly, that the holy Ghost cometh unto the Saints, by no works, but by faith alone, for Paul faith, 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit, &c.' Sons believe, when servants only work; sons are free from the law, servants are held under the law, as appeareth plainly by those things that are before spoken. But how cometh it to pafs that he faith, 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit,' &c. seeing it is before said, that by the coming of the spirit we are changed from servants, unto the state of sons, so that the spirit must be first sent unto us, before we are sons. But here as though we could be sons before the coming of the spirit, he faith, 'Because ye are sons, &c.' To this question we must answer, that St. Paul speaketh here after the same sort that he spake before. Before the fulness of time came, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the world; all the

clect,
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

elect, which are predestinate of the Lord, that they shall become sons, are counted in the place of sons with God. Therefore he faith rightly, 'Because ye are sons,' that is, because the state of sons is appointed unto you from everlasting, 'God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son,' to wit, that he might finish it in you, and make you such as he hath long since of his goodness determined, that he should make you. Moreover he calleth him the Spirit of the Son of God, that he might continue in commending unto us this benefit of God, that he hath chosen us to be sons. For Christ is the Son of God, and that most beloved. Now if the Father give unto us his spirit, he will make us like to his only begotten son, his true sons and heirs, that we may with certain confidence cry with Christ, Abba Father, being his brethren, and fellow heirs with him: where in the apostle surely hath notably set forth the goodness of God, which, maketh us partakers with Christ, and causeth us to have all things common with him, so that we live, and are led by the same spirit. Moreover these words of the apostle do shew, both that the holy Ghost is another from Christ, and yet doth proceed from him, when as he calleth him his spirit. The spirit indeed dwelleth in the godly, and no man will say that he is their spirit, as here St. Paul maketh him the holy spirit of Christ, saying, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son, that is of Christ; for he is the spirit of God, and cometh from God to us, and not ours, unless one will say after this sort, my holy spirit, as we say, my God, my Lord. Wherefore, whereas he is here said to be the holy spirit of Christ, it proveth him to us God, as of whom that spirit is sent, and is peculiarly counted his spirit.

Furthermore, Christians may perceive by this place, whether they have in themselves the holy Ghost, to wit, this spirit of Sons, whether they hear his voice in themselves; for St. Paul faith, that he crieth in the hearts which he possesseth, Abba Father, according as he faith also Rom.viii. 15. 'We have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father.' Now thou hearest
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

352 Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

hearest this voice, when thou findest so much faith in thy self, that thou doft assuredly without any doubt, presume, not only that thy sins be forgiven thee, but also that thou art the beloved Son of God, which being certain of eternal salvation, dareth both call him Father, and be delighted in him with a joyful and most confident heart; thou must be so certain hereof, that thou canst be no more certain of thy life, and must sooner suffer death, and helish torments, than suffer this trust and confidence to be taken from thee. For to doubt any thing herein were no small reproach, and contumely to the death of Christ, as though that had not obtained all things for us, and ought not far more effectually to provoke and encourage us to have a good trust in God, than all our sins and temptations are able to put us out of hope and fray us from it. It may be indeed, that thou shalt be so tempted, that thou shalt fear and doubt of thine opinion, and think plainly that God is not a favourable Father, but a wrathful Revenger of sins, as it fell out with Job and many other Saints, but in such a conflict this trust and confidence, that thou art a Son ought to prevail and overcome, or else thou shalt come in miserable and desperate estate. When one of Cain’s brood heareth these things, he is as it were beside himself, by reason of admiration and astonishment, yea, faith he, away with this arrogancy, and this most pernicious error, God turn this mind from me, that I do not presume to think that I am the Son of God, I am a sinner, most miserable and wretched, and will never esteem more of myself. But thou which desirest to belong unto Christ, shie this kind of men, who are most hurtful enemies of Christian faith, and of thy salvation. We also know that we are sinners, and miserably wretched; but here we must not weigh or consider, what we either do, or are, but what Christ is, and what he hath done for our sake. It is not spoken more of our nature, but of the grace of God, which so far exceedeth our sins, as heaven is higher than the earth, and the East is distant from the West, as the 103 Psalm faith, Now if it seems
unto thee a great honour, that thou art the Son of God, as indeed it is very great, consider that it is no less marvellous, that the Son of God for this cause did come, was born of a woman, and made under the law, that thou mightest become the Son of God. These are great benefits of God, and do cause in the elect a great trust and confidence in the goodness of God, and a spirit which is afraid of nothing, but is bold and able to do all things. On the contrary, the religion of those of Cain's brood, as it is a thing marvellous strive and careful, so doth it make hearts exceeding fearful, which serve to no use, but are unapt to all things, fit neither to suffer or do any thing, which tremble and are afraid even at the shaking of the leaf of a tree, as it was before spoken of them, Levit. xxvi. Wherefore thou must lay up these words of the apostle well in thy mind, thou must feel this cry of the spirit, which crieth so in the hearts of all the faithful. For how shouldst thou not hear the cry of thine own heart? Neither doth the apostle say, that he doth whisper, speak, yea, or sing, it is greater than all these which the spirit doth in the heart, he crieth out amain, that is, with all the heart. Whereupon it is said, Rom. viii. 'That he maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered and that he beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' How therefore can it be, that our heart should not hear this cry, sighs, and testimony of the spirit? Howbeit hercunto temptation and adversity are very profitable, they move to cry and do exceedingly stir up the spirit; notwithstanding we foolish men do greatly fear and fly the cross, wherefore it is no marvel, if we do never feel the cry of the spirit, and do continually remain like them of Cain's brood. But if thou dost not feel this cry, take heed that thou be not idle and slothful, neither secure, pray instantly, for thou art in an evil case. And yet do not desire, that thou mayest feel nothing but this cry of the spirit thou must feel also another terrible cry made, whereby thou mayest be provoked and urged to this cry of the spirit, which happeneth to all the saints; that is the cry of sins, which call most strongly and instantly unto desperation, but
this cry must be overcome of the spirit of Christ, by
godly calling upon the Father, and crying for his grace,
that the trust and confidence of grace may become grea-
ter than desperation. Wherefore this cry of the spirit
is nothing else, but to be with all our heart touched with
a very strong, firm, and unmoveable trust of most dear
sons toward God, as our most tender and favourable
Father. Hereby we may see how far a Christian life
exceedeth nature, which can do nothing less than trust
in God, and call upon him as a Father, but is always
afraid, and uttereth a voice which is a witness of ex-
ceeding fear. Wo is me, how cruel and intolerable a
judge art thou, O God? How heavy is thy judgment
unto me? As Cain said, Gen. vi. 13, 14. "My punifh-
ment is greater than I can bear: Behold thou hast driven
me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy
face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vaga-
bond in the earth, and it shall come to pass, that every
one that findeth me, shall slay me," &c. This is a terrible
and dreadful cry, which is necessarily heard of all such
as be of Cain's brood, forasmuch as they trust to them-
selves and their own works, and put not their trust in
the son of God, neither weigh and consider that he was
sent of the Father, made of a woman, made under the
law, much less that all these things were done for their
salvation; they are continually tormented in their own
works, the miserable men do in vain go about by them
to help themselves, and to obtain the grace of God.
And while their ungodliness is not herewith content,
it beginneth to persecute even the sons of God; as it
is always wont to do, yea, at the last, they grow unto
such cruelty, that after their example of the father
Cain they cannot rest, until they slay their righteous
brother Abel, in whom they do also kill unto themselves
Christ. Then the blood of righteous Abel crieth unto
heaven against unrighteous Cain, neither ceaseth it to
ery until the Lord hath revenged it. He asketh thoSe
Cains of their brother Abel, yea, of Christ; but they
deny all knowledge of Christ, which labour not to be-
tome the sons of God, and heirs by Christ, but to be-
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

Come righteous by their own works. In the mean time the blood of Christ continually crieth out against them, even nothing but punishment and vengeance, when as for the elect, it crieth by the spirit of Christ for nothing but grace and reconciliation. The apostle useth here a Syrian and a Greek word, saying, Abba Pater. For this word Abba in the Syrian tongue signifies a Father, by which name at this day of the chief of monasteries are wont to be called, and by the same name Hermits in time past being holy men, did call their presidents, at the last by use it was also made a Latin word. Wherefore that which St. Paul faith is as much as Father, Father, or if thou hadst rather, as, my Father. But what is the cause why the apostle doth double the word, Father, that is, the cry of the spirit? I will by your leave bring forth my judgment and opinion hereof. First I think that he would hereby shew the force and straining of this holy cry; for when as we call any with great affection and through necessity, we are wont often to double his name. Now because that sin, and Cain, do always go about with desperation to stop this cry of the spirit for the grace of the Father, it is need surely to cry most strongly, and with a voice both doubled, and exceedingly strained forth, that is, the trust of the grace of the Father ought to be most strong, and not able to be overcome. Again, such is the manner of the scripture, to witness the certainty of a thing, sometime to double or iterate the words, as Joseph did to Pharaoh, Gen. 41. So here also the spirit twice calleth upon the Father, whereby it may shew the certainty of his fatherly favour and grace; for the trust hereof ought to be no less certain, than great and unmoveable. Finally it is meet also to persevere, which again this doubling of the name of the Father doth note unto us: for as soon as we begin to call God Father, Satan with all his band moveth war against us, and omittest no means to wrest from us this trust of sons toward God our Father, wherefore the word Father must be diligently doubled, that is, our trust and confidence must be confirmed, neither must we ever cease from calling upon this Father, but must most earnestly continue
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

continue in this cry of the spirit, whereby we may obtain a certain sure experience of his fatherly goodness, by which our trust in him may be made most certain and safe; and perhaps St. Paul had respect hereunto, when he first set down Abba, which is a word strange to them, to whom he wrote, after adding Pater, that is, Father, a familiar word and of their own language, meaning to signify hereby, that the beginning of so great trust in God is unaccustomed, and even strange unto men, but that when the mind hath a while exercised it, and continued in it altho' assailed with temptations, it becometh even familiar and almost natural, that we now enjoy God as a domestic Father, and do in every thing most confidently call upon him.

Verse 7. 'Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.' Now, faith he, that is after the coming of the spirit of the sons, after the knowledge of Christ, 'thou art not a servant.' For as it is said, a son and a servant are so contrary one to another, that the same man cannot be both a son and a servant. A son is free and willing, a servant is compelled and unwilling; a son liveth, and resteth in faith, a servant in works; and so by this place also it appeareth, that we can obtain no salvation of God by works, but before thou workest that which is acceptable unto him, it is necessary that thou have received of him and possessest salvation and all things, that thereupon works may freely flow forth, to the honour of so gracious a father, and to the profit of thy neighbours, without any fear of punishment, or looking for reward. This, that which St. Paul faith, proveth, 'and if a son, then an heir.' For it is said, before, that we become the sons of God by faith, without any works, and therefore heirs also, as this place witnesseth; for by nature they that are sons, the same also are heirs. But if this inheritance of the Father be now thine by faith, surely thou art rich in all good things, before thou hast wrought any thing; for how should it be, that by faith thou art the heir of God, without any works through only grace, and that thou mayest again first merit it by works? Wherefore the
Of being under the Law, and under Grace.

the cafe standeth as I oftentimes fay, To a man that is baptized and believeth in Chrift, the heavenly inheritance of the Father is already given at once, that is, all good things, they are only hid as yet by faith, for that he should enjoy them being revealed. Whereupon St. Paul faith, Rom. viii. Ye are faved but by hope, for ye do not as yet fee it, but do yet wait, when the possession of your good things shall be revealed. And 1 Pet. i. it is laid, Your Salvation is reserved in heaven and prepared for you, to be fhewed in the last time: Wherefore the works of a Christian ought not to have regard of merit, which is the manner of fervants, but only of the use and commodity of his neighbours, that he do not live and work to himself, but to his neighbour, whereby he may truly live to the glory of God. For by faith he is rich in all good things, and truly blessed. Now the apostle addeth, through Chrift, left that any think that so great inheritance cometh unto us freely, and without all cost; for although it be given unto us without our cost, and without all our merit, yet it cost Chrift a dear price, who, that he might purchase it for us, was made under the law, and fatisfied it for us both by life and also by death. So those benefits which of love we bestow upon our neighbour, do come unto him freely, and without any charges or labour upon him, notwithstanding they cost us something, inasmuch as we bestow upon him, although freely, and of meer goodness, yet those things that are our own, whether it be labour or part of our substance, even as Chrift hath bestowed those things that be his upon us. And thus hath St. Paul called back his Galatians from the teachers of works, which preached nothing but the law, perverting the gospel of Chrift. All which things are very necessary to be marked of us also; for the pope with his prelates and monks, hath now too long a time with intruding and urging his laws, which are foolish and most pernicious, inasmuch as they do every where disagree with the word of God, seduced almost the whole world from the gospel of Chrift and plainly extinguished the faith of fons, according as the scripture.
hath in divers places very manifestly prophesied of his kingdom, where let every one that desireth to obtain salvation, most diligently take heed of him and all his apostles, no otherwise than of Satan himself, and his chief and most pernicious apostles.

SERMON XXI.

Of Faith and Diffidence in Danger and Trouble.

Mat. viii. 23, to the 27. When he was entered into a ship, &c.

According to the history, this text setteth before us an example of faith and diffidence, whereby we may learn both what a strong and invincible thing faith is, and that it must be exercised and tried even in great matters, and full of peril; and also how desperate a thing on the other side diffidence is, and how full of fear and trembling which can never do any thing rightly or well. This doth experience most lively set forth in the disciples; they, when they entered into the ship with Christ, and whilst there was a calm in the lake, were nothing disquieted in mind, neither felt any fear. Then if one should have asked them whether they believed, they would have answered without doubt that they did believe; for they did not know that their heart did trust in that quietness, for that all troubles were absent, and therefore did rest upon a thing visible, and not upon the invisible grace of God; which then was made manifest, as soon as the tempest was risen, and the waves did cover the ship, by and by all their trust and confidence ceased, for that the quietness and calmness wherein to they trusted was taken away, and diffidence, which before, when all things were prosperous, did lurk in their minds, did appear; for this is the nature of diffidence, that it believeth or knoweth no more than it feeleth. Forasmuch therefore as it had possessed
possessed the breasts of the apostles, they felt nothing now but the fearful tempest, and the waves covering the ship, they saw the sea swelling and greatly raging, threatening nothing but death; these things only did they think upon, these only did they consider, and therefore could there be no measure or end of fear and trembling in their minds; the more they weighed in their mind the peril, so much more were they terrified, and seemed now to stick in the very jaws of death, hoping for no life or deliverance. And as they could not so much as think any thing else because of their unbelief, so all comfort also was far from them; for diffidence or unbelief hath nothing whereunto it may trust or flee, wherefore when outward adversity cometh, it admitteth nothing into the mind but it, and therefore it can never feel any peace or quietness, while it remaineth. So in hell, where diffidence exerciseth full tyranny, there can never be any intermission of desperation, trembling and terror. But if the disciples had been then induced with a sound faith, and if it had ruled in this danger, if would have removed from the mind the wind and all this tempest, and instead of these would wholly have thought upon the power of God and his grace promised, whereunto it would no otherwise have trusted, than if it had sat upon a most strong rock, far from the sea and from all tempest; for this is the chief virtue of faith, that it seeth those things which are not seen or felt, and seeth not those things which are felt, yea, which are now fore up on us and do press and urge us; as on the contrary, diffidence seeth nothing but that which it feeleth. For this cause those things are of God laid upon faith, which the whole world is not able to bear, as sins, death, the world and the devil, neither suffereth he it to be occupied with small matters; for who feeth not death? who is not terrified and overcome by it? Against this invincible faith standeth, yea, it courageously sitteth upon it, which otherwise tameth all things, and overcometh and swalloweth up that insatiable devourer of life. So even the whole world is not able to bring under and subdue the flesh, but it rather bringeth under and maketh the world subject unto it, and beareth rule over it;
Of Faith and Diffidence.

It so that he liveth carnally whatsoever is of the world; but faith subdueth this subducer of all other, holdeth it in subjection, and teacheth it not only to be ruled, but also to obey. Likewise who is able to bear the hatred and fury, ignominy, and persecution of the world? who doth not yield unto it, and is oppressed with it? But faith even laugheth at all the iniquity, rage, and fury thereof and maketh that unto itself matter of spiritual joy where with others are even killed; it doth no otherwise behave it against Satan also; who is able to overcome him, which practiseth so many crafts, and coils, whereby he stayeth and hindereth the truth, and word of God, faith and hope, and soweth against the innumerable errors, facts delusions, heresies, desparations, superstitions, and such kind of abominations, without number? all the world is to him as a spark of fire to a fountain of water, it is wholly subdued unto him, in these evils, as (alas) we both see and try; but it is faith which troubleth him, for it is not only not made subject to his delusions, but it also discovereth and confoundeth them, that they are no more of any importance, that they are able to do nothing, but do vanish away, as we have experience at this day, by the decaying and vanishing of the papacy and indulgences: Finally, sin hath that force, that that which is even the least, cannot be appeased, or extinguished by any creature, that it doth gnaw and tear the conscience, yea, if all men should go about together to comfort the conscience wherein sin hath begun to live, they should go about it in vain; but faith is that noble champion, which overcometh and extinguisheth every sin, yea, if all the sins which the whole world hath committed from the beginning, were laid upon an heap, it would extinguish and abolish them altogether. Is not faith therefore most mighty, and of incomparable strength, which dareth many and mighty enemies, and beareth away the certain victory? Wherefore John faith in his first Epist. chap. v. 4. 'This is the victory that overcome the world, even our faith,' Howbeit this victory cometh not with rest and quietness, we must try the fight
not without blood and wounds, that is, we must needs feel sin, death, the flesh, the devil, and the world, yea, and that affailing us so grievously, and with so great force, that the heart of man do think that he is past all hope, that sin hath overcome, and the devil gotten the upperhand, and on the contrary, very little feel the force of faith. We see an example of this fight here in the disciples, for the waves did not only strick the ship, but did even cover it, that nothing could be now looked for, but that all should be drowned, especially Christ being asleep, and knowing not of this peril; all hope was then past, life seemed to be overcome, and death appeared to have the victory. But as it fell out with the disciples in this temptation, so also doth it fall out, and must fall out with all the godly, in all kind of temptations, which are of sin, the devil, and the world. In the temptations of sin, we must need feel the conscience, thrall unto sins, the wrath of God, and helish pains to hang over us, and all things to be in that case as though we were past all recovery. Likewise when we have conflicted with the devil, it must appear, as though truth should give place to terror, and Satan should drive the word of God out of the whole world, and he himself reign for a God with his delusions and deceits; neither standeth the case any otherwise when it cometh to pass that we are tried of the world, it must needs be that it should greatly rage, and cruelly persecute us, so that it shall seem that no man is able to stand, that no man is able to obtain safety, or profess his faith; that Cain only shall bear rule, and suffer his brother in no place. But we must not judge according to such feeling and outward appearance of things, but according to faith, the present example ought to stir us up hereunto, and to be received of us instead of special comfort; for we learn hereof, that altho' sins do urge us, death disquiet us, the world rage against us, and the devil lay snares for us, that is although the waves do cover the ship, yet we must not be discouraged; for although thy conscience being wounded doth feel sin, and the wrath and indignation of God, yet shalt thou not therefore be plunged into hell; neither shalt thou therefore die, although
Of Faith and Diffidence.

although the whole world do hate and persecute thee, and gape so wide to devour thee, as the morning spreadeth forth itself: They are only waves, which falling upon the ship do terrify thee, and compel thee to cry out, We perish, Lord save us. Thou hast therefore in the former part of this text, the nature of faith set forth, how it is wont and ought to behave itself in temptation, also how desperate a thing diffidence is, and nothing to be counted of; the other part commendeth unto us the love in Christ, whereby he was brought so far that he brake off his sleep, arose, and counted the danger that his disciples were in for his own, and helped them freely, asking and looking for nothing of them. Even as it is the nature of Christian love to do all things freely and of good will, to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbours, seeking to itself nothing thereby, for the exercising of which love, man, adopted of God, is left in the earth, that he might for us, as he witnesseth of himself: 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many,' Mat. xx. 28. [The Allegories of this deed] In this deed Christ hath sent forth the life of Christians, and the state of such as preach and teach the word of God. The ship signifieth the church, the sea the world, the wind the devil, the disciples of Christ are the preachers and godly Christians; Christ the truth the gospel and faith. Now, before that Christ and his disciples enter into the ship, the sea is calm, and the wind quiet, but when Christ with his disciples are entred in, by and by ariseth a tempest. This is that which he said, 'I come not to send peace, but a sword,' Mat. x. 34. For if Christ would suffer the world to live after its own manner, and would not reprove the works thereof, it would be quiet enough; but now seeing that he preacheth that they which are counted wise men, are fools; they that are counted righteous, are sinners; they that are counted rich, are not blessed; but miserable, it rageth and is in great fury. So thou mayest at his day find wise men of this world, which indeed would suffer the gospel to be preached, if the words of the scripture
Of Faith and Diffidence.

scripture should be simply declared, and in the mean
season the state of ecclesiastical persons not reproved;
but as soon as thou shalt begin to condemn by thescripts-
tures all those things which have been hitherto brought
in under a false name of religion, and teach that they
are to be rejected as being of no importance, thou
preachest sedulously, and troublest the world with un-
christian doctrine,

But how doth the present text pertain unto us? A
great tempest did arise where that ship went, wherein
Christ and his disciples were. Other ships did pass the
sea quietly, nothing tossed of the wind, this ship only
must be tossed and covered with waves, because Christ
was carried in it; for the world can suffer any kind of
preaching beside the preaching of Christ. The cause is,
for that he condemneth all things of the world, and
challengeth all righteousness to himself, according to that
which he faith, Mat. xii. 30. 'He that is not with me,
'is against me.' And again, The Spirit 'will reprove the
'world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment,' John
xvi. 8. He faith not, will preach, but will reprove, and
not this or that man, but the world, and whosoever is in
the world. Against this ship of Christ all this tempest is
raised, and it is brought into danger; for the world, doth
not suffer his own things to be condemned, but Christ
cannot allow them, and if he should allow them, he
had come in vain; for if the world were wise by itself,
and did know and follow the truth, what need had there
been that Christ and his disciples should preach? Where-
fore it is not a small comfort to Christians, especially to
preachers, that they are certain before, that as soon as
they shall begin to preach Christ to the world, they must
suffer persecution, and that it cannot be otherwise. So
that is a sure sign, and therefore to be wished, that it
is true Christian preaching if it be tried with persecution,
especially of the holy, learned and wise men of the
world; as it is an undoubted sign also, that is unchris-
tian preaching, if it be praised commonly and honoured
of the world, according to that saying, Luke vi. 22.
'Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall
'
separate you from their company, and shall reproach you; and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake—for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Now mark how our spiritual men do behave themselves, and of what sort their doctrine is: They have got into their subjection the riches, glory, and power of the world, and they that praise them, enjoy the honour and pleasures thereof, their case in all things agreeeth with the case of the false prophets, and yet they dare boast themselves to be preachers and teachers of Christ, and worshippers of God. The next thing whereby this deed doth comfort and encourage the preachers of Christ, is that it sheweth where help is to be asked when a tempest is risen; to wit, not of the world, for not man's wisdom or power, but Christ himself, and he alone is able to help them. Him they must call upon in every distress with full confidence; in him they must trust, as his disciples here did, for unless they had believed that Christ was able to take away the danger wherein they were they would not have awakened him, and prayed him to save them; although their faith then was very weak, and very much diffidence was in them, for that they did not confidently commit themselves with him unto danger, doubting nothing but he was able to deliver them out of the midst of the sea, and from death itself. Hereof therefore let it be acknowledged as certain, that as no judge or moderator can be given to the word of God, but God only, so there can be had no other maintainer or defender thereof: who as he senteth it out whither he will, without any merit or council of men, so he alone also will defend and preserve it without the aid or strength of men; and therefore he that seeketh aid unto this word of men, shall without doubt fall, being forsaken as well of men as of God. Whereas Christ did sleep, it giveth us to understand that in the time of persecution he doth sometimes withdraw himself, and seemeth as though he slept, whilst that he giveth not strength valiantly to resist, the peace and tranquility of mind being now disturbed, but suffereth us to wrestle and labour with our infirmity for a while, that we may acknowledge how we are altogether nothing, and that all
all things do depend upon his grace and power, as Paul confesseth of himself, 2 Cor. 1. that it behoved that he should be so pressed and troubled out of measure, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the deed. Such sleep of God David oftentimes felt, and maketh mention thereof in many places: "Arise, awake, O Lord: Why sleepest thou? Why dost thou forget us?" &c. In fine, the present text offereth unto us two principal things, full of confidence and godly boldness. The first, that when persecution is risen for the word of God, we may say, We knew that it would so come to pass. Christ is the ship, therefore the sea so rageth, the winds trouble us, the waves fall upon us as though they would drown us; but let them rage and be furious as much as they may, it is certain the sea and the winds do obey Christ, which is the other principal thing which this text offereth. Persecution shall extend no farther, nor rage any longer then he will, and although the waves do even overwhelm us, yet must they be obedient at his beck. He is Lord over all, wherefore nothing shall hurt us, he only endues us with his grace, that we be not overcome by unbelief, and so despair. Whereas the men marvelled and praised the Lord, as unto whom the sea and winds do obey, it signifieth that the gospel and word of God is so far from being extinguished by persecution, that thereby it is spread farther abroad, and faith also is increased and becometh stronger. Wherein it appeareth how divers the nature of this divine good thing is from the good things of the world, which decay by calamity and misfortune, and are increased by prosperity and fortunate affairs: But the kingdom of Christ is increased and strengthened by tribulation and adversity, but is diminished and weakned by peace and tranquility. Whereupon Paul faith, 2 Cor. xii 9. "My strength is made perfect in weakness;" which God perform in us also. Amen.
Of the Life of a Christian.

SERMON XXII.

Of the Life of a Christian.

2 Cor. vi. 1. to the 10. We then are workers together with him, &c.

This is an admonition and exhortation to the Corinthians, to apply themselves to those things, which they did already know. The words are easy to be understood, but hard to be done, and in use most rare; for in such marvellous order and colours he painteth out Christian life, as it cannot be pleasant to the flesh to behold. First he faith, 'We then as workers together with him, beseech you.' He calleth them ministers of the word, workers together, as 1 Cor. iii. 9. He also faith, 'We are labourers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.' Which is thus must in effect: We preach and labour in the word among you by teaching and exhorting, but God inwardly with the Spirit doth bless and give the increase, lest that the outward labour in the word be in vain; and so God is the inward and true master, which bringeth to pass all things, whom we serve in the office of outward preaching. Now he calleth himself and his fellows, workers together, lest they should contemn the outward word, as though they either had not need of it, or had already sufficiently attained to the knowledge thereof; for though God can only by his Spirit, without the outward word, work all things in the minds of the elect, yet he will not do it, but rather will use together working preachers, and work by their word when and where it pleaseth him. Forasmuch therefore as it seemeth good unto God to give to preachers this office, name and dignity, that they be counted workers together with him, it is not lawful for any man to challenge either that learning or holiness unto himself, that he neglect even never so simple a sermon wherein the word of God is preached, much less that he
he contemn it; for we know not when that time will come, when God by his preacher will vouchsafe to accomplish his work in us. Secondly, the Apostle admonisheth of the danger of losing the light of the gospel, when he faith, 'That ye receive not the grace of God in vain.' Whereby he giveth us to understand, that the preaching of the gospel is not a perpetual, continuing and permanent doctrine, but rather that it is like rain that suddenly cometh and soon passeth away, when the sun and heat come by and by, and take away all the moisture that is left thereof, and afterward scorch and hurt things. This very experience proveth, for no man shall be able to bring forth even one place in the world, where the gospel hath remained pure and sincere above the age of one man, but continued and increased while those lived, by whose ministration it began, they departing, that also almost wholly departed, and by and by after followed heretics and false teachers, with their delusions and false doctrine, perverting and corrupting all things; so Moses foretold his Israelites that by and by after his death it should come to pass, that they should depart from the way of the Lord, and corrupt their own ways, which the book of Judges witnesseth to have come to pass. Moreover the same book faith, that as often as any Judge which had called again the word of the Lord, did die, they fell again forthwith to their ungodliness, and made all things worse and worse; so Joash the king continued in his duty so long as Jehoada the priest lived, who being dead, he began by and by to be a king unlike himself, and left the office of a good and godly king. Neither fell it out otherwise after Christ had received his apostles to himself, almost the whole world was filled with heresies and false doctrines which Paul pronounced before, Acts xx. 29. 'I know this, faith he, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, &c. So standeth the case at this day also, the pure and sincere gospel hath shined unto us, the day of grace and salvation, and the acceptable time are present but they shall shortly be ended if the world stand. To receive grace
grace in vain can be nothing else than to hear the pure and sincere word of God, whereby the grace of God is preached and offered, and notwithstanding, embrace it with no diligence, neither be changed or altered in life. By this unthankful slothfulness we deserve to have it taken away again as being unworthy of it; for we making so light of the gospel are undoubtedly they which are bidden and called to the marriage, but whilst being busied about other matters we despise this grace, the good man of the house is angry with us, and swears that he will never taste of his supper. The same doth Paul now here admonish of, that we take heed to ourselves, lest that we receive the gospel unthankfully and without fruit; yea, Christ also admonished us of the same, John xii. 25. 'Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.' It ought surely to make us more wary and heedful, even for that we suffered grievous and pernicious darkness under the Pope; but we have now forgotten all such things, no thankfulness, no amendment is found among us; which how greatly to our own heart we neglect, we shall shortly feel: 'For he ' faith, I have heard thee in the time accepted, and in the ' day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is ' the accepted time.' He describeth here the marvellous felicity which is there where the gospel flourisheth, there is no wrath, no revengement, all things are replenished with grace and salvation, yea, it is unspeakable how great felicity these words, do speak of. Where he first faith a time accepted, it is spoken by an Hebrew figure, and is as much as thou say, A gracious time and replenished with the favour of God; wherein God turneth away his anger, and declareth nothing but love toward us, and a ready will to help us. Our sins are blotted out, not only those that be past, but those also which as yet stick in our flesh, and that I may speak in a word, the kingdom of mercy is present, wherein nothing but forgiveness of sins, and restoring of grace is shewed; heaven standeth open, the right year of jubilee is come, wherein all debts are remitted, and no grace is denied. Whereupon he faith, 'I have heard thee in a time accepted;' that is,
Of the Life of a Christian.

is, now I favour thee and am merciful unto thee, whatsoever thou wilt have, pray for it, and thou shalt obtain it, and certainly receive it; only let not the fault be in thyself, pray while this time endureth. ‘Behold, now is the day of salvation.’ He calleth this the time and day of salvation, that is, of help and felicity; for we are not only certain hereof, that God is merciful and favourable unto us, and we acceptable unto him, but also, as we believe, and by faith are sure of his goodness towards us, so he declareth indeed, heareth them that cry unto him, helpeth and saveth them, yea, and maketh them plainly blessed. We therefore worthily acknowledge and confess this time to be the wished, prosperous, happy, and very day of salvation; for it behoveth that both be together, both that God favour us, and also that he declare his favour towards us by work or deed.

That he favoureth us, the accepted time which is now our salvation, this other witnesseth viz. the day of salvation the day of help. But as the state of the life of Christians is, if thou wilt judge according to the outward man, thou wilt judge it rather a time of affliction, wrath and indignation, wherein the gospel is preached, and wherein they live, than a time of grace and salvation; wherefore the words of the Spirit must be spiritually understood, so shall we easily see and perceive, that these noble and most pleasant names do most rightly and properly belong to the time wherein the gospel flourisheth; that it is a time accepted, that is full of grace, and a time of salvation, whereby freely all the riches and felicity of Christ's kingdom are notably commended and set forth unto us. ‘Giving no offence in any thing.’ Forasmuch therefore as there is so acceptable and gracious a time, let us, faith he, use it worthily, and not receive it in vain. First, endeavouring to give no occasion of offence to any man, least that our office of preaching Christ be reprehended, whereby he sufficiently declareth what offence he meaneth, namely, that the doctrine of the gospel may not be stumbled at, as though he taught that

A

which
Of the Life of a Christian.

which is not perfect and found. Now there may be given a double occasion of offence, whereby the gospel is reprehended; one, whereby the heathen are offended, when as some under the pretence of the gospel, seek the liberty of the flesh, will not be obedient to Magistrates, turning the liberty of the spirit, into fleshly licentiousness. These do marvellously offend the discreet and wise sort of the heathen, so that they hate the gospel without a cause, which they think doth teach this licentiousness: and as it were with a certain force they do by this their insolence repel and drive them from the faith of Christ; for they measuring all Christians by these, do detest them as light of men, and trouble the common-wealth, and therefore not to be suffered. This offence therefore, and this reprehension, or rather hatred and persecution of the gospel we acknowledge to come through these preposterous Christians. Another offence is, whereby even Christians among themselves are sometimes offended through the unseemly use of all Christian liberty, in meats and other indifferent things; whereat the weaker sort in faith do sometimes stumble, whereof the apostle hath given many precepts, 1 Cor. viii. Rom. xiv. He exhorteth therefore here unto that, whereof he admonisheth in other words 1 Cor. x. 32. So behave yourselves, that ye "give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." The same he teacheth also Philip. ii. that every man look not on his own things, but on the things of other men, so all offence should be easily taken away, nay, none at all should be given. "That the ministry be not blamed." Who can bring to pass, that our ministry shall not be blamed, seeing that the gospel is necessarily subject to persecution, no less than Christ himself? Indeed it is not in us to make that the word of God be not blamed and persecuted of them which are ignorant of God, and do not believe; for it is a rock of offence, Isaiah viii. Rom. ix. this offence cometh because of our faith, and cannot
Of the Life of a Christian.

cannot be avoided of us, and therefore the blame thereof ought not to be laid upon us. Howbeit there is another offence which proceedeth hereof, for that our love is not sufficient dutiful, this cometh through us, insomuch as our works are the cause thereof, because they do not so shine by faith, that they which are conversant with us, may thereby be provoked to serve God, as it is meet. This offence is given through our fault, whom it cometh so to live, that the Jews, Heathen and princes of the world might have no occasion to say, Behold how light and naughty these men are, yea, and very wicked wretches, the doctrine of life, which they follow must needs be evil and pestilent. So our infamy and crimes are occasion of offence to others, and of hatred and detestation of the most holy word of God. For whereas we ought so to know, preach and follow it, that thereby both our neighbours might be brought unto God, and to the leading of a godly life, and also the glory of God set forth, so we by our naughty and slothful life bring to pass, that it doth not only bring no profit and advantage to our neighbours, but is brought into hatred and made detestable through our means, bearing our ignominy and reproach. Now it is a most horrible sin and wickedness by our naughtiness to make the word of God which is most holy and bringeth salvation, to make it, I say so odious, and to repel and drive men from it to our own, and their most certain destruction.

"But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions," &c. Here he describeth in order the signs and proper tokens of a Christian life wherewith it ought to be adorned in outward conversation; Not meaning that one is made a Christian and godly hereby, but as he faith, that by these as by proper fruits and figures of Christianity, we should shew ourselves to be both, and behave ourselves as the ministers of God, that is as Christians and godly men; and mark well that he faith; as the ministers of God." It may seem very strange, that the ministry of God consisteth in these, in 'afflictions, in necessities,
Of the Life of a Christian.

Ties, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, &c. Among these he numbeth not masses, and prayers for the dead, or other trifles of feigned worship of God. He rehearseth those things that pertain to the true and right service of God, whereby the body is chastised, and the flesh tamed. Which is well to be noted, lest that any neglect fastings, watchings and labour, and make no account of them for that they do not justify. They bring not righteousness indeed, yet are they fruits of righteousness being obtained, wherein thou mayest be exercised, and whereby thou mayest keep thy flesh in subjection, and inforce it to do his duty. In tumults. He rehearseth tumults or seditions among the rest, not that it becometh us to teach or move them, who ought to obey magistrates, and with quietness to live obedient unto all in that which is good, as St. Paul teacheth, Rom. xiii. and Christ, Mat. xxii. Give unto Cæsar those things that are Cæsar’s. But that we must bear tumults of others, as also necessities, distresses, stripes, and imprisonments, which we must cause or procure unto none, but suffer being procured and laid upon us by others. Wherefore in the first place he setteth much patience, which surely moveth no sedition or tumult, but rather suffereth it, and appeaseth it if it can. But in the mean time, it singularly comforteth us at this time, when as tumults are commonly imposed unto us, for that this is incident to a Christian life, that for the preaching of the gospel it is accused to raise sedition, which it rather suffereth being raised of others against the word of God; for as in time past Achab accused the most holy prophet Elias of sedition, affirming that it was he that troubled Israel, when as he himself indeed did trouble it; so is it neither a shameful nor new thing, for us to be accused of the same, when we preach the same word. Let us think when the enemies of God lay this reproach and slander upon us, that not only Elias, not only the apostles, but Christ himself was counted of the Jews a seditious fellow, and crucified, a title being written in three languages and put on the cross, that he should of all
Of the Life of a Christian.

all be counted a seditious king of the Jews, which would have moved that people against Caesar, and ad-
joined them unto himself, who indeed by word and example of his life, taught nothing more than submis-
sion and obedience, and lived so that he was ready to profit and minister unto all. As for the rest whereof the apostles here maketh mention, as patience, afflic-
tion, necessity, distress, stripes, prisons, labour, watch-
ings, fastings, purity; it is easy to understand how they pertain to the ministry of God, who truly disdaineth to have slothful, idle, gluttonous, and drowsy ministers, and such as cannot abide adversity and trouble. But he especially proveth our delicate ones, which quietly enjoy revenues and rents, and take their delight and pleasure, thinking that it is an unworthy thing, that they should labour, for they are shaven, wear long gowns, and cry out in temples, &c. Howbeit these shall not be able to approve themselves before God, who will have all to labour, and eat their own, and not other men's bread, as it is written by St. Paul to the Thessalonians. Who therefore teacheth here also, that God is served by labour, and not that only, but that we also are thereby proved and commended to be the mini-
ters of God.

'By knowledge.' St. Paul taketh knowledge here for that which we call here prudence or wisdom, whereby we use things with reason, behaving ourselves with dif-
cretion and comeliness; of which knowledge the saying also of St. Paul, Rom. x. 2. is understood, 'They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,' that is, they bear a zeal, to the law not prudently, not weighing and considering all things well, that they might do no undecent thing, wherefore he here expressly re-
quireth knowledge in the ministry of God, there-
by admonisheth us, that we frame our life with rea-
on, and order it prudently, in all things keeping a mean, and having an advised regard of our neigh-
bours, lest that in any thing we offend the weaker fort, with unseasonable use of Christian liberty, and that we do all things to the edifying of all; so we must labour, fast, watch, and apply ourselves, to chastity, A a 3.
and such other things not above measure that either
the body may be in danger by too much hunger and
watching, or the true purity of life by overmuch ab-
flinence from matrimonial company, but we must use
these things with knowledge, that is, with convenient
wifdom and discretion, that they may not any whit
hurt, but always edify. Whereupon St. Paul, 1 Cor. vii.
expressly admonisbeth married folks, that they abstain
not overmuch from mutual company least that they
be tempted of Satan. In all these therefore, in fast-
ings, watchings, labours, chaffity, &c. the apostle
would prescribe and appoint no rule, law, or measure,
which the countrils of the pope and monks do, but the
mean or measure to be observed in them he left free to
every man's knowledge and discretion, that every one
may consider with himself how much or long he must
labour, fast, watch or abstain, to this end, that the
flesh may be tamed and made obedient to the spirit. ' By
long suffering, by kindness, by the holy Ghost.' What
the two former are, the apostle hath sufficiently declar-
ed, Rom ii. Gal v. But whereas he faith, By the holy
Ghost, it may be understood after two sorts, either that
he speaketh of the holy Ghost, God himself, or that he
meaneth by the holy Spirit, the true force and manner
of a spiritual life, as though he would admonish in this
manner; Beware of an hypocritical spirit, which will be
counted for a holy spirit thro' a marvellous shew and craf-
ty counterfeitings of spiritual things, when it is indeed
an unclean, prophane, and evil spirit, and bringeth in no-
thing but Sects and Heresies. But live ye in the true
and holy spirit which is given of God, which giveth and
maintaineth unity, one mind, heart and affection, where-
of he speaketh also, Eph. iv. 3. ' Endeavouring to keep
the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' They there-
fore which persever in the same true faith, mind and sen-
tence behave themselves as the ministers of God in the
holy spirit, being truly spiritual life, which is led by the
assistance of the holy spirit of God, is also led in the
unity of minds, the hearts by faith being affected after the
the same manner. By love unfeigned, By the word of truth. As he set the holy spirit against heretics and false prophets, so he setteth unfeigned love against slothful and sluggish Christians, who altho' they have the same meaning and mind in the true spiritual like, as concerning opinions of doctrine, yet are they remiss, cold and faint in love; so he setteth the word of truth against them which abuse the word of God, and interpret it according to their own affections, that thereby they may get them a name and profit; for as false spirits do condemn the word of the scripture, and prefer themselves before it; so these do indeed boast of the word, and will be counted masters of the scripture, but by their interpretations do pervert the sense and meaning thereof. Against these Peter speaketh, 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,' that is, let them take heed that he be certain that those words which he speaketh, be the words of God, and not his own vain imagination. Now St. Paul calleth that the word of truth, which is the sincere word of God, not which is in sincere and feigned, which forasmuch as it is ours, is falsely called the word of God. For that which we call the true and right word, the Hebrews call the word of truth. 'By the power of God.' Of this power St. Peter also speaketh, 1 Pet. iv. 11. 'If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.' And St. Paul Colos. i. 29. 'Whereunto I also labour striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.' Again Rom. xv. 18. 'I will not dare to speak of any of those things, which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, &c.' Christians must be certain that they are the kingdom of God, and do nothing at all, especially in spiritual functions, and those things that pertain to the salvation of souls, whereof they are not certain, that it is not they which work, but God that worketh by them. For in the kingdom of God it is meet, that God alone do speak, command, do, dispose and work all things. This Christ meant when he said, Mat. v. 16. 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,'
heaven,' as the author of them, which doth them and not you, 'By the armour of righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left. By honour and dishonour, &c.' This armour he describeth more at large in the epistle to the Ephesians and Thessalonians; he rehearseth there the girdle of verity, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shoes of preparation to preach the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation. &c. This armour of righteousness, he calleth in his epistle to the Ephesians, the armour of God, both are to this end, that he may turn Christians from corporal and prophane armour, and admonish them, that they are a spiritual people, and therefore must be furnished with spiritual armour, wherewith they must always fight a spiritual fight with spiritual enemies, which here he rehearseth, and sheweth that they do assail us both on the right hand and on the left. On the left hand he setteth dishonour, evil report, and that we are counted as deceivers, unknown, dying, chastened, sorrowing, poor having nothing. For all these things come unto Christians, they are openly defamed, being reproached to their face, and by infamy falsely accused and railed on, counted as deceivers and followers of most wicked trades. They are as unknown, although noble, all refusing to be friends with them, because of the perilous confession of the name of Christ, yea, it many times cometh to pass, that they that were their most familiar friends are ashamed of them, for that they have so evil a report, and are very ill spoken of among the chief, richest, wisest, and mightiest of the world, they are dying, that is, as sheep appointed to the slaughter, they look for death every moment, by reason of the great hatred and envy which the evil bear toward them, being always persecuted of the chief of the world. They are chastised, for it often times falleth out, that they are stricken and beaten, and do by other disadvantages try how they are envied of the world, and how great indignation the mighty of the world bear against them. They are as sorrowing, for all outward things are against them, and the whole world giveth many causes of griefs unto them; they are as poor,
poor, for there is no man of the world which will give
them any thing, every man is ready to hurt and en-
damage them; neither do they possess any thing, for al-
though all things be not taken from them at once, yet are
they in that state, that they daily look for it; against
these adversities and as enemies affailing us on the left
hand, it is needful, that we be fortified and fenced with
the armour of God, left, that we either despair or faint.
Now this armour is a sure and invincible faith, con-
tinual consolation and exhortation of the word of God,
and a lively hope and undoubted expectation of the help
of God. When being furnished with these, we suffer
all things patiently, standing steadfast in our duties, we
declare ourselves the sincere ministers of God, which
the false apostles and hypocrites can never do altho' they feign that they serve God.

On the right hand he setteth glory, praises, that we
are counted true, known, do live, are not killed, do
rejoice, enriching many, possessing all things; for it al-
ways falleth out, that there be some which make ac-
count of Christians, and reverence them, among whom
they are well reported of, and counted true in doctrine,
wherefore some are not wanting which join themselves
unto them, and do openly pretend friendship with them,
freely pronouncing them to be the ministers of God: nei-
ther do they die so oft as they are brought into danger,
and being chastened are not always killed. Finally, it
cometh to pass by the consolation of the spirit, that
they do then most of all rejoice, when they are in great-
est affliction; for their heart rejoiceth in God, which
joy bursteth forth, and uttereth itself in words, works,
and gestures. And altho' they be poor in temporal sub-
stance, yet are they never famished with hunger, but
with the word of God, do enrich very many in spirit,
and stand not in need of any thing, although they
have nothing, for all things are in their hands, for that
all creatures must serve the believers, as Christ faith;
to him that believeth all things are possible. These
things altho' they be the excellent gifts of God, not-
withstanding if the fear of God should be absent, even
they should be turned into enemies unto us, and there-
there
Of Temptation.

fore it is needful that we be strongly fenced against them with the armour of God, lest that they make us wax proud, or insolently puff us up. A Christian man therefore is marvellously free, and delights in nothing but God alone, he setteth God only before his eyes, he endeavoureth to come straight unto him by this middle and high way, between those things which affail on the right hand and on the left, so that he is neither thrown down by adversity, nor puffed up by prosperity, but u- feth both most rightly, both to the glory of God and profit of his neighbours; we must, faith the apostle, live such a life, while it is the time of grace and of the live- ly light of the gospel, left that while this day shineth we work not, and so have shined unto us in vain. This is the true ministry of God which only healloweth, where- in he grants that we may serve him, and that most duti- fully, Amen.

**SERMON XXI.**

Of Temptation.

Matth. iv. 1. to the 11th. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted, &c.

T HIS text hath therefore been appointed to be read in the beginning of the solemn fast which hath hitherto been commanded for forty days, that the example of Christ being commended to Christians, they might thereby be provoked to keep that fast so much more religiously, which surely was nothing but a vain trifle. First, for that no man is able to follow the ex- ample of Christ, who lived without any meat, forty days and so many nights, Christ rather followed the ex- ample of Moses herein, than gave unto us any example to follow. Moses received the law, was forty days and forty nights in mount Sinai without meat, so long time would Christ also fast, coming to bring and publish a new law. Again, this fasting is a perverse thing, in-
as much as it was ordained of men. For altho' Christ fasted forty days, yet have we no word of his, whereby he hath commanded us also to do the same. He did many other things besides, notwithstanding he will not have us also to do them; those things that he hath commanded us to do, those things, I say, we must endeavour to do, that thereby we may obey his will; but the most pestilential thing of all herein was, that we took upon us, and used fasting as a good and meritorious work, not to tame the flesh thereby, but to satisfy for sins, and to procure the favour of God unto ourselves; which wicked opinion made our fasting so foul, filthy, and abominable before God, that no fastings, banquets, glutonny, and drunkenness are so filthy and detestable before him, and it were better to drink and bib day and night, than so to fast; and although their ungodly and wicked intent had not defiled our fasting but that it had been ordained for chastising the body, nevertheless, as it was not left free, that every one might have taken it upon him of his own accord, but it was inforced by the laws of man, so that most which fasted, fasted against their wills; and with a grudging mind, it could not be but vain and unacceptable to God. I speak not what other hurt it did to women with child, in young children, in the weak and aged. Wherefore we will more rightly consider this text, and see what manner of fasting it teacheth by the example of Christ. The scripture commendeth unto us two sorts of fasting, which are laudable: one, which is taken upon us of our own accord, to name the flesh, whereof the apostle speaketh, 2 Cor. vi where he exhorteth us to behave ourselves as the ministers of God, by labours, watchings, and fastings among the rest. Another, which indeed is not taken upon us willingly, yet is willingly born of us, when by reason of need and poverty we have not whereon to feed: whereof St. Paul speaketh also in the first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. iv. 'Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst.' And Christ, Matt. ix 'When the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall they fast.' This fasting Christ teacheth us by
by his present example, who being alone in the desert, and having no meat, did suffer hunger and need patiently. The first of these two facts may when we please be left and broken with eating of meat; but this last must be suffered until the Lord end and break it. Now the cause why the evangelist did so diligently first declare, that Jesus was led up of the spirit into the wilderness, that he should there fast and be tempted, is this; lest that any taking upon him to fast of his own mind, and for his own profit sake, should in vain endeavour to follow this example of Christ; for he must look for the leading up of the spirit, he will cause fasting and temptation enough: for he that without the leading of the spirit, should voluntarily bring himself into danger of hunger, or any other temptation, when by the blessing of God, he hath what to eat and drink, and whereby to live quietly, he, I say, should plainly tempt the Lord. We must not procure to our selves poverty and temptation, they will come soon enough of themselves, only when they are sent of the Lord, we must endeavour to bear them patiently; Jesus, as the evangelist writeth, was led up of the spirit into the wilderness, he did not chuse to himself the wilderness; they are led with the spirit of God, which are the sons of God, Rom. viii. The good things which the Lord giveth, he giveth for this, that we may enjoy them with thanksgiving, not that we should neglect them, tempting him. Moreover, this history is written unto us both to instruct, and also to exhort; to instruct, that we may learn hereby, that Christ by this his fasting, hunger, temptation and victory against Satan did serve us, and furthered our salvation; that whosoever believeth in him, may never need, or be hurt by any temptation, but rather shall abound with good things in the midst of poverty, and be safe in the midst of temptation, for that his head and Lord Christ hath overcome all these things for him, whereof by faith he is most certain, according as the Lord himself faith, John xvi. 33. Be ye of good cheer, I have overcome the world. And if God could without meat nourish his Christ.
Of Temptation. 381

Christ forty days and so many nights, so he can also Christians; we are exhorted also here, that according to this example of Christ, we suffer hunger, temptation, and other necessities when they come, and when the case so requireth, to the glory of God and profit of our neighbours, and surely if we do earnestly confess and stick to the word of God, these things will undoubtedly come unto us. The present text therefore containeth a marvellous consolation and strengthening of faith against the filthy and incredulous belly, which being diligently and faithfully weighed, our conscience shall be very much comforted and strengthened, that we may not be careful for living, but trust with a full confidence, that God will give us plentifully those things that be necessary. Now, that this temptation also is incident unto it is manifest; for as Christ was led aside into the wilderness, that is, was left alone of God, angels, men, and all creatures, which might help him; so also it falleth out with us; we are led up into the wilderness, we are forsaken and left alone; and this indeed is it, which especially grieveth us, to feel or perceive nothing whereunto we may trust, or from whence we may look for help; as when it lieth upon me to prepare lustenance for me and mine, and I have nothing at all of myself, neither perceive any help coming from any man, neither know where to look for any. This is to be led up into the desert, and to be left alone, I being in this case, am in the true exercise of faith, then I learn how I myself am nothing, how weak my faith is, how great and rare a thing found faith is, and how deep abominable incredulity is settled in the hearts of all. But he that hath as yet a purse heavy with money, a cellar full of wine, a garden replenished with grain, he is not yet led up into the wilderness, or left alone, and therefore cannot feel temptation while these things remain. Secondly, Satan cometh, and tempteth Christ with this care for the belly, and diffidence of the goodness of God, saying, ‘If thou be the son of God, command that these stones be made bread,’ as if he should say according to the Dutch proverb, Trust in God, and in the
the mean time neglect to bake bread, tarry till a roast
ed chicken fly into thy mouth. Go now and say that thou hast a God, who is careful for thee; where is now thy heavenly Father, who hath so great a care of thee? Hath he not goodly forsaken thee? Eat now and drink of thy faith, and let us see how thou shalt be sufficed; it were well with thee, if thou couldst feed on stones; what a goodly son of God art thou? How fatherly doth he behave himself toward thee? He sen*
d thee not so much as a piece of bread, but suffereth thee here to be pined with hunger. Go now, and believe yet that thou art the son of God. and he thy Father. Surely with these and such like cogitations he tempted all the children of God, which Christ alfo undoubtedly felt, for he was not a block or stone, but every man, although pure from sin, as he also continued, which is not given unto us. Now that the devil tempted Christ with care of the belly, diffidence and wicked desire, the answer of Christ doth sufficiently de-
clare: ' Man liveth not by bread alone: ' which is as
much as if he had said: thou wilt have me have regard
to bread alone, thou deallest with me, as though I ought
to have no other care but of meat and food for the
belly. This temptation is very common, even among
men that are of the most perfect sort, but they especially feel it, which when they are poor, have notwithstanding a wife and children to nourish and maintain, and therewithal an empty house. Hereupon St. Paul called covetousness the root of all evils, for that it is the right offspring of diffidence; and what thing else, but this diffidence and care of the belly, is the cause that many are so loath to marry? What else doth hold so many thousand men in whoredom and unchaste living, and de-
taineth them from matrimony, but this immoderate care of the belly, and ungodly fear, left they should be pined and perish with hunger? But the present deed and ex-
ample of Christ should be thought upon, who although he had been without meat forty days and so many nights, yet was he not quite forsaken and left destitute. But the angels at the last came, and ministr'd all things
necessary
necessary unto him. Thirdly, we may see here how Christ meeteth with this temptation of the belly, and overcometh it. He seeth nothing indeed but stones, and that which cannot be eaten, therefore from these things that were before his eyes he removeth his mind to the word of God, thereby both strengthening himself, and overthrowing the devil. On which word Christians, especially when poverty presseth them, and all things seem to be turned into stones, and the mind doth now tremble for fear of hunger, ought with a strong faith to lay hold, and answer the temptation that would quite discourage them: what if the whole world were full of bread? yet doth not man live by bread alone, there is need of another thing, that is, of the word of God. Now forasmuch as these words are of marvellous force and efficacy, we must a little stand upon them, and endeavour to declare them, and not lightly pass them over. These words therefore Christ took out of the fifth book of Moses, Deut. viii. 3. where Moses speaketh thus unto the Israelites: The Lord thy God he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna (which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know) that he might make thee know, that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live. Which is as much as if he had said, Whereas he suffered thee to hunger, and yet thou didst not perish, thou mayest thereby easily know that it is God which sustaineth thee by his word, even without bread; for if we did live and were nourished by bread alone, it were necessary that we should be always filled with bread; but it is the word of God that nouriseth us, which he will have preached, that we may know that he is our God, and that he will shew himself bountiful and gracious unto us. We are taught therefore, by this answer of Christ, and testimony of Moses, that he which believeth in the word of God, shall undoubtedly have experience of two things. First, that when meat is wanting, and he is pinched with hunger, he is well sustained and strengthened by this word, that he die not or perish with hunger, as if he might abundantly enjoy meat; this word of God, which he
he obtaineth in heart, nourishing and strengthening him without meat and drink; and if he have but a little meat, he shall perceive that little, although it were but even one piece of bread, to feed and nourish him no less than if he did enjoy princely fare; for not by bread, but by the word of God the body is nourished and preserved, like as by it it was made, as also all other things, like as by the word they were created, so also by it are they preserved. The other thing, which we are here taught that the believer shall have experience of, is, that at the length he shall assuredly receive bread, from whencesoever it come, yea, although it should rain down from heaven, as manna did to the Israelites, in a place where no other bread could be gotten. Let a Christian quietly promise to himself and look for these two things, his hope cannot be frustrate, either he shall have in hunger somewhat to eat from whencesoever it be given him, or his hunger shall be made so tolerable unto him, that he shall be no less fed than if he were fed with bread, the power of the word of God nourishing and sustaining him. Those things that I have said of bread, that is, of meat, are also to be understood of drink, apparel, house, and all things necessary unto this life. It may be indeed that a godly man do need apparel, or an house, &c. but at length he shall have them; the leaves falling from the trees shall sooner be turned into coats and cloaks, than we can be left naked, or surely those garments which we have shall not wax old, which the Israelites tried, whose clothes and shoes in the desert were not torn, as also a most wide wilderness was unto them instead of houses, places unpassable passable, unwatry watry, finally, the stony rocks fountains of water; for the word of God standeth sure and unmoveable: the Lord he careth for you; and Paul faith, 'God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy,' 1 Pet. v. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Also Christ faith, Matt. vi. 33. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow.' Such words and promises of God must needs remain true for ever, and therefore no good thing can be wanting to them that believe; this even daily experience
ience may teach us. We see commonly poor folks and their children to be better liking than many rich folks and their children, for that the use of their small sustenance is by the blessing of God increased, and doth much more feed and nourish them, than all that most abundant sustenance doth feed and nourish the rich. Now, whereas the wicked do sometime suffer need in the time of famine, some do even die through hunger, that is, the special vengeance of God, as is also the pestilence, war, and such like; otherwise it plainly appeareth, that not meat, but God doth feed and sustain us. Howbeit, whereas God feedeth the world with bread, and not with his word alone without bread, he therefore doth it, that he may so hide his work, and exercise our faith; so he commandeth the Israelites, that they should prepare themselves to battle, and yet he would not have the victory to be gotten by their sword and labour; but he himself would by means of their sword and labour overcome and vanquish the enemies. Here also it might be said, that the soldier doth slay and overcome the enemies, not by his sword alone, but by the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God; whereupon David faith, Psal. xlv. 6. I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. And again, He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: He taketh not pleasure in the legs of man, &c. Psal. cxlvii. 10. Nevertheless God useth men, swords, horses, and bows, howbeit not by the power and strength of them, but by them as by certain means and instruments he himself fighteth and overcometh; this he hath sufficiently declared oftentimes, when he hath overthrown the enemies and delivered his people, which surely he daily doth, when the case so requireth. After the same sort God useth bread also, by it, forasmuch as it is made for that use, he feedeth us, howbeit when it is wasting, he nevertheless feedeth them that be his even by his word, without bread, as he doth at other times by bread, so that bread doth as it were work under God, as the apostles and preachers of the word in spiritual and evangelical meane serve under him, as it is mentioned, 1 Cor. Bb
3. for as God useth their ministry to teach men, he himself by his Spirit speaking in their hearts through it, and doing all things alone, which he both is able to do, and oftentimes wont to do without the ministry of the preachers of his word, although he will not in the mean season have the ministry of his to be despised, and so himself tempted; so to the nourishing of our outward man, he outwardly useth bread, although he doth make by his word inwardly, that we be nourished and strengthened, which he can as well do, as is wont to do when bread is away, that all our nourishment may be attributed to the word and not to bread, which he useth as an instrument, but yet of no necessity. That I may speak briefly, all creatures do as it were serve under him, and are his instruments, without which notwithstanding he is able, and oftentimes wont to work; by this means providing, that we may depend on his word alone, neither trusting more unto him, when we have bread and other things which our life useth, neither less when we want them, but may use them with giving of thanks when he bestoweth them upon us, when otherwise, we may patiently be without them, being certain nevertheless, that we shall live and be nourished in both times, both when we have them, and when we have them not. And by this faith that vain and ungodly care of the belly, greedy desire of things, and carefulness of life are overcome. ‘Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city,’ &c. This temptation is quite contrary to the former; he affaileth us with such temptation also, whereby he goeth about to move us to tempt God, even as he willeth Christ to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, and so tempt God, when there were ladders, by which he might descend; and that this temptation provoketh to tempt God, it is manifest even by the answer of Christ, who answereth Satan in this manner: ‘It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.’ Hereby he signifieth, that the devil would provoke him to tempt God. Now this temptation doth not amiss follow the former; for when the devil perceiveth the heart that in poverty and necessity it trusteth in God, he by and by maketh an end of tempting by care of the belly
belly and desire of things, as being weaker than that by
it he may overthrow one so strong in faith. He thinketh
therefore with himself, If he professeth himself to be of so
religious and assured a mind, I will on this side also give
occasion to sin; and so he setteth upon him on the right
side, affirming that that is to be believed, which the
Lord hath neither spoken, nor commanded to be believed
as is this: If he should bring thee to such madness, that
when thou hast bread at home given thee of God, as he
of his goodness giveth unto us every day, thou wouldest
not use it, but wouldest procure to thyself necessity and
hunger, saying I must trust in God, I will not feed on
this earthly bread, I will tarry till God give me other
from heaven. This were to tempt God; for he doth
not command thee to believe, that that thing shall come
unto thee whereof thou hast need, if it be already come
of his liberality; for why shouldst thou believe that he
will give that which thou hast already of his gift? Thou
seest therefore that the devil doth here object a certain
necessity and need unto Christ, where there is none; for
there was a sufficient mean to descend from the pinnacle
of the temple, neither was it reason to attempt this new
unaccustomed and unnecessary mean whereunto Satan
persuaded. Moreover, allegorically, we may by this
doing of Satan perceive his craft and subtlety: The devil
taketh him, faith the Evangelist, up into the holy city, and
setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple. By this emptation
he repleniseth men with cogitations that seem most
holy, that they may think themselves most plentifully
endued with faith, and to stand in a very holy place,
when as notwithstanding they are set not in the temple,
but on the temple, that is, not in the sincerity of faith,
but in a vain outward shew of faith; nevertheless he is
in the mean season in the holy city, because that this
kind of men is wont to be no where but among Chris-
fians, where the word of the Lord and the preaching of
faith is daily heard, who also like unto Satan have sen-
tences of scripture in a readiness, as concerning the words,
although they always pervert and wrest them to their
own error and false imaginations; so Satan recited here
unto Christ, out of the 91st Psalm, that God doth com-
mand
mand his angels concerning his children, that they keep them, lifting them up with their hands. But the deceiver concealed that which is added, that is, in their ways. For thus hath the Psalm xci. 11. 'For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.' So that the custody of angels is not by the commandment promised unto us, unless we walk in our ways which he hath prescribed us. If we walk in them, we shall assuredly be kept of angels; howbeit the devil faith nothing of the ways of the Lord, but promiseth by corrupting the saying of the Psalm, that it is commanded to the angels, to keep us in what ways soever, whereof the Lord hath commanded nothing. And this is Satan's seducing, and persuasion to tempt God. But this temptation doth not easily happen in these outward things, as are bread, apparel, houses, &c. Thou mayest find indeed some rash heads, which for no cause do put their life, goods, and good name in great danger, as they do which go on warfare of their own accord, which leap rashly into most deep waters, or go voluntary into other no small dangers. Of whom Jesus the son of Syrac faith, 'He that loveth danger, shall perish therein,' Eccles. iii. 26. whereof the Germans have a proverb, 'Self do, self have,' what every one followeth, that he cometh unto. So it is almost usual that none are oftener drowned, than they that are most exercised in swimming, and none fall more perilously, than they which use to attempt high matters. But he shall be hardly found, which having a false and overmuch confidence in God, attempteth any such thing, or useth not the things present, as bread apparel, house, and such like, looking with peril, while God provide otherwise for him by miracle. We read of a certain Hermite, who because he had vowed to take bread of no man, brought himself into peril by hunger, and so perished, and undoubtedly went straight to hell, because of that false faith and tempting of God, which he learned no other where but of the devil, so that his madness was altogether like that, whereunto Satan here persuadeth Christ, viz. that he should cast
cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple; howbeit thou shalt find very few which do follow this hermit, and do defer to enjoy temporal things present, for that they hope that God will give them other from heaven.

But in spiritual things, which concern the nourishment, not of the body, but of the soul, this temptation is wont to be both mighty and often; in these God hath appointed a certain manner, whereby the soul may be fed, nourished and strengthened, both most commodiously, and also most blessedly, so that no good thing at all can be wanting unto it. This nourishment, this strength, this salvation, is Christ our Saviour, in whom the Father hath most abundantly offered and given all good things. But there are very few which desire him, the most part seek some other where, whereby their souls may live, and obtain salvation. Such are all they which seek salvation by their works. These are they whom Satan having set on a pinnacle of the temple, biddeth them cast themselves down, and they obey him; they descend, whereas it is no way that is, they believe and trust in God, yet so, as they trust also in their own works, in which is no place at all for faith and trust, no way or path unto God, wherefore throwing themselves down headlong, they break their neck, falling into utter desparation. Now Satan persuadeth miserable men unto this madness, as also he persuaded Christ to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, by places of scripture perverted and misapplied, wherein works are commanded, whereby he maketh them believe, that the angels shall keep them, that is, that they shall be approved of God, when as indeed they can by nothing offend him, as by that mad trust and confidence in works; for they acknowledge not, that the scripture doth no where require works without faith, or that it doth every where require a found and lively faith from which works proceed. We have at large declared who are such, namely, incredulous hypocrites, which are given to works without faith, which falsely boast of the name of Christians, challenging to themselves to be chief in the flock of Christ; for this temptation must be
be in the holy city. Now these two temptations, and the causes of them do greatly differ. In the former cause why men do not believe, is need and hunger, for they are thereby moved to distrust God, and despair of his goodness. In the latter the cause why they do not believe, is overmuch abundance, for that miserable men are full of most plentiful and abundant treasure, so that they loath it, coveting to have some other special thing, whereby they may procure the salvation of their souls. So our case standeth ill in both respects: if we have nothing we despair, and distrust God; if we have plenty of things we loath them, and require other, being then also void of faith. Concerning the first, we fly and hate scarcity and seek plenty; concerning the latter, we seek scarcity and fly plenty. Howsoever God dealeth with us we are not content; our incredulity is a bottomless pit of malice and ungodliness. 'Again the Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain.' Here he tempteth with vain glory and power of the world, as by the words of the devil doth plainly appear who shewing Christ the kingdoms of the world offered them to him, if he would worship him. By this temptation they are overcome which revolt from faith, that they may enjoy glory and power here, or at least do so temper their faith that they lose not these things: in the number of these are all heretics and troublest of the church, which do therefore either live, or oppugn the sincerity of faith, that being exempted out of the common number they may be extolled on high. So we may place this temptation on the right-hand, as the first afflicteth us on the left; for as the first temptation is of adversity, whereby we are moved to indignation, impatience, and diffidence, so this third temptation is of prosperity, whereby we are provoked to delights, glory, pleasures, and whatsoever is excellent and delectable in the world. The second temptation is altogether spiritual, whereby Satan by deceit, and marvelous and secret subtlety goeth about to withdraw man from faith; for whom he cannot overcome with poverty, scarcity, necessity, and misery, them he tempteth with
with riches, favour, glory, delights, power, &c. and so he affaileth us on either side, yea, when he prevaleth by neither way, he goeth about, as St. Peter faith, and attempteth all means, that whom he can overcome neither by adversity, that is, by the first temptation, nor by prosperity, that is, by the third temptation, he may overcome either by error blindness, or false understanding of the scriptures, that is, by the second temptation which is spiritual and therefore most hurtful; by which if he prevail against any, they are also overcome both on the left side and on the right; for whether they suffer such poverty, or enjoy plenty of things, whether they contend, or yield unto all things, both is nothing while they are in error, either in patience in adversity or constancy in prosperity can be of no importance. For in both even heretics oftentimes do notably excel, and it is a practice of the devil oftentimes, to feign himself overcome in the first and third temptation, that he may reign victor by the second; he can be content, that they that be his, do oftentimes suffer poverty patiently, and do also contemn the world, although they do neither of both with a simple heart, and sincere faith. Every one therefore of these three temptations is grievous and very hard, but the middle one is most perilous of all, for it assaileth the doctrine of faith, and is spiritual and wont to deceive in spiritual things. The other two also doth assail faith, howbeit in these outward things, as adversity and prosperity, altho' they do also urge us very sore; for it cannot be a little grievous to suffer poverty, to want bread, and such other things necessary: again, it is no less grievous to neglect, and wholly to deny favour, glory, riches, friends, companions, and other commodities which we have; but an entire and sound faith in the word of God can perform both notably, and if it be a strong faith, they seem very easy and defeatable unto it. We cannot certainly know the order of these temptations which happened to Christ, for that the evangelists have not described them after one order; for St. Luke hath set that last, which St. Matthew hath set in the midst, and that which Mat-
Of Temptation.

heu hath set last, Luke hath placed in the midst. But they do not so much consist in the order; notwithstanding, when any will teach the people concerning these temptations, it were better to follow the order of Luke; for he may fitly say, and thus rehearse; that Satan doth first tempt us with poverty and adversity, whereby if he prevail not, then he tempteth us with prosperity and glory, which if he do in vain, then he affail- eth us with all his might, and tempteth us with error, lies, delusion, and other spiritual subtilities; yet neither is this order always observed of Satan; but he tempteth Christians sometime with the first, sometime with the third temptation, as he hath and seeth occasion. Matthew was not careful to rehearse them in that order, which they have almost by their own nature, and which may be commodious for him that shall teach of them. Yea, it may be that they happened not unto Christ by any certain order, but that he was affaided of Satan one day with this, another day with that, during the space of those forty days, as Satan thought it most convenient and meet for his purpose. And behold angels came and ministered unto him. This I think was done corporally, that they having taken bodies appeared and ministered unto him meat and drink, as his servants at the table, and ministers of all other things necessary for his life. Yea, and I think that the devil also appeared unto him in a corporal form, perhaps as an angel; for in that he took Christ, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, also whereas in a moment he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, he sufficiently declared, that he was more than man, and such a one surely he shewed himself openly, when he offered that he would give unto him those kingdoms, and required that he would worship him; and undoubtedly he did not appear like a devil when he did these things, for he loveth to appear after a fair sort, especially when he will lie and deceive: for then he transformeth himself into an angel of light, as St. Paul witnesseth. Now this is written chiefly for our consolation, that we may not doubt, that many angels shall minister unto us, when one devil tempteth us,
Of leading a godly Life.

Of leading a godly Life.

393

If we fight valiantly; for if we stand fast in faith, God will not suffer us to be troubled and pinched with poverty, more than is meet, that he will sooner send his angels to minister unto us, to be our butlers, our cooks, and to help us in all our necessities; neither are these things written for Christ’s cause, whom they cannot profit, but they are written for us, that we may learn to believe, that if the angels ministered unto him, they shall also when the case so requireth minister unto us his brethren and members. The Lord give us faith to believe this.

SERMON XXIV.

Concerning the leading a godly Life.

Ephes. v. 1. to the 9. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, &c.

This text is exhortary, wherein St. Paul, according to his manner, and accustomed care for the brethren, exhorteth Christians not to leave, or slack the study and care of godliness, and give themselves to slothfulness, but to declare by their works the word that they have learned of him, that is, to shew it forth by the fruits of faith, and make it plausible and honourable, to the edifying of the Heathen, least that by the vices of them which profess the doctrine of the gospel, they take occasion to hate that doctrine, and so be offended by them, whom it behove to win unto Christ.

'Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.' First, therefore he exhorteth us, forasmuch as we are by Christ made the sons of God, to imitate such a Father, as dear children, marvellous gently, and alluringly he speaketh unto us, calling us dear children, that by the love of God our Father toward us, he may provoke us to love him again, and them whom he commandeth us to love, even as he hath loved us first; but how hath he
he loved us? Surely not after that common fort alone, whereby in this life he nourisheth and sustaineth us being unworthy, together with all the ungodly; making his Sun to arise on the good, and on the evil, and sending rain on the just and unjust; whereof Christ speaketh, Mat v. ‘Be ye perfect as your Father is perfect.’ But he loveth us also after another special manner, in that he hath given his Son for us, John iii. For he hath abundantly bestowed upon us all temporal, and also eternal good things, yea, his own self, and hath as it were poured himself with all that he is, hath, and can, into us who were sinners, unworthy enemies, and servants of Satan, so that he could not do and give unto us more and greater things. Now he whom this divine fire of love which filleth heaven and earth, and yet is not comprehended, doth not kindle and inflame to love likewise his neighbour, whosoever he be, friends, or enemy, he, I say, will neither by law, precepts, doctrine, threatenings, and force be ever moved to godliness and love. Walk, faith the apostle, ‘in love,’ whereby he signifieth, that our life should be nothing else, but meer love. Howbeit he will not have us walk in the love of the world, which in love seeketh those things which are his own, and loveth so long as there is any thing, whereby it looketh for profit and lucre. Therefore he faith, ‘As Christ also hath loved us,’ who neither sought nor could look for any profit or advantage of us, and yet he loved us so greatly, that he gave himself for us, and not only his other good things which he giveth us daily, and he so gave himself for us, that he might be an oblation and sacrifice, to obtain the good will and favour of the Father toward us, and to bring to pass, that we might now have God a merciful and favourable father, being become his true children and heirs, &c. So also it behoveth us to give and lend, not only to our friends, but also to our enemies, neither to count this sufficient, but to be ready also even to die both for friends and foes, thinking nothing else, but that we may serve and profit our neighbours both in body and goods, as long as we shall be in
in the pilgrimage of this life, seeing that we possess all things being given unto us by Christ. 'And hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling favour.' This manner of speech St. Paul borrowed out of the Old Testament wherein those corporal sacrifices are written oftentimes to have yielded to the Lord a sweet favour, that is, to have been acceptable unto him; notwithstanding that was not because of the work and sacrifice in itself, as the Jews falsely thought, and therefore were very often reproved of the prophets, but for Christ's sake who was to come, the one and only sacrifices of a good favour, whom all those sacrifices of the law did shadow forth, and represent: wherefore that which St. Paul here faith, is as much as if he had said, All the sacrifices of the Old Testament have an end, they can now be of no price, Christ himself is the only sacrifice, which yieldeth unto God a sweet smelling favour, that is, is pleasing and acceptable unto him, whereby we are assured that we are acceptable unto God, and do please him; wherefore there is no other sacrifice in the church which may be offered for us, beside this only sacrifice, which being once offered, hath at once satisfied for the sins of all the elect; and altho' we after the example of this sacrifice, do offer our bodies to God, as St. Paul teacheth, Rom. xii. yet we offer them not either for ourselves, or for other, forasmuch as that is proper to Christ, the only sacrifice, whereby the salvation of all is obtained; wherefore those things smell most stinkingly before God, whatsoever men offer with this mind, as tho' they would satisfy for their own sins, or for the sin of other, whereof we both have and will elsewhere speak more.

'But fornication, and all uncleannesses, or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you.' By the name of uncleannesses beside fornication he understandeth all lust, and lecherous filthines, which is committed out of matrimony, which for the filthiness of them he doth not vouchsafe to rehearse by name, as Rom. i. he speaketh very groffly of them; altho' in matrimony also a mean may be exceeded, and it is the duty of Christians so to moderate the use of marriage, that they require
quire and perform due love and benevolence only for avoiding fornication, but we are fallen so far, that they are most rare, which come together only for procreation of children and to avoid fornication, which surely were best and should very well become us. Now the apostle faith, 'Let it not be once named among you,' that is, be so far from these evils, that they may not so much as be spoken of; although it will never come to pass in this exile, that none among Christians be weak, and do not oftentimes fall, yet true Christians will never wink at those things; they will reprove, amend, put away, cover and cure whatsoever such thing shall burst forth amongst them, that the heathen may not be offended and say: See what vices the Christians suffer among themselves, how unclean and lewd a life do they lead, thinking that all their whole life is defiled with like vices as is their own: we must needs confess, that among Christians some do oftentimes fall, which we must needs bear; it is well if only the better part liveth well, and winketh not at their sins, neither teacheth them, but rather reproveth and amendeth them. So St. Paul exhorteth, Gal. vi. that they which are spiritual will restore them that offend, with the spirit of meekness; and he sharply reproveth the Corinthians, for that they did lightly pass over many sins, of certain persons. For sin being reprehended and punished, is now counted as no sin, neither can the church be blamed because of it: after the same fort heed must be taken, that covetousness be not named among Christians, that is, that they become not infamous by the name thereof, which they shall bring to pass, if, when it chance that covetous men be amongst them, or one useth deceit toward another in their businesses and affairs, or some contend in judgment for those outward things, if I say they do not wink hereat, but do reprove and correct such, that the sincerity of the doctrine of the gospel may obtain due estimation among the people, and there may be no cause openly to disparage our ministry, 2 Cor. vi. These things have I spoken because of them, who as soon as they see that all things do not resemble and shew forth a holiness among Christians, and that some do stumble
flumble and fall, do think, that there is no Christian left, that the gospel is to no purpose, and that all things are taught and done in vain; as tho' the life of Christians were now without fight victory and due triumph over sin being obtained, when as rather it is a warfare and a continual fight; whereas therefore they do now fight and are in the camp, it is no marvel if some fly away, if some be wounded, if some fall, yea, and be even lain outright; war is not made without peril and hurt, if it be earnest war.

'As become saints.' This he addeth to his exhortation, as a reason and cause shewing why it lieth upon Christians, to take heed that they be not defamed by these names; for they are saints, now it cometh such to be chaste, bountiful, and ready to give, to teach and do the same; thou seest here, that St. Paul calleth Christian saints, while they remain yet in this life, and are pressed with flesh and blood, from which nothing cometh but sin, which he doth undoubtedly not for their good works; but because of the sanctifying blood of Christ, as he witnesseth, 1 Cor. vi. 11. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." Forasmuch therefore as we are saints, it is meet that we should shew the same in our works, and altho' we be as yet weak, nevertheless we must daily endeavour to live purely, and far from covetousness, to the praise and glory of God, and edifying of our neighbours, even the heathen. 'Neither filthiness.' All unchaste and lewd words of bawdry, uncleanness, and lecherous matters, he calleth filthiness, of which words abundance is wont to be poured forth in inns and victualling houses, in the time of eating, drinking, and playing. These the Greeks used very freely and accustomedly more than others, as their own poets and other writers do sufficiently witness; but he especially reproveth here those lewd and wanton words, which are spoken openly without shame, which stir up wicked and unchaste thoughts, and are cause of many offences, especially being spoken among youth, according to that saying, 'Evil communication corrupt good manners,'
Of leading a godly Life.

'ners,' 1 Cor. xv. 33. as the apostle writeth to the Corinthians; and if any Christians should be so careless of their tongue, that such words should come from them, such must be chastised of the church, and if they do not amend, they must not be suffered, lest because of them the whole church be ill reported of, 'as tho' these things were either taught among Christians or suffered to be unpunished, as it is wont to be among the Heathens. 'Nor foolish talking.' Fables and other trifling speeches and jests are called foolish talking, which the Grecians also were wont to use more than other nations, being very witty to invent such vain speeches. Of this sort are those tales, which our women and maidsens are wont to tell, spinning at the distaff, also the terms and verses of jugglers and such like fellows, and many common songs, which are partly even filthy, and partly contain other trifling and vain things; but especially it is unseemly and inconvenient for Christians to use such foolish and trifling talk, when they come together to hear the word of God, or to read and search the Scriptures, and yet notwithstanding almost even such folly happeneth among them, when many come together; for altho' they begin with serious matters, nevertheless they are marvellous easy brought unto trifles, from earnest and holy matters, to ridiculous and vain speeches, wherewith both the time is spent in vain, and better things are neglected; so have they been wont certain years hitherto, at every feast of Easter in the time of preaching to tell some ridiculous tale to stir up the people from sleep; they did not unlike at the feast of the nativity of Christ, using songs or carolls, where- in they said, they made discourses of the birth and infancy of Jesus, howbeit ridiculous metre and words, moving rather laughter than devotion, as they called it: also they sung many feigned fables of the wise men, whom they made; three kings, of the passion of the Lord, of the punishment of Dorothea, and many others, all which were nothing but foolish talking and vain inventions, altogether unworthy of Christians. To the number of these I might well add those histories of saints,
Of leading a godly Life

faints, which they call the Legends, and that flood of lies, of miracles and pilgrimages to images, and monuments of saints, masses, and worshipping of saints, indulgences, and innumerable others, not so much foolish as ungodly inventions which in the assemblies of the church, were wont to be chiefly extolled in the pulpit, which were so contrary to godlinefs, that they deserve much rather to be called the wicked inventions of Satan, than foolish imaginations of men; for they did not as ridiculous lies are wont to do, corrupt good manners only, of which St. Paul speaketh especially here, but they did wholly overthrow faith, and put out of place the word of God, so that they did not only not beseech saints, but did plainly abolish all saints. Those former therefore were fables and tales of men, which are not believed, neither esteemed any thing of, but rather laught at, although in the mean time they corrupt good manners, withdraw Christians from serious matters, and make them slack and slothful: but these latter are devilish fables, which are believed for a truth, and counted for serious, yea, and heavenly matters, when as notwithstanding, they be nothing else but feigned devices of Satan, whereby he with his angels deludeth and mocketh us. 'Nor jesting.' Hereby he understandeth all pleasant speeches, which they whom they call jesters are wont to use, to make men merry, which by pleasant discourses, and merry terms do move laughter and stir up mends minds to mirth, and cheerfulness, which is wont to be usual in civil banquets, and when civil companions meet together. This jesting the heathens counted for a virtue, especially Aristotle; but St. Paul among Christians giveth it place among vices. for Christians have other speeches, whereby they may recreate and cheer themselves in Christ, which also do bring some profit with them, although it easily happeneth, that many Christians do offend oftentimes herein; but they that are true Christians, do never praise it. neither do suffer that any should give himself to this jesting, and study to exceed therein, but they reprove and prohibit him, especially in the church, in the time of preaching and teaching;
Of leading a godly Life.

...; for Christ hath witnessed, that we shall in the last day give an account of every idle word; it is meet indeed, that Christians be an elegant and amiable people, but therewithal grave, that there may be seen in them a severe gentleness, and a gentle severity, as the life of Christ is described unto us in the gospel.

'Which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.' This comprehendeth all idle words which want a proper name; now I call them idle words which make neither to the edifying of faith nor to the use of our temporal life; for there be things enough both profitable and pleasant, which when it pleaseth us to speak, we talk of in the short time of this life, as of Christ, of love, and other things either necessary or profitable: whereof St. Paul admonisheth, when he saith, 'But rather giving of thanks;' for our daily speech ought to be the praise of God, and giving of thanks to him, as well privately, as publicly in sermons, for such infinite good things, as he hath given unto us in Christ, even unspeakable: but such is the manner of our reason and nature, that necessary and profitable things are neglected, and foolish and frivolous things are chiefly regarded. Now mark here, if St. Paul doth not suffer in Christians speeches that be only pleasant and tending to mirth, what thinkest thou would he say of that pestilent backbiting and flandering, which reigneth now in all companies of men! Yea what would he say of them which openly in sermons do as it were bite and rent one another with reproachful words, and maliciously accuse and speak evil of one another? 'For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God.' In these words he doth very plainly pronounce against them which are infected with such vices, that they are heathens under the name of Christians, how many soever do not bring forth the fruits of faith; this is a brief and certain sentence: He that is a fornicator, hath denied the faith; an unclean person hath denied the faith, a covetous person hath denied the faith, all such are apostates, persuaded and traitorous toward God, as St. Paul writeth also unto Timothy of him that
that neglecteth them that be of his family, 'But if any faith he, provide not for his own, and specially for thofe of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,' 1 Tim. v. 8. How could he be more severely and terribly fray us from vices? For he faith, 'For this ye know,' as it he said Do not so much as doubt, count it not a play, neither let it be sport unto you, neither comfort yourselves with vain hope of a Christian name, and for that ye are counted Christians, these things shall profit you no more than it profited the Jews, that they were the children of Abraham and disciples of Moses, it was spoken to all which Christ faith, Mat. vii. 21. 'Not every one that faith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven.' There is need of doing, and our faith muft be proved by works; whom therefore that great force of heavenly fire (hall not inflame unto godliness, that is, the admonition of the incomparable love of God towards us, which he set in the first place, him let these horrible threatenings of hell fire move, viz. whereas he witnesseth, that as many as will not follow God, and walk in love, and shew forth their faith by their works are neither the sons of God, nor heirs of his kingdom, whereupon it followeth, that they are undoubtedly heirs with Satan of hell fire. Whom therefore these two so mighty provocements shall not stir up to the fear of God and godliness, with all diligence to the duty of a Christian, he is plainly a block and a stone, having a heart harder than the anvil, as Job faith; he particularly reproveth a covetous person, and pronounceth him an idolater or worshipper of images, whereby surely he declareth, how greatly he is displeased with them that are infected with this vice, and in his third chapter of his epistle to the Coloffians, he faith, also the fame thing of him; the cause hereof I think to be this; other sinners use only that thing, wherein they offend, and make it serve their lust and desire; fo the fornicator and unclean person use their body to pleasure: the proud person useth riches, learning, the favour of men, and such like, unto glory; only this miserable idolater is a slave to his money and riches,
riches, and his sin is, that he spareth his money and goods, keepeth and hoardeth them up, dareth not apply them neither to his own use, nor to the use of others, but doth plainly serve and worship them as his god, and so much esteemeth them that he would sooner lose and suffer to perish the kingdom of God, than he would spend his money, or give the value of a rush toward the maintaining either of a preacher, or an instructor of youth, whereby the word of God and his kingdom might be furthered. Forasmuch as all the trust and hope of such a man is reposed in money, and not in God alone, who giveth him abundantly whereby to live, money is worthily called his God, and he himself faid to be an idolater, and hath no inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. What can be invented more filthy and pestilent than this diseafe? Wo unto thee, incredulity, how abominable and hurtful an evil art thou? 'Let no man deceive you with vain words.' These are the vain words of them which extenuate and make light of fornication and such like sins, as though they were not greatly evil, or did so much offend God. There were not wanting Philosophers and Poets among the heathen, which counted all use of letchery beside adultery only, lawful, as a thing natural, as is to use meat and drink; 'fo faith Terence, 'It is not 'a wickedness, believe me, for a young man to follow 'harlots,' &c. But this is to be ignorant of God, and to live according to the fore of concupiscence, as the Gentiles were wont to do. Moreover such vain words are those, which although they have some likelihood of truth, yet indeed are trifling, and shall not excuse any; so covetousness doth not want a cloak and pretence for itself, for him that seeketh his own with the disadvantage of others, they call a good husband, industrious, one that looketh to his business, although in the mean while the poor perish with hunger, or are otherwise afflicted above their strength. Wherefore such speeches are profane and heathenish, by which love is extinguished, and they which give ear to them and believe them are deluded with a vain hope; 'For because of 'these things cometh the wrath of God upon the chil-
Of leading a godly Life.

...dren of disobedience. This is another light which we ought to follow, leaving the obscure light of reason, which doth not greatly condemn fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, &c. This our light witnesseth, that for such things the wrath of God cometh upon unbelievers, whom he calleth the children of disobedience, and therefore cannot abide to believe the word of God, and to give themselves to the obedience of faith. This Paul declareth, 1 Cor. x. by many examples, where he saith that a great part of the people was slain for fornication, of which deed is spoken also, Numb xxv. for violence also, covetousness, and uncleanness, the whole world was destroyed by the flood. Wherefore a sufficient sharp, yea, and a certain vengeance abideth them that are infected with these wickednesses; now he calleth them the children of disobedience, that is, of incredulity, which is as much as if he had said, Of them that have revolted from the faith, and have renounced Christ. Hereby we see and learn, that he that doth not approve his faith by works, is no better than a heathen, yea worse, insomuch as he hath renounced Christ, and denied the faith once received; for this cause the vengeance and wrath of God shall come upon them that are such, as we Germans do now try, unto whom God sendeth abundantly the pestilence, famine, and cruel war. Let men take heed they give no ear to those deceivers, which with vain words promise that those sins shall escape unpunished: Let those slack and slothful Christians beware, who although they be not blind heathen, but know well that uncleanness and covetousness are sins, and think or teach no otherwise, do nevertheless live wickedly, resting upon faith, whereby they hope that they shall obtain salvation without works, forasmuch as works do not save; yea, altho' they very well know, that faith without works is a figned faith, and that worthy fruits and good works must needs follow, where a true and sound faith is, yet notwithstanding they live securely in their sins, presuming of the grace and mercy of God, nothing fearing God and his judgments, when notwithstanding it is certain, that God doth require the mortification of the old Adam, and good fruit of good trees. Although
perhaps Paul speaketh not here properly of these, but of them which think and in vain words teach, that fornication, covetousness and such like, are not sins, as the blind heathen did, and many do at this day under the name of Christians; yet is it not to be feared, seeing they live no better than the heathen do, and be themselves fornicators and covetous persons, that they shall feel the like vengeance of God with them, yea so much more grievous vengeance, as they do know more certainly that those are sins, according to that saying, Rom. ii.3. “Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. &c. Eph. v. 7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For yewere sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. So Peter also faith, 1 Pet. iv. 3. The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness,” &c. but from henceforth should have nothing common with them, but spend the rest of our life in the service and worship of God. When we were Gentiles, we knew not that these were sins, we were so blinded through incredulity and ignorance of God; but after that we were made light in the Lord, that is, lightened by Christ, we do not only well understand what God is and what he requireth of us, what sin and iniquity, but are also able now to be instead of light unto others, and to teach them those things which we have learned. Such Paul said the Philippians were, chap. ii. 15. ‘In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.’ So before we were not only dark, but darkness itself, inasmuch as we were not only ignorant and erred, but did also bring others into the same darkness, both by words and deeds. Let us be thankful therefore to him, which hath called us out of this darkness into his marvellous
vellous light, walking as the children of light, which Peter also admonisheth us to do. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.

Forasmuch as he hath here spoken of light, it had been more agreeable to have added, for the fruit of light, as the Latin editions have, than of the Spirit, as it is read in the Greek. Who knoweth whether the Greek copies were here changed upon this occasion, for that Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians treateth of the fruits of the Spirit: But this skilleth little, of the Spirit and of light, are all one in this place. Goodness therefore is a fruit either of the Spirit or of light, contrary to covetousness, whereby a Christian man is good, that is, profitable and beneficial to others, ready to gratify and do well to his neighbours. Righteousness, being a fruit of the Spirit, is contrary to covetousness; for it maketh that no man doth take away from another that which is his, either by violence, either by craft or guile, but that he endeavour rather to give unto every man that which is his own. Truth is a fruit of the Spirit, contrary to hypocrisy and lying, which requireth that a Christian be true and incorrupt, not only in words, but also in his whole life, that he do not glory of the name of a Christian, without works, that he be not called a Christian, and yet live after the manner of a heathen, in fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, and other vices, &c.

SERMON XXIII.

God's Providence and Care for his Children.

Luke v. 1 to the 11. And it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear, &c.

To them that believe this text is most easy to be understood, which setteth forth two things unto us namely, faith and temporal good things. First, it declareth unto them that believe in Christ, that they
God's Providence and

shall have sufficient wherewith to sustaine themselves even in this life; which Christ sheweth by this, when he giveth so many fishes to Peter and his companions, as they durst not so much as desire. So that Christ is careful even how to feed the belly, if that cursed incredulity be not an hindrance thereunto; for behold St. Peter, and consider his heart aright in your mind, then shall ye find, that he did not so much as think that he should take so many fishes. God therefore is present, and causeth fishes to come into the net, even more then they would have wished; by which example we are admonished that they shall have sufficient of those things that are necessary for the sustenance of this life, which do believe. But they that do not believe can never be satisfied, whereby they fall into all kinds of vices. Hereunto pertaineth that which St. Paul faith, i Tim. vi 6. "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." This place of St. Paul plainly declareth what followeth our unbelief, viz. that it travelleth to get substance, and laboureth to be rich, and falleth into the temptation and snares of the devil; but we cannot see that, forasmuch as it is spiritual. If we could as well see the hurt, which it bringeth to spiritual things, as we can see that which it bringeth to corporal and outward things, then were it an easy matter to preach unto us; for we see plainly in outward things, how he that is given to the desire of money, scarpeth and gathereth together, doth injury to all men, that he alone may gather together and heap up many things, whereunto he may trust and say, Well, now have I goods enough. Whereby we may gather how unkind and unmerciful a covetous man is; for he doth good to no man, he sheweth himself gentle and kind to no man, he
Care for his Children.

he giveth nothing to any man, but looketh unto his own lucre and advantage.

Now this is a cursed thing, that we cannot so much as trust unto the Lord, that he will feed our belly, thinking always that we shall perish with hunger, when notwithstanding we shall have things necessary, and that which is sufficient for us, as Christ faith, Mat. vi. 25. “I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on: Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat; or what shall we drink? or what shall we put on? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take the thought for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” Ye see in this place, how God hath a care for the fowls and flowers, and doth adorn them after a most goodly sort; how much more will God give unto us those things that be necessary? and yet we cannot but trust in him, so that the devil entangleth us in his snares. When one cometh so far, that he is not content with that he hath, neither trusteth in God, then charity must needs suddenly cease, so that he doth good to no man, but only provideth that his own heap he increased. Hereupon came the spiritual state of sacrificing priests and monks, that they might only help themselves, feed their belly, avoid labour, enter into monasteries, that
thereof did arise a true proverb, 'Desparation maketh a monk:' yea, not only a monk but sacrificing priests, bishops and popes; for they trust not in God, that he is able to feed them, but they study upon this only that they may be delivered from all misery and infirmity, which is altogether to live incredulity: they never trusted in God, that he is able to give them nourishment and things necessary, if any of them should marry a wife and remain without that state of Antichrist. Here is an example set forth unto us, which provoketh and allureth us to confidence, and first that we commit our belly to God; for he hath a care of us, even in temporal things, which sufficiently appeareth in Peter, whereas he took such a great multitude of fishes, which ran by great companies into his nets, whereby it plainly signified that God will forfake no man, but that every one shall have enough, if that we shall only trust in him, as the 37th Psalm affirmeth: 'I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forlaken nor his feed begging bread.' Things necessary shall not be wanting unto us, if faith be not wanting; for before we should want, the very angels should come and minister unto us food. Whereas men are commonly oppressed with so great misery, only unbelief is the cause thereof. And altho' God be with us, notwithstanding he requireth yet of us, work or labour, and hope, if he at any time defer somewhat to help us. He commandeth Peter here, that for the taking of fishes, he should cast forth his nets. 'Launch out into the deep, faith he, and let down your net for a draught,' as if the Lord said, do thou that which belongeth to a fisher, cast thy net into the deep, and commit the success unto me, leave the care unto me. God leaveth not the care unto thee, but the work and labour; howbeit we after a clean contrary method, study to commit the care to ourselves and the labour to him. Whereby it cometh to pass, that every one for himself applieth his mind earnestly to gain, and to gather money unto himself, that he may not be inforced by any means to take pains and labour. But if thou wilt live a Christian life, leave unto thy God to care how
how the fishes shall come into the nets, and go thou and take upon thee the state wherein thou mayest labour. Howbeit for the most part we with such states of life, as in which there is no need of labour, which is altogether a devilish thing. And therefore have we been consecrated monks and sacrificing priests, that we might live only like gentlemen, without labour. And for the same cause parents have set their children to school, that at last they might live merry days, and to serve God, as they thought. Whereby it came to pass that they did not know, what a good life was; forasmuch as God especially commendeth that, and that indeed is acceptable unto him, which is gotten with the sweat of the brow, as he commanded Adam, Gen. iii. 19. ‘In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.’ And the deeper thou art occupied in the law, in so much better case thy things are, wherefore follow thy work, labour, and trust in God, all carefulness being cast off. Now some murmur, and say, If faith be preached, that we must trust in God, and leave the care unto him, I might long enough, say they, believe or trust, before I should have wherewithal to be fed and sustained, if I should not labour. Yea it is plain enough that thou must labour, forasmuch as labour is commanded thee; howbeit suffer God to care for thee, believe thou and labour, then shalt thou assuredly have those things that be necessary for the sustaining of thy life. And this is another thing, that we must hope notwithstanding, though God deferreth for a time, therefore he suffereth them to labour all the night, and to take nothing, and sheweth himself to be such a one, as will suffer them to perish with hunger, which might have come into the mind of Peter, when he had fished so long and taken nothing, so that he might have said, now God will suffer my belly to perish with pinning and famine. Howbeit he doth not so, but goeth on still in his labour, he plyeth his work and hopeth that God at the last will give him fishes, although he deferreth a time. God therefore is present, and giveth him so many fishes in one day, as he could scarce take in the space of eight days. Wherefore these things are
are to be learned well of thee, that thou labour and
hope, although God deferreth his blessing a little: for
altho' he deferreth a while, and suffereth thee to labour
fore, so that thou now think thy labour to be lost, yet
must thou not therefore despair, but repose thy hope in
him, trusting assuredly that he will at the last give thee
prosperous succeed; for he will certainly come and give
more than thou didst need as he did here unto St. Peter.
Wherefore if God delayeth with thee a little, think
with thyself, he delayed also with St. Peter, and yet
afterward gave unto him abundantly. Commit thyself
therefore to his good will and pleasure, and leave
not off thy work, but hope still, and then shall not
thy hope be frustrated. Thus much concerning the
former part of the text, now let us hear the latter.
After therefore that they had taken fishtes, and tasted
the fruit of faith, their faith is increased and augment-
ed. We therefore must go so far, that we may com-
mit our belly to God; for he that cannot commit so
much as his belly to him, will never commit his soul
unto him. Howbeit that is only a childish faith. Here-
we learn first to go by benches and settes; here we
do feed on milk as yet; but we must likewise learn by
these to commit our soul also to God. The Evangelist
so meaneth, when he faith, "When Simon Peter saw it,
he fell down at Jesus knees, saying, Depart from me, for
I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and
all that were with him, at the draught of the fishtes
which they had taken." Let Peter be here a type or fi-
gure of them which believe eternal good things, and
count him as one verily looking for and seeing the good
things to come. A sinful conscience is of that na-
ture, that it so behaveth itself, as Peter here did,
whereas he flieth his Saviour, and thinketh, Lord, I
am more unworthy, than that I should be saved, and fit
among thy saints and angels; for that good is most ex-
ceeding high. Here straight conscience is not able to
comprehend such great good things, but it thus think-
eth; if I were as Peter and Paul, I could easily believe;
which is altogether a foolish and vain thing. For if
thou wouldest place thyself according to thine own ho-
liness,
Care for his Children.

Jinefc, thou shouldest build upon the sand. Thou must not do so, but behave thy self like unto Peter, for in that he esteemed himself vile, and judged himself unworthy of so great grace, he rightly became worthy. And therefore, whereas, thou art a sinner, thou must trust in God, and dilate and open wide thy conscience and heart; that grace may enter in. After thou hast now known God, thou must reject one of his gifts, that is, when as thou feest the great good things, thou must not despair. It is good that we know ourselves, and the deeper we know ourselves, so much the better. But that grace is not to be refused because of thy sins. For when thou shalt find thy conscience to tremble so that it would drive away sins, then art thou most ready and most fit to receive grace, then shalt thou find comfort in thy conscience, and say with Micah, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" Mic. vii.18. Whosoever take not away sins, they are no gods but idols; whereupon he saith rightly, that none is like unto our God; for other gods will find and not bring godliness, but the Almighty God doth nor find it, but bring it: wherefore thou must not forthwith despair, if thy conscience trembleth and feeleth sin; for the more defiled that thou art, so much the sooner doth the Lord pour in his grace, if so be that thou be repentant and thirsteth after it. A great part go so far that they say that they merit grace, whilst they dispose themselves thereunto, which is, as they interpret, whilst they do that which lyeth in them, and also that they do satisfy for their sins. But it is not so. The scripture teacheth us, that it is God that taketh away sin, and casteth it into the bottom of the sea. We shall not put away sins by our works, neither shall we be justified of ourselves. God himself, and not but he shall do the thing, of his meer grace as Isaiah faith, chap. xliii. 15. 'I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' And so must thou believe, otherwise thou shalt never obtain a joyful conscience. Wherefore, when as Peter said, I am a sinner, he said right. It is true indeed, there were causes, why he
he might be afraid of himself, and humble himself, but he ought not to refuse God, but most willingly receive him. Wherefore when thou shalt feel thy sin, like as Peter did, and shalt perceive that thou wouldst now fly from God, then it is need that thou do forthwith turn thyself, and come more and more unto him. For if God should go away, and would not take away sin, would not come unto thee, nor seek thee, yet the more thou perceivest thyself a sinner, the more oughtest thou to make unto him, which see thou mark well, and lay it up in a mindful memory. For as St. Peter doth here, so all consciences do, which are terrified of sins, and would fly from God, and seek another God, do not thou leave so, but come boldly, and join thyself nearer unto God. Otherwise if one go away to seek works, and help of another God, he is then found like the foolish virgins, which while they go to get themselves oil, are in the mean season shut out. But what doth Christ, when Peter so humbleth himself? and by reason of his great fear and terror, desireth the Lord to depart from him; did he leave him in such desperation of himself? no truly, but he comforteth him, saying thus, 'Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.' This is a joyful word, whereby weak hearts receive comfort. Now therefore that God hath a care for us, yea even in those things that pertain to the body, ye see by this, that he giveth Peter so many fishes; he maketh him also full and rich in spirit that he ought to bestow some of his plenty upon others. He maketh him a fisher both in body and in spirit: in body, for that he taketh many fishes which he may sell; but in spirit he is a fisher of men. For he hath the gospel, whereby other men must be brought to God by him, and the kingdom of Christ be encreased. Lo, it cometh to pafs, where men believe, the Lord giveth so much, as succoureth and helpeth all men. The faithful man outwardly helpeth the needy with his substance and goods: and from within he breaketh forth, teacheth other, and inricheth them also inwardly. For as such a man cannot hold his peace, but is inforced to declare and shew to others, how he is dealt with, as it is in
SERMON XXVI.

Concerning trust in God in Penury and Distress.

Mark viii. 1. to the 9. In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, &c.

I hope dearly beloved, that ye do well understand the meaning of this text; for your understanding is sufficiently well grounded in these mysteries, so that ye do easily perceive what good is to be looked for in the gospel,
pel, and what is prescribed unto us therein, namely the true nature and quality of faith. And this is the cause why Christ is of all the Evangelists set forth to be loving and gentle; for although the doings and works described of them do oftentimes vary, nevertheless the simplicity of faith remaineth always alike. Moreover this text doth so lively set forth Christ unto us in his colours, that it may be manifest and well known unto every one of us, what we ought to promise ourselves concerning him, to wit, that he is merciful, bountiful, gentle, who succoureth all that fly unto him for help. And such ought to be the image of faith; for the scripture setteth before us a double image; one of fear, which representeth to our eyes the horrible wrath of God, before which no man is able to stand, but rather we are all enforced to be cast down in mind, when we see it, unless we be strengthened by faith. Howbeit, against this is set the other image, namely grace, which faith doth attentively behold, and taketh from hence principles of comfort, and conceiveth trust and confidence in the favour of God, having this hope, that man cannot promise to himself from God so many good things, but that he hath infinite more treasures in readiness for him. Ye have now oftentimes heard, and there are two sorts of good things spiritual and temporal. The gospel by these temporal good things teacheth us the faith of children, and they are unto the weak, as a certain mean or help, whereby they may learn the goodness of God, how bountiful he is in bestowing the riches upon us, and that we ought in spiritual things also to put our hope and trust in him; for if we be now instructed by the gospel, that God will give food to our belly, we may thereupon account with our selves, that he will nourish and cloath our souls with spiritual good things. If I cannot commit my body unto him that he may feed it, much less can I commit my soul unto him that he may always preserve it; or if I cannot be brought to believe that a crown of gold shall be given unto me of him, how I pray you, shall I hope for ten crowns of gold of him? From whom I dare not promise to my self so much as a piece
piece of bread, truly much less shall I be persuaded to believe, that he will give a farm unto me or his whole inheritance. Now he that is not able to attain unto this tender, as it were as yet a fucking faith, to him surely it is very hard to believe, that God will pardon his sins, or preserve his soul for ever. Forasmuch as we are persuaded, that the soul is by infinite degrees to be preferred before the body, toward which notwithstanding he is touched with compassion at this our present text teacheth; wherefore St. Peter hath rightly admonished, 1 Pet. ii. 2 'As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: For it is not enough that the infant being put to the breast do suck, but he must also wax greater, and gather strength, that he may accustom himself to feed on bread and stronger meat. Now to eat milk is to taste of the favour and grace of God, which is then tasted of, when a trial thereof is had in our life; for although I should preach a hundred years of the bountifulness, favour, liberality and gentleness of God toward us, it would profit me nothing unless I have a trial and taste of those commodities, neither could I learn rightly to trust in God thereby. Hereof thou mayest conjecture how rare a Christian man is, there are many which say, that they commit their belly to God; but that sticketh only in the tongue and lips, when as rather it ought to pierce the heart. Let us now consider an example teaching us the quality and nature of faith; the apostle Heb. xi. 1. hath written thus, 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' Which is thus much in effect; faith is the foundation, whereby I look for that good thing, which is neither seen with the eyes, nor heard with the ears, but which I must only hope for; even as in our present text it plainly appeareth; wherein we read that there were about four thousand men, who together with their wives and children had now suffered hunger three days (was not this a notable kind of fasting?) yet were not famished with hunger, being far from their houses, and destitute of those necessaries, whereby the body is sustained. Now St. Paul faith, that faith is a thing whereby
whereby a man hopeth for those things which appear not to the eyes; such a faith had this multitude, which although they see no meat, nevertheless they trust in God, that he will feed them; what doth Christ here? he is moved with compassion, he demandeth of the disciples with what victuals, or with what thing their hunger may be taken away; to whom his disciples answer, whence can a man satisfy such a multitude here in the wilderness? Here you see how a man's reason and faith agree together, that the wiser reason is, so much less can it submit itself to the works of God. For this cause therefore did he ask his disciples, that every one of them might try their own reason, and learn how much the capacity of man and faith do differ one from another.

Here it appeareth unto us how reason is blind, and how, when faith cometh, it ought to give place; whereof let this be an example; If I were a married man, having a wife and a company of children, and had nothing wherewith to nourish them, neither would any man give me any thing, yet should it be my duty to believe and hope, that God will provide for me; But when as I see my hope to be in vain, and that I am not succoured by and by with nourishment and clothing, then if I be faithless, I yield unto desparation, and go and purpose another thing with myself, I apply my mind to dishonest trades, that I may get somewhat thereby, as theft, deceit, and other such practices, and by all means that I am able, I pass through the storms of adversity; see what filthy incredulity bringeth unto man; but if I be endued with faith, I shut mine eyes and say, Most gentle Father, I am thy creature, and thy work. it cannot be denied but thou hast created me, I will put all my trust in thee, which hast greater care of my welfare than I myself. Thou wilt well nourish, feed, cloath, and help, where and when thou shalt know best. So faith is a sure foundation, whereunto I trusting, do look for those things which I see not, and that I may speak at once, it shall not want those things that be necessary; surely the angels themselves
elses should come down from heaven, and give bread digged even out of the earth, unto such a faithful man, 
that he might be nourished, rather than he should be 
pined with hunger, yea, heaven and earth shall pass, 
before God will suffer a man endued with such faith to 
want either cloathing or any other necessary things. 
This singular trust and confidence in God, the comfor-
table and effectual word of the divine promise doth re-
quire; whereof David glorieth, Psal. xxxvii. 25 "I have 
been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righ-
teous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. And again, 
God knoweth the days of the righteous, their inheri-
tance shall continue for ever. They shall not be confounded in 
the perilous time, and in the days of dearth they shall have 

This Angular trust and confidence in God, the comfor-
table and effectual word of the divine promise doth re-

But if we shall ask counsel of reason, it will 
forthwith say, (as the disciples did before) this thing is 

impossible, for it looketh for nothing, it trusteth to no-
thing, when nothing is present. Of like diffidence were 
the disciples, who thought thus with themselves; how 
can it be, that such a great multitude of men should be 
here refreshed with meat? Truly it exceedeth our ca-
pacity; if they had seen a heap of money store of 
bread, and shambles full of flesh, they could then have 
esay believed this present necessity they could have 
put all in good hope, and fitly have disposed all things, 
according to the capacities of their reason. And thus 
much shall suffice to be spoken concerning the faith of 
temporal good things. Now we will treat of spiritual 
good things, which shall come unto us when we shall 
die: then shall we see death set before our eyes, when 
as notwithstanding we would willingly live, then shall 
hell appear unto us, when we rather desire for heaven, 
then shall we behold the judgment of God, notwith-
standing his grace would be more acceptable unto us; 
in fine, whatsoever we would desire to see, shall be taken 
out of our sight, yea, and no creature shall help us 
against death, hell, and the judgment of God; But if I 
believe, I say thus unto myself, well, faith is a sure 
foundation; herewith I being stayed up, shall attain unto 
those things which are very far out of my sight, altho' 
those things be horrible which be in my sight, yet shall 

D d
they not hurt him that believeth; although therefore I do presently see nothing, but death, hell and the judgment of God, yet must I consider none of these, but rather my mind is to be confirmed with an undoubted trust, that God by the virtue of his promise, not in respect of my merits or works, will give unto me life, blessedness and grace. This indeed is to cleave unto God by sincere faith, which is here very well painted forth in this gross and bodily image of four thousand men, who cleaving to God only by faith, did not doubt that they should be refreshed of him; if they had judged according to the capacity of their reason they would have murmured, and said after this sort; surely we are a very great multitude, we are here in the wide wilderness, we have empty and hungry stomachs, here is nothing that is able to fill them. Howbeit, they murmured of none of these things, but conceiving a sure confidence, reasoning nothing against God after the affection of men, they commend themselves wholly to the good will of God, and commit unto him this urgent necessity of hunger, they themselves being quiet from all care; then God, before this care cometh upon them, and before they begin to ask of him, is present, being more careful for them, than they are for themselves, and faith on this sort, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way." Behold how gentle and bountiful we have God toward us, who hath even a care to feed the unclean belly. Here now our hope is erected, and the words of Christ are comfortable to a man, when he faith; They have now continued with me three days, it now behoveth me to give sufficient unto them to eat. Here we may see, that all that do stick diligently to the word of God, are fed of God himself; wherefore let us dearly beloved, at the last begin to believe, for only diffidence and incredulity is the mother of all sins and vices, which at this day reign in all sorts of men. How cometh it to pass, that every where, whethersoever we turn us, there are so many harlots and bauds, such plenty of deluders and deceivers,
for many thieves, pilferers, ulcers, robbers, simonists, as
they call them, and sellers of benefices, all these diffidence
toward God bringeth forth unto us; for such kind of
men do judge only according to human reason, and rea-
on looketh unto that which is present; but that which
it feeth not, it is not able to comprehend; wherefore,
while it doth not repose her trust by faith in God, it
is infforced to despair, which desperation afterward cau-
feth such naughty and wicked men. Behold thus it go-
eth out of frame with us, when we commit ourselves
to be ruled, not by faith, but by our own reason.
Moreover as ye have now learned faith, so must ye al-
so learn love; for Christ is set forth unto us in a double
form, in one, of faith, that we should not be over
careful; in another, of love, that we may learn, that
as he hath care of us, giving us meat, drink, apparel,
and that of meer and bountiful love, not for his own
advantage fake, or because of our merits; so also we
ought to do well to our neighbour, and that freely, only
love moving us thereunto, that as Christ is to us, so we
may be to our neighbour. Hereupon now we may per-
ceive, that all works of monks and nuns are vain and
to be utterly disallowed, when they are not directed to
that end, that they may serve their neighbour, but are
ordained only unto this end, that they may merit much
at God's hands by them; for the true works of Christi-
ans, which they desire to be accepted of God, must be
done so, that they tend to the profit of our neighbour,
and not to this end, that we should think that we shall
merit many things of God by them, they must be cheer-
fully and freely bestowed upon all, even as Christ hath
done, who hath spread abroad and freely bestowed
his goodness upon all. These things have I briefly
spoken concerning this text, that ye may thereby learn
that God requireth this especially of us, that we do
firmly and constantly trust in him, and that we freely
do good and be beneficial to our neighbours, according
as God hath of his meer goodness and mercy bestowed
infinite benefits and blessing upon us; the prophet faith,
Psal. 1. 7. "Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O
Israel,
Israel, and I will testify against thee; I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" After the same sort he faith unto us: Behold Israel, that is, thou faithful man, I am thy God, thou art not my God, I will give unto thee, thou givest nothing to me, I will not be angry with thee, for that thou offerest not many things unto me; for whatsoever is in thy stable, in thy houses, in thy court, it was all mine before, for I have sent it thither, whereby he briefly reproveth the Jews, who did marvellously please themselves in their sacrifices. Now because he rejecteth these sacrifices, what will he have to supply the place of them? truly even that which followeth in the same place: 'Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high. And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' This is I will have thine heart, give over thy self to me, and account me for a gentle, favourable, yea, and for thy God, and it shall suffice me. Wherefore place thy faith, trust and hope in him, count him for a gentle and loving God, cleave unto him, and in extream anguish fly unto him for succour, and to none, beside him; believe and look for help of him, that he will help thee, thou needest not any whit doubt; afterward do good to thy neighbour with a cheerful heart and freely. These two things are set forth in this our text, as also in many other places beside.
SERMON XXVII.

God's Punishments against the Contemners of his Word.

Luke xix. 41. to the 48. And when he was come, he beheld the city, and wept over it, &c.

The sum and scope of this text is this: The Lord is troubled, and lamenteth for the evils which were to come upon the contemners of the word of God. Ye have oftentimes heard, what the word of God is, what is the fruit and advantage thereof, also what disciples it hath, of which nothing is said or done; but the punishment and misery only is shewed, which was to come upon the Jews, for that they knew not the time of their visitation. Which thing let us well consider of, for it pertaineth unto us also. If they be punished which know not the time of their visitation, what shall come unto them which persecute, blaspheme and reprehend the gospel and word of God? Howbeit he speaketh here only of them which know not the season of their visitation. The contemners of God are preached against after two sorts: First by threatnings, as Christ threatneth them, Mat. xi. 21. "Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida: for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes But Ifsay unto you It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou Capernaum, (which was his own city, wherein chiefly he wrought miracles) which are exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sidon, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, then for thee." These are the threatnings wherewith he terrifieth them that they should not so neglect the word of God. The other way the Lord here sheweth when he sheddeth tears.
Against the Contempt of God's Word.

and is touched with pity towards miserable and blind men he doth not terrify or threaten them, as being indurate and obstinate, but is rather wholly moved with love, and taketh pity on his enemies, and would willingly call them back, but that he could prevail nothing with them, and the means which he used to reclaim them were in vain. Before in Matthew, he sharply rebuketh them, he dealeth not by love, but by rigour, but here is pure love and pity, as we shall afterwards see.

First, when he drew near to the city, some went before him, and some followed him, with great joy singing and saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' they spread their garments in the way they cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way, and all things were done after a goodly manner, but in the midst of this joy, Christ beginneth greatly to weep he suf-fereth all to rejoice, notwithstanding his eyes gushed out with tears when he beheld the city and said, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.' As if the Lord should say, O, if thou knewest what belongeth unto thy peace, that thou mightest not be destroyed, but stand still, thou wouldest yet at this day consider of it and beware. Now it were time for thee to know that which should be best for thee, but thou art blind, and wilt neglect the time, then shalt there be no place neither for help nor counsel. As if he said, Thou standest here adorned with sumptuous and goodly buildings, and there are in thee mighty citizens, which are both secure and merry, thinking that no danger hangeth over them, but after the space of forty years thou shalt be destroyed. Which the Lord plainly foretelleth in these words.

"The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because thouknewest not the time of thy visitation." Now the Jews as they supposed, stood unmovable and safe, resting upon the promise of God, so that they thought no otherwise but that they should
should continue so for ever, they were secure and thought thus with themselves, God will not send such things unto us; we have the temple wherein God himself is resident, we have also plenty of excellent men, money, and other things, who can do any hurt or harm to us? moreover the emperor and people of Rome having taken the city, seeing it furnished with so many excellent buildings, marvelled greatly, and confessed that it was impossible that so great a city should be taken, unless it had been the special will of God. Their boasting therefore and confidence in their own false opinion deceived them; howbeit the Lord did more earnestly and deeply consider the matter, than they when he said, O Jerusalem, if thou knewest those things that are known to me, thou wouldst have a care of thy peace: (peace in the scriptures is, when the matters and affairs of any have good success,) thou thinkest that thou hast glad and merry days, that it is well with thee and that thy affairs are in a prosperous state; but if thou knewest how thine enemies shall by siege affect thee, keep thee in on every side, and bring thee into such distress, that they shall lay thee even with the ground, destroy all thy buildings, and leave not one stone upon another, thou wouldst surely conveniently receive the word, whereby thou mightest enjoy both true peace and all good things. The reading of the history of the destruction of this city doth help much to the right understanding of this text. God had plainly so ordained, that at the feast of Easter, at which time they came to Jerusalem out of all quarters, the city should be besieged, and there were then gathered together as Josephus reporteth, about thirty hundred thousand men, upon whom the Lord would shew his grievous indignation and wrath. All the apostles and Christians were departed and gone into the country of Herod, not far from Jerusalem. The Lord took out the wheat and put the chaff together on an heap, now there was so great a multitude of people, that they might seem to exceed not only a city, but even a kingdom. And they were driven into so great calamity, that all their vi...
Against the Contempt of God's Word.

Strings of their bows, and old shoes, dressing them in such manner as they could, yea through the exceeding famine, they were driven to kill their own children: the soldiers took the flesh of children roasted from the mothers, smelling the favour of the roasted flesh two streets off; Pigeons dung was unto them instead of salt, and was also very dear: finally, there was so great misery, so great slaughter, and shedding of Blood, that it would not have been marvellous for a stone to have been moved with pity. He that had seen it, would have thought that God could not have been so grievously angry, and so greatly have afflicted a people. Both houses and streets were filled with carcases dead through famine; notwithstanding the Jews remained still so obstinate and without understanding, that they gloried of God, and would not yield themselves until the emperor set upon them with his whole power and took the city, which they were able to keep no longer. And when as some of them were so crafty that they devoured gold that it might not be taken from them, the Roman soldiers thought that they had also so done, whereupon they slew about two thousand, and having ript their bellies fought for gold. There was such a slaughter made, that it seemed a miserable thing even to the Gentiles; wherefore Caesar commanded that they should not be so slain, but led captive and sold. The Jews were then sold so cheap, that thirty were bought for a penny, they were then dispersed through the whole world, and were counted the most abject people of all other, as also at this day they are the most contemptible nation on the earth. For they live spread here and there without cities and countries of their own, neither can they again be gathered into one place, so that they shall never be able any more to erect their priesthood and kingdom, as they hope they shall. Thus God revenged the death of Christ, and all the prophets, thus were they recompensed for that they knew not the time of their visitation. Wherefore let us be here admonished, for it belongeth not only unto us, but even unto all Germany, it is no jesting matter of sport, neither is there any cause why we should persuade ourselves that it will fall out otherwise with us. The Jews would not believe that evil
the Contempt of God's Word.

Against the Contempt of God's Word.

425
evil should come upon them until they had sufficiently tried it. And we at this day are visited by the goodness of God: he hath opened unto us a treasure, his sacred and holy Gospel, whereby we know his will, and see how much we were subject to the power of Satan: but no man will receive this gospel, yea we contemn it, and that which is more miserable, we persecute and blaspheme it: God is patient, it pleaieth him to try us a while, if we be not watchful, so that the word be again taken from us, the same wrath and indignation which was poured forth upon the Jews, shall also be poured forth upon us. For there is the same word, the same Christ at this day, that there was at that time, whereupon undoubtedly the punishment shall be the same, or at least as grievous both in soul and body. We make a sport and trifling manner of the gospel, for no man embraceth it from his heart, no man frameth his manners according unto it, which is a manifest argument of blindness; a thing surely most miserable; I fear lest the matter will shortly come to pass, that all Germany will fall together on an heap, which, alas! in part of the commonality hath already had a lamentable beginning; we have lost a great multitude of people, almost an hundred thousand men have been slain only between the feast of Easter and Whitfuntide. It is hard work of God, and I am afraid that the war begun is not yet at an end; this is only a forewarning and threatening whereby God would terrify us, that we might diligently take heed to ourselves: it was nothing but the Fox's tail, if he come again with his whip he will scourge us more grievously: but we will behave ourselves as the Jews behaved themselves, until there be place for no succour or help; now we might prevent it, now is the time to know what should be best for us, and to receive the gospel with peace, for at this day grace is offered unto us, whereby we may live peaceably, but we suffer day to pass after day, year after year, applying ourselves less to the gospel than before: no man doth now pray unto God for the increase of his word, no man receiveth it in his heart; if so be that the time shall pass, no prayers shall any more help: We might not this matter in
our heart, we think ourselves safe. we do not thoroughly perceive the great misery already come to pass, neither do we consider in our minds how miserably God punisheth us with false prophets and sects, which he on every side sendeth unto us, which preach so securely, as if they had wholly received into their breast the spirit the comforter: those which we counted best of all do go away, and bring men into such a perplexity, that they almost know not either what is to be done or not to be done. But this is only the beginning, altho' sufficient horrible and cruel; for there cannot be greater affliction and misery, than if the Lord send amongst us sects and false prophets, which are rash and bold, that it is greatly to be lamented; notwithstanding the time of grace is now present: Christ hath been sent down into the world, hath been born man, hath served us, died for us, is risen again from the dead, hath sent unto us the spirit the comforter, hath given unto us his word, hath opened heaven so wide, that all good things may be obtained of us, moreover hath given unto us rich promises, whereby he promiseth that he will preserve us both in this short and frail time, and in the eternal time, in this life, and in the life to come, must plentifully pouring forth his grace upon us. Wherefore the time of grace is now before our doors, but we despise and neglect it, which God neither will, neither can pardon: for when we contemn his word he threateneth punishment, and will at the last punish us, although he should defer it even an hundred years, but he will not defer it so long. And the more purely that the word is preached, so much greater shall the punishment be. But I fear lest this punishment require the subversion of all Germany: God grant that in this thing I be a false prophet but I fear exceedingly that it will come to pass, God cannot leave this wickedness unrevenged, neither will he defer long, for the gospel is so abundantly preached, that it was not so manifest even in the Apostles time as it is at this day, thanks be to Christ therefore. Wherefore I fear much, left that all Germany be spoiled, yea, and quite destroyed, unless we otherwise apply ourselves to this matter. We which have long heard the gospel ought to pray God from
the heart, that he would give us longer peace. The Prince go about to bring all things to pass by the word, whereby they go too rashly and rigorously to work; wherefore it is exceeding needful that we should pray unto God, that his gospel may spread farther abroad through Germany, even unto them which have not yet heard it. For if punishment come suddenly upon us, our case shall be miserable, than many souls shall be in danger to be lost before the word shall come unto them; I would wish therefore, that we would not so cruelly despite the gospel, that precious treasure, not only for our own sake, but also for their sakes which are yet to hear it: a scourge is a little begun, God grant that it may so stay; that neither the princes nor the commonalty be stirred up to greater rage and fury; for if that civil war should begin again, it were to be feared that it would have no end. We do like as the Jews did, who took greater care of the belly than of God, having more regard how to fill the belly, than that they might be saved, wherefore they lost both, and that worthily: forasmuch as they would not receive life, God sent unto them death, so they lost both body and soul: they pretended the same cause that we do: we would willingly indeed embrace the gospel, if there were no danger of body and goods, wife and children. If we shall believe him, said the Jews, the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation, which nevertheless came unto them: for that which the wicked man feareth falleth upon him. This was a let and hindrance to the Jews that they would not believe the words of God, neither have regard to the rich and large promises made unto them: so also do we, we regard not the mighty and comfortable promises which Christ hath made unto us, as where he saith, Matth. xix. 29. 'He shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.' Leave thy wife and children, I will preserve them, I will restore them, so as thou goest to work boldly in my name; thinkest thou that I cannot build thee other houses? countest thou me so simple, who will give unto thee heaven? wilt thou not put thyself into danger for my sake? if thy goods be taken from thee, heaven and earth are mine, I will recompense thee
abundantly. These and such like sayings we pass over, yea and also contemn, having diligent consideration only what we have laid up in our chest, and that our purse may be full, neither do we see that even that which we have, God hath given unto us, and will as yet give us more, if we believe and trust in him, neither do we mark if that we lose God we shall lose the belly also.

Howbeit they that believe in God, do not avoid peril if it come for his sake, but commit all things to his divine power, that he may order them according to his will, and thus they think: The Lord hath given me both a house and the furniture thereof, wife, children, &c. I have not obtained them of myself forasmuch then as they are God's, I will commit them unto him, he shall best preserve them; for even otherwise I must leave them, wherefore I will refuse to suffer no peril, and to leave whatsoever I have for his sake, if the case so require. If he will have me so to do, he can give me other things, for he hath promised that he will give sufficient to them that believe, both here and in the time to come. If he will not have me to live here, I owe death unto him, when he shall require me, I will be ready for his word's sake. He that shall not do thus, denieth God, and is notwithstanding compelled to lose both this frail life and eternal life. The thinking belly which we make our god, is the cause that we do not cleave to the word of God: for I will first be certain how I may feed myself, and where my gods be. The gospel faith, 'Trust in God,' but I provide for my belly, and if I have one noble in gold, I think I have sufficient to sustain and nourish me for ten days, and trusting to that which I have laid up, I trust not in God, that as he hath hitherto fed me, so he will nourish me still. Is not this a detestable thing, that I trust to one piece of coin only, whereby I look to have my food and sustenance to morrow? Fie, what a cursed thing is such care for the belly? Shall a vile piece of coin be more esteemed of me than God himself, in whose power are heaven and earth, who giveth unto us air and water, maketh grain to grow unto us, and sendeth all things necessary? It is more detestable than that it can be expressed by the voice
voice of man, that God is not esteemed of us so much as a little money. Why dost thou not think, God who hath made me will nourish me, if he will have me live. If he will not, well, then shall I have no need. But faith the belly, I find no god in my chest, Thou foolish ass, who can assure thee that thou shalt live till to morrow? It is uncertain whether thou shalt keep thy belly till to-morrow, and desirest thou to know where food and sustenance is? If this did pierce our heart, we should see how devilish a thing incredulity is. It is not a horrible thing that I do not make so great account of God, who feedeth so many mouths, as to trust in him, that he will nourish me, yea that I do make more account of one noble in gold than of God himself, who poureth forth his good things so abundantly? The world is full of the blessings and works of God, he is on every side with his good things, notwithstanding we do not yet commit ourselves to him, to receive his visitation. O cursed world, which cannot trust to God even one day, and yet trusteth to a piece of gold. Thus we see, as I think, of what sort the world is, how it despiseth God for the belly's sake, which notwithstanding it is compelled to lose. O how great contentious of salvation are we? We ought rather to detest the world, but we are deeply drowned in old Adam. The world is as it were a figure of hell, yea a very devilish kingdom, and an entrance to hell; wherefore Christ with weeping eyes exhorteth us to know our salvation, and to receive his visitation, lest that a plague and scourge follow, which undoubtedly shall come upon them, which thinking themselves in safety, do not believe and trust in God. God give us his grace, whereby we may know him. It followeth moreover in the text Ver. 45. "And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought, saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves." This is the second part of this text, wherein is declared how the Lord going into the temple, beginneth to drive out the buyers and sellers therein. The former part was nothing else but an exhortation and inviting to faith, but here the Lord insinuateth what the temple
Again the Contempt of God's Word.

temple of God is, and bringeth a place out of the scripture hereunto appertaining, namely out of Isaiah, where he faith, chap. lv. 7. 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.' This is a strong saying, whereas the Prophet faith, 'for all people' against the Jews, who trusting unto that temple at Jerusalem, thought that this house made with hands, should continue for ever, supposing it to be impossible that God should either destroy this temple, or leave the city desolate, because the word of God cannot lie. Wherefore they stoned Stephen, for that he spake against that holy city, and affirmed that Jesus would destroy it, and change the ceremonies given by Moses; for they said, The prophets have greatly praised this house, and do you apostles preach that it shall be destroyed? Howbeit this saying is thus to be understood, that the city Jerusalem, the temple, and the people should continue until the time of Christ, whereunto all the prophets tend, which referred all things unto Christ, that as he should do, so it should be, and so it should continue. Wherefore the place of Isaiah extendeth no farther than to the coming of Christ, which all the prophets also witness, affirming that there should come a kingdom which should extend far and wide over the whole world, as it is in Malachi i. 11. 'From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering! for my name shall be great among the Heathen, faith the Lord of hosts.' Here the prophet speaketh of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, who would build unto himself an house of prayer in the whole world. It is true that God himself did confirm and sanctify the temple at Jerusalem, not because it was furnished with precious stones and goodly buildings, or hallowed of the priests, which manner of trifles and dotages we use at this day, but because he had consecrated and hallowed it with his word, when he said, This house is my house; for his word was preached in it. Wheresoever the word of God is preached, there is his true house; where the word of God hath his course and proceeding, there undoubtedly
Against the Contempt of God's Word.

God dwelleth with his grace; where his gospel is, there is the holy house of prayer, there prayers both may and ought to be made unto God. God also will hear us, as Christ faith, John xvi. 23. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask and ye shall receive.' On the contrary, where the word is not, there is Satan wholly. Now, whereas we imitating the Jews have built so many temples, it were tolerable if we had therefore so done that the word of God might be preached in them, for where God's word is preached, there is he present, andoureth forth his grace. Christ faith that the Jews had made the temple at Jerusalem a den of thieves. They were resident in the temple which fold oxen and sheep, that they which came might buy to offer and worship God: why therefore doth he call it a den of thieves? Surely he giveth unto it a foul name, which came to pass upon this occasion; for that it was not any more counted of them for the house of God, but for a house of merchandize, that is, the priests had no care how the word of God was preach'd there, and did negligently and carelessly sing, babble, and read Moses and the prophets. But God doth nothing esteem that mumbling of many words, which is only vain and childish. They behaved themselves like as our sacrificing priests and monks do, who of temples and monasteries making dens of thieves, preach poisonous doctrine, and therefore only they celebrate mass, that they may thereby get unto themselves money, and fill the belly, killing and destroying silly sheep with their traditions; which is the den wherein souls are slain; which title is to be given to all temples wherein the word of God is not preached: for there they mock God, kill souls, expel the true word, and set up thievency. O how foully have we been deceived in this point? But God at this day is highly to be praised, that his word reneweth and quickeneth us, driveth away thieves, and teacheth us to pray aright; for a sincere Christian, must pray not in mouth only, but in heart also. Thus we have the second part of our text, how Christ casteth out the fellers, that is, them that served the belly, and maketh place.
place for his word. It were very good if monasteries were scoured after this sort; that either Christian schools, or places wherein the word of God might be preached, might be made of them; which if it come not to pass, they are, and do remain dens of thieves. If Christ calleth his house a den of thieves, how much more shall our temples, which God hath not consecrated, be proved to be dens of thieves? I have oftentimes desired you, that ye would devoutly pray unto God that he turning away his indignation, would bridle the devil, who now rageth in the world; for ye have heard of a great calamity, how many thousands have been slain, it is to be feared that they are all damned. God requireth obedience of us, and he hath pronounced the sentence, that he that taketh the sword, shall perish with the sword. They were besieged of Satan, who knoweth whether the same shall come unto us? Let us pray God therefore that his kingdom may come unto us, that Christians may be multiplied, and that he will send wife and meek preachers, whom the people may receive and obey. Let him that knoweth the gift of God, pray for others which have not yet heard the word of God; for it is high time so to do.

SERMON XXVIII.

The Difference between the Law and the Gospel.

Luke x. 23. to the 37. And he turned him unto his disciples and said privately, &c.

I hope well that ye do now rightly understand this gospel, forasmuch as it is preached every year; notwithstanding, because occasion is now again offered, we must again treat and preach of it. First the Evangelist faith, that Christ took his disciples aside, and said unto them secretly after this sort: Blessed are the eyes which see the things, that ye see. For I tell you, that many prophets
phets and kings have desired to see those things which ye hear, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. To see and hear is to be understood here simply of the outward seeing and hearing, viz. that they saw Christ come in the flesh, heard his sermons, and were present at those miracles which he did among the Jews. The Jews saw the same according to the flesh, yea and felt them also; yet did they not truly acknowledge him for Christ, as the apostles did, and especially Peter in the name of all the rest did confess, him saying, 'Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.'

We grant indeed, that there were some among the Jews which acknowledged him, as the apostles did, but the number of them was very small wherefore he taketh his apostles here severally unto himself. Many prophets and kings have seen Christ, howbeit in the spirit, as the Lord himself faith to the Jews of Abraham, John viii. 56. 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.' The Jews thought then that he had spoken of the bodily seeing, but he spake of the spiritual seeing, whereby all Christian hearts did behold him before he was born; for if Abraham saw him, undoubtedly many other of the prophets, in whom the Holy Ghost was, saw him also. And although this seeing saved the holy fathers and prophets, yet did they always with most inward and hearty affection desire to see Christ in the flesh also, as is commonly shewed in the prophets. Wherefore the Lord faith here unto his disciples, which saw him both in the flesh and in the spirit, 'blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see.' As if he said, Now is the acceptable year and time of grace. The matter which is now in hand is so weighty and precious, that the eyes are worthily said to be blessed, which see it; for now was the gospel preached openly and manifestly both by Christ himself, and also by his apostles, whereupon he here calleth them all blessed which see and hear such grace. Of which grace I have preached much and a long time to you, I would to God ye did keep that which I have spoken thereof, fresh in memory.
When the Lord spake these things, a certain lawyer started up, shewing himself as though he had been something, who tempting the Lord saith, ' Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' This lawyer was endued with wisdom, and not unskilful in the scriptures, which even his answer doth declare, yet in this place he is proved a fool, yea he is brought unto shame and ignominy; for Christ taketh away all his glorying even in one word. He was of this mind, that he had observed the whole law, and that he was a certain chief one in respect of others, as undoubtedly he was, and thought himself sufficiently worthy by reason of his godliness and learning to be conversant with the Lord. But what doth the Lord in this case? The text following declareth, Ver. 26. "He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Methinks that the Lord gave this good man a hard lesson; he dealeth very straitly with him, it may seem to some that he should have spared him a little he putteth him to shame openly before all; he proveth that he had done nothing, who notwithstanding thought that he had done all things. He asked what he should do; but I think he had enough and overmuch to do, if he had been able to do more than he was. If I had time, many things might be spoken of the two commandments; for they are the chief and greatest commandments in Moses, on which the whole law and all the prophets do hang, as Christ himself saith in Matthew, chap. xxii. 40. Notwithstanding we will treat somewhat of them. If we consider the commandments of Moses they have respect altogether unto love; for this commandment, Exod. xx. 3. 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,' we can no otherwise declare or interpret than, Thou shalt love God alone; so Moses expoundeth them in Deuteronomy where he saith thus, Deut. vi. 4. 5. 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and
with all thy might.' From whence the lawyer took his answer. But the Jews understand this commandment so, that they think it to extend no farther than that they should not set up nor worship idols. And if they can say and witness in mouth, that they have one God only and do worship none but him, they think they have observed this commandment. After the same sort did this lawyer understand it, but that was an evil and a wrong understanding thereof. Howbeit we must otherwise consider and understand this precept, 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.' Thou, it faith, with all that thou art, but especially it requireth all thine heart, soul and strength. It speaketh not of the tongue, not of the hand, not of the knees, but of the whole man, whatsoever thou art and hast. That no other God may be worshipped of me, it shall be necessary that I have the true and only God in my heart, that is, I must love him from mine heart, so that I do always depend on him, trust in him, repose my hope in him, have my pleasure, love and joy in him, and daily remember him; even as otherwise if we take pleasure in any thing, we say, it doth me good inwardly at the heart. And if any speaketh or laugheth, and doth it not in good earnest, neither from his heart, we are wont to say, Thou laughest indeed, but it cometh not from thy heart. The love of the heart in the scriptures signifieth a vehement and special love, which we ought to bear toward God; they which serve God with mouth, hands, and knees only, are hypocrites, neither hath God any care of them; for God will not have part, but the whole. The Jews did outwardly abstain from idolatry, and served God alone in mouth, but their heart was far removed from him, being full of diffidence and unbelief. Outwardly they seemed to be very earnest in serving God, but within they were full of idolatry. Whereupon the Lord said unto them, Mat. xxiii.27. 'Wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleannesse. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.' These are such
The Difference between.

...those wicked ones, which glory of the outward thing, which go about to justify and make themselves good by their own works, after the manner of the lawyer. Consider how great the pride of this was, he cometh forth as though he could not be blamed, or rebuked of the Lord, he thought, yea it seemed unto him, that the Lord would here commend and praise his life before the people; he thought not to learn any thing of the Lord, but he sought only his own commendation, he would willingly have had Christ set forth his praise, toward whom the eyes of all were bent, and who was an admiration to all. So all hypocrites do, outwardly they pretend excellent, great and weighty works; they say that they have respect neither to glory nor praise, but within in their heart they are full of ambition, and wish that their holiness were known to the whole world, shewing a goodly sign of their religion, by the bitting of their lip, if they hear any speak thereof. But our Saviour Christ sheweth here no kindness or gentleness to this lawyer, inasmuch as he putteth them to shame; that great holy man notwithstanding continueth still in the same mind, and supposeth that he shall receive great honour and singular praise because of his precious life, thinking that he had fulfilled the commandment, whereupon also he looketh for a joyful answer, that the Lord should say, good master, your mastership hath done all things. But Christ answereth him, Do this, which indeed is as much to say as, thou art altogether a naughty fellow, thou hast never in all thy life fulfilled so much as one letter thereof: so shewing unto him how evil and naughty he was. Like unto this lawyer are all they which do most grievously offend against the first commandment, and think that God is to be loved, no more than the words found for, and that thereby it is fulfilled; the commandment therefore remaineth in their mouth, and doth as it were float above the heart, and pierceth it not: but I must go much farther than so, I must love God so, that I can be content to forfake all creatures for his sake, and if it shall seem good unto him, my body and life, I must love him above all things, for he is
is jealous, and cannot suffer that any thing be loved above him, but under him he pertaineth us to love any thing. Even as the husband can suffer, that his wife love her maids, the house, household things, chattels and such like, howbeit he suffereth her not to love any with that love wherewith she is bound unto him, but himself, yea he will have her leave all such things for his sake. Again the wife requireth the same of her husband. After the same sort God can suffer that we love his creatures, yea therefore they are created and are good: The sun is a goodly creature, gold and silver, and whatsoever by nature is fair, procureth us to love it, which maketh it dear unto us, neither is God offended thereat. But that I should cleave unto the creature, and love it equally with him, that neither will be, neither can he suffer; yea he will have me both to deny and forfake all these things, when he requireth it of me, and will have me content, although I never see the sun, money, riches, &c. The love of creatures must be far inferior to the love which we must bear toward him. As he is the sovereign good, so will he also be chiefly loved before all other good things; if he will not suffer that I shall love any thing equally with him, much less will he suffer that I shall love any thing above him. Thou seest now I think, what it is to love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all thy mind. To love God with all thy heart is, to love God above all creatures, that is although creatures be very amiable and dear unto me, and that I take great delight in them, yet must I so love them, that I do contemn and forfake them, when my God and Lord requireth that of me. To love God with all the soul, is to bestow our whole life and body at his pleasure; if the love of creatures, or any temptation assail thee, or would overcome thee, thou mayest say, I will rather part from all these, than I will forfake my God, whether he cast me off, or kill me, or drown me, or whatsoever, through his promiss, shall come unto me, I had rather leave all things than him, I will depend on my Lord, rather than upon all creatures, or upon any other thing whatsoever it be. Whatsoever I have and am, I will bestow, but him will
The Difference between

I not forsake, the soul in the scriptures signifieth the life of the body, and whatsoever is done by the five senses, as to eat, drink, sleep, wake, see, hear, smell, taste, and whatsoever the soul worketh by the body. To love God with all the strength, is for God's cause to renounce all the members and limbs of the body, so that one will peril whatsoever he is able in his flesh and body, before he will commit that which is against God. To love God with all the mind, is to enterprize nothing but that which may please God, whereby he understandeth the thought which is in man, that that also be referred to God, and all things that be acceptable unto him. Thou perceivest not what this commandment of God containeth in it. Thou shalt love God, thou, thou faith he, and that wholly even every part of thee, not thy hands, not thy mouth, not thy knees alone. They which do these things, as it is said, do truly fulfill it: but no man liveth in the earth which doth so, yea we do all otherwise. Wherefore the law doth here make us all sinners, so that not so much as the least jot or point thereof is fulfilled of them that are most holy of all in the world. For no man doth so cleave with all his heart unto God, that he can leave all things for his sake. We alas are gone so far, that we cannot suffer so much as a little word, nay we will not forgoe the value of a half-penny for God's cause. How can it be that we should love God, when his will is not settled in our mind? If I love God I cannot but love his will also. Now if God send sickness, poverty, shame and igno-

miny, it is his will, whereas what do we? we murmur, we grudge, our mind is carried hither and thither, we take most impatiently, and yet is this the least? what would we do, if we should leave our body and life for God and Christ his sake? then would we shew ourselves after another sort. But in the mean time we do like unto this Pharisee and lawyer, we lead an honest life outwardly, we worship God, we serve him, we fast, we pray and behave ourselves in outward appearance, justly and holily: But God doth not require that of us, but that we should bend ourselves to do his will with pleasure and love, cheerfully and lovingly. Whatsoever the
the Lord faith to the lawyer, he faith to us all, to wit, that we have yet done nothing, but that all things do yet remain to be done. All men therefore are guilty of death and subject to Satan. All men are liars, vain, filthy, and whatsoever they pretend, it is nothing worth. We are wise in our own matters, that we may scrape together money and goods, and we can speak most sweetly and fairly before men, and cunningly propound or set forth our matter. What doth God care for these things? he requireth of us that we love him with our whole heart, which no man living is able to perform, whereupon of this place is inferred, that we are all sinners, but especially they, whose life hath a goodly outward shew only. This is the former part of this text, namely, the preaching of the law: now followeth the other part, which is the preaching of the gospel, which declareth how we may fulfil the law, and from whence that fulfilling is to be taken, which we shall learn of the Samaritan. What doth the lawyer after that the Lord had thus dealt with him? he, faith the Evangelist, willing to justify himself, spake unto the Lord, and asked him as followeth, 'Who is then my neighbour?' he asked not who is my God? as if he said, I owe nothing unto God, neither do I want any thing before God, yea it seemeth unto me, that I do neither owe any thing to any man; nevertheless I would willingly know who is my neighbour. The Lord answering him, bringeth forth a most goodly similitude, whereby he declareth that we are all neighbours one to another, as well he that giveth a benefit, as he that receiveth and needeth one; although by the text it seemeth to appear, that he only is a neighbour, which beftoweth a benefit upon another. But the scripture maketh here no difference, sometime calling him our neighbour, which beftoweth a benefit, sometime him that receiveth a benefit. By this similitude the Lord inferreth in these words, 'Go and do thou likewise,' so that the lawyer had offended not only against God, but also against man, and wanted not only love towards God, but also love towards his neighbour, unto whom he had not done that good which he ought. This wretched fellow is brought into such a case, that
he is found wholly evil, even from the head to the feet. How came it to pass that he being most skilful of the scripture could not beware of this? So fell it out: he led a pharisaical, hypocritical, and counterfeit life, which had not regard unto his neighbour; and to succour and help others, but sought thereby only glory and honour before men, and so looked by negligent and dissolute living to come to heaven. But ye have heard very often, that a Christian life consisteth in this, that we deal with faith and the heart in things that pertain unto God, but use our life and works towards our neighbour; and that I must not look while my neighbour seeketh a benefit, and requireth something of me, but according to my duty must prevent his asking, and of mine own accord offer my liberality unto him. Now we will see what the parable containeth in it, The Samaritan in this place is, without all doubt, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath declared his love toward God and man: toward God, in that he descended from heaven, and was incarnate, and so fulfilled the will of his Father. Toward man, for that by and by after baptism, he began to preach, to work miracles, to heal the sick, neither was there any work that he did which did concern himself only, but all his works were directed to his neighbour, being made our minister, notwithstanding he is above all, and equal to God; but he did all these things, for that he knew that they did please God, and that it was the will of his father. When he had ascended to the height of the commandment, that he loved God with all his heart, he left and committed the life of his body, and whatsoever he had to the pleasure and will of his Father saying, Father, behold all things that I have, my life and soul are ready at thy will; I leave for thy sake the glory and honour which I have had among men, yea and all things how good soever they be, that the world may understand how greatly I love thee: my Father let for thy sake my wisdom be contemned, that the world may count me for the foolish-est of all; now make I myself most contemptible of all other, who was before praised of the whole world now I am as a wicked thief, who before was liberal, profitable;
profitable, and beneficial to the whole world: my Fa-
ther, I make no account of all these things, that I may
be found obedient to thy will. This is that Samaritan
who being desired by no prayers, came and fulfilled,
the law with his whole heart, he alone hath fulfilled it,
which praise none can take from him, he alone hath de-
served it, to him only it appertaineth. But whereas he
is touched with care of the wounded man, hath com-
passion on him, bindeth up his wounds, bringeth him
with him into an inn, provideth for him, and pertaineth
unto us. The man which lieth half dead, wounded,
beaten and spoiled, is Adam, yea and all of us. The
thieves which spoiled us, wounded us, and left us half
dead, as yet a little panting, are the devils. The horse
and his sitter do here fall down; we are not able to
help ourselves, and if we should be left lying so, we
should die through great anguish and distress, our wounds
would become fetred, and our affliction miserable and
exceeding great. This excellent parable is set before
our eyes, lively painting forth unto us what we are,
what is the strength of our reason and free will. If
that wretched man had gone about to help himself, his
case would have been made worse, he would have hurt
himself, he would have opened his wounds with rub-
ing, and so would have fallen into greater calamity:
Again if he had been left lying, it had been all one.
So it cometh to pass when we are left to ourselves;
our studies and endeavour surely are nothing, whom-
soever we set upon the matter. Hitherto sundry ways
and divers means have been invented, whereby we
might come to heaven, and amend our life, this man
found out this, another that, whereupon have increased
innumerable sorts of orders, letters of indulgences
pilgrimages to faint, which did always make the state
of Christianity worse. This is the world which is paint-
ed forth in this wounded man, he being wholly laden
with sins, fainteth under so heavy a burthen, and is
not able to help himself; but the Samaritan who hath
fulfilled the law, and as perfectly found and whole, com-
eth, and doth more, than either the priest or Levite, he
bindeth up his wounds, poureth in oil and wine, setteth
him
him upon his own beast, bringeth him with him unto
an inn, maketh provision for him, and when he should
depart, diligently commendeth him to the host, and
leaveth with him sufficient for expenses, none of which
either the priest or Levite did. By the priest the holy
fathers are signified, which flourished before Moses, the
Levite is a representation of the priesthood of the Old
Testament. Now all these could do nothing by their
works, but passed by like unto this priest and Levite;
wherefore though I had all the good works of Noah,
Abraham, yea, and all the faithful fathers, they would
profit me nothing; the priest and Levite saw that mi-
serable man lyed wounded, but they could not help him
any thing; they saw him lyed half dead, but what was
that to the purpose? They could not give him any re-
medy; the holy father saw men drowned and plunged
in sins, even up to the ears, they also felt the sting and
anguish of sin, but what could they do hereunto; they
could make the case worse and not better; and those
were the preachers of the law, which shewed what the
world is, namely, that it is full of sin, and lieth half
dead, and cannot even any whit help itself with its
strength, reason, and free will; But Christ is that true
Samaritan, who is touched with as great care of that
miserable man, as of himself: neither doth the Sama-
ritan call him unto him, for he hath no merit, but in-
joyeth the meer grace and mercy of Christ, who bindeth
up his wounds, and having great care of him, poureth
in oil and wine, that is, the whole gospel; he poureth
in oil when grace is preached, when it is said, be-
hold, O miserable man this is thy inconstancy, this is
thy condemnation, thus art thou wounded and sick; but
stay, I will shew thee a remedy for all this: Behold join
thy self unto this Samaritan Christ the Saviour, he will
best help and succour thee, and beside him nothing. The
nature of oil, as ye know, is to make soft and mollify,
so the sweet and gentle preaching of the gospel maketh
my heart soft and tender toward God and my neigh-
bour, so that I dare bestow my body and life, for Christ
and the gospel, if God and need so require; sharp wine
signifieth the holy Cross of affliction, which withth
followeth;
the Law and the Gospel. 443

followeth; neither is there any cause that a Christian should look far about and seek the Cross, for it sooner hangeth over his head, than he is aware of, as St. Paul witnedseth, 2 Tim iii. 12. 'Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.' This is the cognizance and badge of this King; he that is ashamed of this cognizance, pertaineth not unto him moreover, that Samaritan poufeth this wounded man upon his own beast; this is our Lord Jesus Christ, who beareth us, we lye upon his shoulders, upon his neck and body; there is scarce a more amiable and comfortable history in the whole gospel, than where Christ compareth himself to a shepherd, which carrieth again the lost sheep upon his shoulders unto the flock; the inn is the state of Christiani-anity in this world, wherein we must abide for a little time; the host is the ministers and preachers of the word of God, and of the gospel, whose charge is to have care of us; this therefore is the sum; the king- dom of Christ is a kingdom of mercy and grace, where is nothing else but always to be born and to be- r; Christ beareth our defects and infirmity, he taketh our sins upon himself, and beareth our fall willingly, we daily lye upon his neck, neither is he wearied with that bearing of us. It is the duty of the preachers of this kingdom, to comfort confeiences, to handle them gently, to feed them with the gospel, to bear the weak, to heal the sick; moreover they ought fity to apply the word according to the need of every one; this indeed is the duty of a true bishop and preacher, not to proceed by violence and injury, as it is the cuftom of our bishops at this day, which vex torment, and cry out, go to, go to, he that will not willingly, shall be compelled to do it against his will; we must in no wise do fo; but a bishop or preacher ought to behave himself as a healer of the sick, who dealeth very tenderly with them, ut- tereth very loving words unto them, talketh very gently with them, and bestoweth all his endeavours about them, the fame must a bishop, or minister of any particular pa- rish do, and think no otherwise, but that this bishopric or parish is as an hospital, wherein are such as are cum- bred with divers and sundry kinds of diseases. If Christ be
be thus preached, then faith and love come together, which fulfil the commandment of love. Now as the knowledge of the law, and the gospel, and of the difference between them is very necessary, I will treat of them somewhat more at large.

Of the law and gospel. I have very often admonished your brotherly charity, that the whole scripture divideth it self into two parts: into the law, and the gospel. The law is that which teacheth what we must do, what the will of God requireth of us, The gospel teacheth where that is to be received, which the law commandeth. Even as if I seek to take physic, it is one art to tell what the disease is, and another to minister that which is good and wholesome to remedy it; so standeth the case here; the law revealeth the disease, the gospel ministreth the medicine, which is manifest even by the text whereof we have already treated; the lawyer cometh, and being very desirous of eternal life, asketh what he must do; the law declareth this unto him, saying, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thy self.' He that readeth these words, after a bare and slender sort only, as the lawyer did, understandeth them not; we must pierce into the law, and every one behold his face and heart therein; God must be beloved of me from the bottom of my heart: Again, I must love him with all my soul, that is, from the depth of my soul, so that I thoroughly feel in myself that I love him; for to love with the soul signifieth in the scripture such love as a young man beareth toward a maid, which he feeleth throughly in his mind; moreover, with all my strength, that is, with all my members, also with all my mind, that is, all my senses, cogitations and thoughts must be directed unto God: Now I find in my self that I do none of these; for if I must love God with all my heart, soul, strength and mind, it is requisite, that mine eyes shew no angry twinkling or motion, that my tongue speak not any word, that my feet, hands, ears, &c. shew no sign of wrath, that my whole body, even from the crown of the head, to the sole
foles of the feet, and all things belonging thereunto, do walk in charity, be as it were ravished with love and pleasure toward God, and always serve and worship him; wherefore, who is he which by the pleasure and love of virtue is chaste and righteous? there cannot be one such found in the earth; for we always find our selves readier to wrath, hatred envy, worldly pleasures, &c. than to meekness and other virtues, I find in me not only a spark, but even a fiery furnace of wicked lust; for there is no love in my heart, no not in all my members; wherefore herein the law, as it were in a glafs, I see whatsoever is in me, to be damnable and cursed; for not one jot of the law must perish but all must be fulfilled, as Christ saith: 'For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one title shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled,' Matt. v. 18. Now thou findest not this in thee, that thou doest with all thy soul and heart, with cheerfulness and pleasure, whatsoever the law exa&eth and requireth of thee, hereupon thou art damned and under the dominion of satan.

The law therefore serveth us thus far, to teach us, that we are condemned; for by it wc find all wicked desires in us, and yet not so much as a spark of them ought to be in us. Howbeit, our school-men not marking this, have taught, that if one do according to his ability, God doth give his grace unto him. They are blind guides; they grant themselves, that a man is carried with no pleasure or cheerfulness to that which is good, and yet do they also teach, if one worketh, although it be with grief, difficulty, and slothfulness, that it is well with him before God; but Christ hath taught otherwise in this place, that we should work that which is good with pleasure and love, readiness and facility; whom therefore shall we rather believe, Christ, or the school-men? But I leave that to your judgment, Of such corrupt and evil understanding of the law, monasteries afterwards came, whereby entred into this opinion, that it was thought to be sufficient to salvation to live in a monastery, and to follow the orders thereof, although that were done even with grief of mind; so they
they taught; but Christ will have us to work with pleasure and cheerfulness, so that if any thing be done with burthen or grief of conscience, it is sin, remove thy self therefore quickly from such a work; wherefore thus it might be said unto them; behold, O man, thou miserable creature oughtest to be carried with a certain delight to the doing of the law of God, but thou comest with no pleasure or cheerfulness hereunto, now see that thou shew thy pleasure and love herein, otherwise thou shalt be the enemy of God, and the friend of Satan; thus men leaving their own rashness, might come to the knowledge of themselves, and might then say; therefore, O God, am I condemned, and that not unjustly. Hereupon it followeth, that we are all under Satan, as long as we feel in us this difficulty and hardnesse to do that which is good; wherefore if I should speak the truth, I should say thus; I find indeed, something that is good in the law of God, but it is my death, and if it could be, I would wish that it were not; so are all men affected in their heart, as St. Paul plainly teacheth, Romans vii. If we should remain in such condemnation, we must needs perish for ever.

There is therefore another part, that is, the gospel, which sheweth comfort and salvation, declaring where that is to be had, whereby the law is fulfilled; when therefore I know by the law, that I am a condemned man, then lye I half dead among thieves, Satan hath spoiled my soul, and hath moreover in Adam taken away all faith, all righteousness, and hath left nothing but bodily life, which is also quickly extinguished. Then come Levites and priests, which teach this and that but can help nothing, and so pass by; but when the Samaritan cometh, he helpeth, that is, when Christ cometh he sheweth his mercy unto us, saying after this sort; behold thou oughtest indeed to love God with all thine heart, but thou dost it not, now believe only in me, and thou shalt enjoy my obedience as thine own, this only helpeth me; then he putteth me on his own beast, that is, on himself, and carrieth me into the inn, that is, into the church of the faithful, then he by and by
be poureth his grace into me, that is oil; that I may feel my self to be laid upon his shoulder, that at the last maketh me to be of good cheer, and quiet and well affected in conscience: afterward he poureth in wine also, which with its sharpness may abate and tame the force of old Adam: and yet am I not so wholly restored unto health, health is indeed poured in and begun, but not yet wholly finished; then Christ hath care of me, and by his grace poured into me, doth purify me, that from day to day I may become more chaste, meek, gentle, faithful, &c. until I wholly die, for then I shall be altogether made perfect; so when we shall come to God the Father, and be asked of him, whether we believed in God, whether we love him, &c. the Samaritan Christ our Lord, who hath laid us on his own beast, will come forth and say, Lo Father although they have not wholly fulfilled the law, yet have I fulfilled it, suffer thou that to turn to the profit of them that believe in me; so it is needful that all the saints altho' very holy, be lyed upon the back of Christ. If to be that the holiest of all, as the priests and Levites could not satisfy the law, how shall we go about with our feigned works, as with shaving, habit, &c. to fulfil the same? O wretched and miserable calamity. These things shall now suffice to have been spoken concerning this text; let us pray unto God, that he will give us his grace.

SERMON XXIX.

Concerning the exercise and increase of Faith.

John iv. 46. to the 54. And there was a certain noble man whose son was sick at Capernaum, &c.

An excellent example of faith is set forth in this text, of what sort it is, of what nature and quality,
lily, namely, that it is not a resting or idle thing, but lively and void of idleness, which goeth not back, but proceedeth on, and still more and more increaseth, which if it be not done, it is no faith, but only a dead opinion of God in the heart; for a true and sincere faith, which the holy Ghost poureth into the heart, cannot be idle; which I say for this cause, that no man be therefore secure, altho' he hath obtained faith, neither that he stay there. It is nothing to begin unless we increase by continual going forward, and come to greater knowledge of God; for on the contrary side, it is the nature and quality of our adversary Satan, not to be idle, as St. Peter faith, Satan sleepeth not, but goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; if so be that the devil is neither idle, neither sleep cometh upon him, neither shall it be meet for a Christian to be idle or put his hands in his bosom, forasmuch, as he hath the devil his enemy, who is stronger than himself; for he is called the prince of the world, 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,' Eph. vi. 12. This prince governeth the world furiously and fiercely rageth, and cannot suffer the prosperous success of a Christian; neither is it to his profit to be suffered of him, for an entry being made hereby, his kingdom is burst in two, and his net torn in pieces, out of which as much as he is able, he suffereth no Christian to escape, moreover when the fire of faith is kindled, and the flame fostered, and Satan trieth and marketh that, by and by he practiseth deceit against it, for he knoweth how much hindrance his kingdom shall take thereby, wherefore as earnestly as he can, even with all his power, he defendeth his kingdom, and laboureth to keep all in obedience to him. Wherefore it is most certain, that when a Christian hath begun to believe, by and by temptation and persecution will afflict him; which if it come not to pass, it is a sign that his faith is not yet found, and that he hath not as yet truly received the gospel; for wicked Satan hath a very sharp sight, he by and by spiesth.
spieoth out where is a true Christian, wherefore he applieth himself wholly unto this, that he may inforce him to fall, may besiege him, and assail him on every side: for he cannot suffer that any should revolt from his kingdom. It is perilous therefore for a man to believe, for the devil is ready therefore he may set upon him, and overthrow him, which sometimes changeth even to very holy men, which understand the word of God well, when they stand upright, and think themselves safe, that privy wicked fiend cometh upon them by little and little, and wrestleth with him so long, till he overthrow them and cast them to the earth; set before thine eyes Moses and Aaron, who were guides of the Jews, they had such excellent faith, when they brought the people out of Egypt, and all the people in faith passed through the red sea, death, the wild beasts, and many other marvellous things, whereby they shewed their faith, but at the last they fell grievously, they fear that they shall perish with hunger. Is it not a thing most miserable, that by so great signs they shew their faith, they go into death and through death, wrestle with it, and overcome it, and yet while they think themselves surest, they fall and suffer themselves to be overcome of the belly, murmur against God, and are so grievously tempted, that they fall altogether; wherefore it is not certain and sure, if one begin, to believe, and doth not always more and more increase in faith. Yea, that godly man Moses, who had so great and strong a faith, did fall also when, as he should bring water out of the rock with a staff, he doubted and talked thus to the people, Come let us see whether we can bring water out of the rock. That good Moses which had shewed so many and so great signs, falleth into reason and carnal understanding, fearing lest the incredulity of the people would hinder so great a miracle and sign; but it had behoved him to cleave fast to the word of God, and to think it higher, greater, stronger, and mightier, than the unbelief of the people: that great man was tempted, he stumbled, and was overthrown. We have like examples in the new Testament, St. Peter was hardy, and firm in faith when he beheld Christ upon the water, he said
unto him with a strong faith, Lord suffer me to come unto thee committing himself to the water even as to the ship, he thought assuredly, that the water would bear him; then was there an excellent faith in St. Peter and great courage, which durst commit himself wholly unto death in the midst of the sea, reposing his hope freely and boldly in Christ; but when he thought himself most safe, a storm and tempest ariseth, he forgetteth the word, suffereth his faith to fail, and he himself also falleth, suffering Satan to pluck faith out of his heart; faith truly is a subtle and delicate thing, a small thing maketh to stumble and fall; Satan is always watchful, and circumspect, and doth by and by obtain his purpose, if we do not diligently watch. How earnestly did the common people follow Christ? they thought that he was a prophet, and did so cleave unto him, and so defend him, that the princes of the people were made astonished, neither durst they so much as lay hand on him; but when they apprehend him, proceed against him, fasten him to the cross, the people all forsake him, and come no more to him; A prophet is present, and no man any more afflicteth him, but they rather cry out against him, crucify him, crucify him; and that which is most detestible of all, his own disciples revolt from him; what is become now both of their faith and holiness? So is it at this day in our time; at the first when the gospel began to shine, the preaching thereof was acceptable and pleasant, then many seemed willing to embrace it, but when monks and sacrificing priests, nuns, &c. began to be spoken against, and the mass to be confuted, all (a marvellous thing to be spoken) fell away as leaves off trees. Again when princes also were touched, the gospel suffered greater persecution, and did by little and little daily decrease. Moreover Satan is not idle, whereupon he stirreth up heresies and schisms, for how many sects have we hitherto suffered? he sleeppeth not, he will stir up greater mischiefs, also he never resteth, but looketh about, and trieth every way, that he may bring the matter to that pass, and prevail so far, that no found doctrine may remain in the church, but that if all Germany be diligently viewed
Of the exercise and increase of Faith.

viewed, a sermon may no where be found, wherein the word of God is truly preached, as it was before; he go-
eth about to extinguish and abolish all the doctrine of
Christ now increasing, for he cannot bear it, it is not
an easy thing to avoid so great an enemy, he lyeth in
wait, and vieweth all places, and so diligently bestir-
reth himself that even the learned fall, and the elec
stumble, as Moses, St. Peter, with the rest of the apostles.
We think ourselves safe, and live securely, no man con-
sidereth, no man hath a care of the word, we should
pray and beseech God, that he would vouchsafe to pre-
serve the gospel, and make his holy name to be spread
and published more abroad; but no man is touched with
care hereof, no man prayeth that it may have good suc-
cess; wherefore it is to be feared, that at the last it
will come to pass, that God will suffer Satan and us to
run together into one, then shall we be in a desperate
case, for he will easily throw us to the ground, when
we are come into so great misery by our own slothful-
ness and default; Satan moreover can so set forth the
matter by feditious spirits, that men shall think it to be
just; as the Arians were persuaded, that their opinion
was found but the Christian humbleth himself, taketh
nothing rashly upon himself, but with an humble heart
faith thus unto God; most gracious God, altho' I know
that the cause which I favour is just, yet without thy
help I am not able to main it, thou therefore help me, otherwise I shall be cast and overthrown; he is
indeed certain of his cause even as St. Peter was on
the water, who could not be surer, when the water did
bear him; for he knew no let or hindrance, but when
the wind was great, and the water troubled, he percep-
ted what was wanting in him; which is thoroughly to
be received into our mind, and considered of us; for
altho' the certainty of our cause be confirmed, strength-
ened, and ratified with plain sentences of the script-
ture, yet it is by the might, council, and power of
God, that we are defended, and Satan our chief adver-
sary and enemy repressed; which is therefore done,
that God may stir us up to watch, and keep us in awe,
that we may always be watchful, and cry unto him;

Lord
Lord help us, and increase our faith, for without thee we are able to do nothing. Our heart must be always so disposed, as though we began to day to believe, and always so affected, that we desire and labour to go more and more forward; for that is the nature, force, and quality of faith, that it always increaseth and waxeth stronger; satan as it is a little before mentioned, neither is idle nor resteth, if he be once overthrown, he riseth again, if he cannot enter in by the door, he endevourreth to steal in at the backside, and if this be not permitted him, he breaketh in through the roof, or entereth in through a hollow place digged under the threshold, for he doth so earnestly follow his work, until he come in, he useth many deceits and practices, if he prevaleth not by one, he taketh in hand another, and doth that so long, until he hath obtained his purpofe. Man is a weak and a miserable thing, as St. Paul faith, 2 Cor. iv. 7. 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels,' &c. I am more frail than a pot compared to the potter, and a pot is a very weak thing, inasmuch as it is easily broken, and whatsoever is in it, is spilt. Now satan when he knoweth how great a treasure faith is, kept in a frail pot (that I may so speake) he is in a great rage and fury, and faith thus unto us; I will touch thee, I will break thy pot, thou hast a great treasure, which I will spill; so God fetteth the filly pot in the midst of his enemies, which should utterly perish, even in a moment if he did not defend it, for it may quickly be shaken and broken in pieces, yea if it be but bitten of a viper, it perifheth. And it is not hard for satan even in one moment to waste and destroy a whole country. Wherefore that vexeth him, that God dealeth with him so simply, setting a filly pot against him, when he notwithstanding is so great a prince, and the most mighty ruler of this world. Now it would grieve me, if I being strong and valiant, any man should set upon me with a reed, surely I being moved with anger would break the reed in pieces; for I had rather that he would set upon me with a spear, sword, and armed on all parts. It grieved stout Goliah, that David durst come unto him unarmed only with a staff; so it greatly grieveth the devil
both who can tell whether he will help me also? However he
have been thus affected: He helped others indeed, but
himself, he had not gone unto Christ, but his heart would
good in a place or way having two paths, doubting with
which clearly fall into God. If that this refer had
helped from him, and that indeed is a true Christian heart
and strength, and scrolled on the other would
upon him, and he returned unto him, inhaling this:
if he helped all men he will also help me, and will hear
let upon him, and he returned unto him, inhaling this:
and what he had said unto the Holy, declared there.

Thus have we an entrance unto our text, the new
incapable and deceit our faith, and prejudice the vessel.
place of which water was come out of Judas's image;
and that the vessel is to be marked:
but that which he had said is to be marked.

Wherefore heard the Jesu's was come out of Judas's image:
and that the vessel is to be marked:
but that which he had said is to be marked.

The Evangelist told this: Thus have we an entrance unto our text, the new
incapable and deceit our faith, and prejudice the vessel.
place of which water was come out of Judas's image:
and that the vessel is to be marked:
but that which he had said is to be marked.

Wherefore heard the Jesu's was come out of Judas's image:
and that the vessel is to be marked:
but that which he had said is to be marked.

Wherefore heard the Jesu's was come out of Judas's image:
and that the vessel is to be marked:
but that which he had said is to be marked.
Of the exercise and increase of Faith.

doth not thus doubt of Christ, but riseth and maketh haste unto him. This is the beginning of faith; now ye shall see how Christ meeteth him on the other side, and answereth otherwise than he thought for, that his faith might be tried, and thus he faith unto him: '

Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe,' Christ said also to St Peter, Mat. xiv. 31. 'Thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' Peter undoubtedly had faith, and did believe in Christ, whereupon he committed himself to the water, but when he saw the wind he was afraid, and began to be drowned; so in this place, that good man heareth a good report of Christ, that he helpeth every man, which he believeth, and therefore reforteth unto him. But when he heareth that Christ denieth to come, he stumbleth, and his faith faileth, fearing that Christ would not come unto him, this is as it were an assault and force blow, here his new begun faith beginneth to be tempted. It was a hard saying, 'Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe;' which saying doth so tempt him and bring him into doubt, that he almost falleth, Satan standing at his back, faith unto him. Get thee home and look to thy business, for he will not help thee; notwithstanding the ruler did not by and by leave off, but prayed the Lord, 'Sir come down ere my child die.' Here his faith began to be in danger and to fail but God doth not forsake him, but lifteth him up again, and faith unto him, 'Go thy way; thy son liveth.' If the ruler had not had faith, he would not have requested Christ to come to his son; What therefore doth he want? Even this; he believed if Christ came to his house, he could then help his son, if he did not come, he could not help him. Neither did his faith extend so far, as to believe that Christ even being absent could heal the sick; but it behoved that he should have a higher faith. Therefore Christ lifteth him up, and setteth him in a higher state, and faith unto him, 'Go thy way; thy son liveth.' Here he first ascendeth from his former faith, whereby he believeth that Christ could heal being present, and cometh to a higher faith, so that now he believeth the word: for if he had not believed the word he would not have left Christ, neither would have
Of the exercise and increase of Faith.

have departed from him, until he had come with him to his house. By having laid hold on the word, he cleaveth unto him by faith, for his son is at home, and Christ is with his father; wherefore the father receiveth this word in his heart, and thinketh with himself after this sort: My son is sick, but I shall find him whole; which faith was contrary both to reason and experience. Reason would have thought thus: When I came from my son he was sick, as I did leave him, so shall I find him. But faith otherwise, it resteth only in the word, and trusteth wholly unto it, neither doubtest thou that any thing will fall out otherwise than a word speaketh, 'Go thy way; thy son liveth.' This is a right and strong faith, when a man liveth sense, wisdom, reason, and trusteth wholly in the word of God; Christ faith. 'Thy son liveth;' and he faith with himself, without doubt it is true I shall so find it. So faith remaineth not idle, nor resteth, but increaseth and goeth forward. Thus Christ dealeth with us also, he suffereth us to be tempted, that we may increase in faith; if in the end of our life when we must die, we shall have but a spark of such faith we shall be in a good case, as Christ faith unto his disciples, Mat. xvii. 20. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." A grain of mustard seed is but as small thing, but he that hath faith agreeable to the smallness of this grain, shall be saved. Neither must we so much consider this, that our faith is little, but we must look unto this, we must have regard unto this, that the grain of mustard-seed do remain, and be not eaten up of the birds; that Satan pluck not faith out of our hearts. We must not look how little the faith is, but we must regard and take heed that faith be not taken away. Peter had faith upon the sea and therefore was he carried by the water, that he should not be drowned; if he had so persevered in faith, he might well have walked an hundred miles upon the sea, but when he failed in faith, he began to be drowned. So Moses had a strong faith, but he fell from it. It consisteth not in the strength or slenderess of faith, that we do stand, but in persevering.
Of the exercise and increase of Faith.

and remaining faithful. It may be that he shall persevere in faith, which hath but a slender faith, and he that hath a strong faith shall fall and doubt. Moses and Peter had an excellent faith, so that Moses by faith did lead the people thro' the midst of the sea and death, and Peter without doubting went down out of the ship into the sea, but they fell from their faith, howbeit God raised them up quickly again. But the thief on the cross having once laid hold of faith, continued constant. Now God therefore suffereth it to be thus, that he may bring down rash arrogancy, that we do not gloriously extol ourselves, but always remain in fear and awe; for when temptation cometh upon us, we do forthwith fall into error, if God do not afflict and strengthen us, of which thing we may see a very goodly similitude in a tree, which in the spring-time buddeth and openeth itself, so that it doth as it were become white by reason of the blossoms. A shower falling upon it, many of the blossoms are shaken off, and the frost also doth much more consume them; afterward when the fruit beginneth to spring forth, some great wind blowing, much of it being newly come forth, falleth down, and when it waxeth ripe, the caterpillar cometh, which with other worms gnaweth and spoileth it so much, that scarce the twentieth part, yea, scarce the hundredth part many times remaineth. The same cometh to pass with the hearers of the gospel, in the beginning thereof every one coveteth to be a true Christian, every one liketh of it very well, and the first fruits thereof are very pleasant; but when wind, a shower or temptation cometh, all fall away from it by companies; afterwards sects and seditions arise, which like unto worms and cankers gnaw and infect the fruits of the gospel, and so many false opinions spring up, that very few do persevere in the true profession of the gospel: we have here, thanks be given to almighty God, the word of God plentifully taught, we are delivered out of deep and great darkness, but we forgetting the word are made weak, we live having no care of the word for it is not savoury unto us, but when hereafter false prophets shall break in with their corrupt opinion, and Satan also shall violently
Of the exercise and increase of Faith.

457

lently afflict us, finding us idle, and the house swept and garnished, he will bring with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and the end shall be worse than the beginning; which things if they so fall out, let us not therefore be quite discouraged, but let us rather instruct one another, that we may learn to cleave unto God, and pray unto him, and say, merciful God, thou hast given unto me to become a Christian, give unto me also that I may persevere, and become daily richer in faith. Altho' the whole world did resist, and every one conspired to destroy the gospel, yet will I be nothing moved. But by thy divine help will depend on the gospel; but to return again to the ruler ye have heard that his faith was very notable and excellent, he heareth the word Thy son liveth, he believeth it and goeth away giving honour to God, he receiveth the only word, he trusteth wholly unto it: hereupon, God dealeth so graciously with him that he restor eth health unto his son, raiseth him up, and strengtheneth him in faith, neither suffereth him to flick in doubt or infirmity, but establisheth him, and maketh him strong, and causeth him to go forward and increase; neither doth God delay until he cometh home, but declareth unto him being yet in his journey the health of his son, sending his servants to meet him, that they might bring him good news, and say, thy son liveth; for God cannot defer or delay, where there is a sincere heart, which trusteth in him alone, all other things being left, looking only unto the word of God, there God cannot hide himself, but reveal esth himself, and cometh unto such a heart, and make his abode there, as the Lord faith, John xiv. Now what can be more joyful then for a man to give credit to the word of God, and to be plucked from it by no affliction or temptation, but to shut his eyes against every assault of Satan, to lay aside human sense, understanding, reason, and wisdom, and to say daily in his heart, God hath spoken it, he cannot lie. I say nothing is more joyful than such a faith; for whatsoever we ask of God with such a faith, we receive it more abundantly of him, than ever we desired it, and God is sooner present with us, than we had thought; hereupon the Evangelist useth.
so many words, even unprofitable, as it appeareth unto us, as these. "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him saying, thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth;" All which tend unto this that we should know, that if we believe in the Lord he will give us abundantly, whatsoever we shall pray unto him for. The conclusion the Evangelist maketh as followeth, 'And himself believed, and his whole house.' He so increased in faith, that he did not only ascend from a low state to a higher, but he brought others also unto faith; he had surely an effectual faith, which did not rest idle and slothful in the heart, but did break forth, so that whosoever were in his house were brought unto faith; for this is plainly the nature of faith; this is the quality of it, to draw others into it, and burst forth, and apply it self even unto the work of love, as St. Paul witnesseth, Gal. v. That faith which worketh by love, is effectual, for it cannot keep silence or be idle, as David faith, Psal. cxvi. which place St. Paul applieth to the faithful, 2 Cor iv. 13. 'I believed and therefore have I spoken;' Faith can do no other, for it is enforced to speak, neither can it keep silence, inasmuch as he that is endued with it, endeavoureth to profit his neighbour; this ruler had faith for himself, but it doth not remain in him alone, but breaketh forth. For without all doubt he declared to his family, how he came unto Christ, and received comfort of him, which they also believed; so we also, when we believe, must open our mouth and confess the grace which God hath shewed unto us; which as the chief and most excellent work of faith, that one instruct another in the word; for Paul faith, Rom. x. 10. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' If we be ashamed of this word; it is a certain argument of a very light and uncertain faith. We see therefore that there is no difference with Christ certain
Of the exercise and increase of Faith, 459
between the strong and the weak in faith, for a little faith is faith also. He therefore came into the world that he might receive to himself, bear and sustain the weak. If he was so impatient as we are, he would by and by say unto us, get thee from me, I will none of thee, because thou believest not in me: but this is greatly to be commended, when one can handle the weak gently, and do not deal rigorously with them, and repel them by impatience; for although they be weak to day, the hour may come, when they shall receive the word more abundantly than we; thus we ought to instruct and teach one another, that we may depend on the word of God; for if we continue in sticking on the word, we shall be strong enough for the devil; for we glory of the word, altho' we are but weak. Unto Satan, who is able even in one hour to overthrow us all, all men should be even as a feather, which he would be able to remove away how and when he will, yea even with his breath, but if we believe, that feather is made more heavy unto him, than the hill Olympus; for a Christian beareth Christ in himself, and Christ is heavier than heaven and earth. Thus much may suffice concerning this text.

SERMON XXX.

Of Mercy to some and Judgment to others.

Matth. xlviii. 23. to the 35th. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king.

CHRIST brought forth this parable unto that answer which he had made to St. Peter, unto whom he had before committed the keys of binding and loosing: for when St. Peter asked him how oft he should forgive his brother his offence, whether it were enough to forgive him seven times, and he answered, not seven times, but seventy times seven, he then added this similitude, by which he inferreth, that his heavenly Father will do likewise unto us, if we do not forgive our neighbour, even as the king did here unto the servant, which would not forgive his fellow servant a small debt, when as his lord had forgiven him so much. We have oftentimes
taught that the kingdom of God wherein he reigneth by
the Gospel, is nothing else but such a state or government,
wherein is meer forgivenes of sins, so that where such
a government is not, wherein sin is pardoned, neither
is there the gospel nor kingdom; wherefore those two
kingdoms are to be separated, one where in sins are punished,
and another wherein they are forgiven, or wherein the law
is exacted, and wherein that which is due by the law,
is remitted. In the kingdom of God, where he reigneth
by the Gospel, there is no exacting of the law, neither
any dealing by the law, but only remission and for-
givenes, neither wrath or punishing, but brotherly ser-
vice and well doing one to another; notwithstanding the
civil law or magistrate is not taken away, for this para-
ble speaketh not any thing of worldly government, but
of the kingdom of God only: wherefore he that is yet
governed only by the regimen of the world is yet far
off from the kingdom of heaven, for worldly govern-
ment pertaineth wholly to inferior things; As if a prince
govern his people so, that he suffer injury to be done to
none, punishing offenders he doth well, and is therefore
commended; for in that government this sentence flour-
ished: Pay that thou owest: which if thou donot, thou
shalt be cast into prison; such government we must have,
howbeit we come not to heaven by it, neither is the
world therefore saved, but this government is therefore
necessary, that the world do not become worse, for it is
only a defence and fortification against wickedness, which
if it were not, one would devour another, neither could
any man keep in safety his own life, wife, goods,
children, &c. That therefore all things should not fall,
come to ruin and perish, God hath appointed the
sword of the magistrate, whereby wickedness may be
partly repressed, peace and quietness among men main-
tained, and one may not do another injury, wherefore
this is in any wise to be kept: but as I said, it is not or-
dained for them that are in the kingdom of grace, but
therefore only, that men be not more deeply plunged
in wickedness, and become worse. Wherefore no man
that is only under the regimen of the world, ought to
glory that he doth therefore well before God, before
whom
and Judgment to others. 461

whom all is yet unrighteous; for thou must come so far that thou do resign that which is just before the world, and yield of thine own right. This the gospel doth here require, which on either side setteth forth unto us only forgiveness. First the lord forgiveth the servant all the debt, then he requireth of him, that he forgive his fellow servant his, and remit his offence: these things God requireth, and so must his kingdom be ordered, that no man be so wicked, neither suffereth himself to be moved, that he cannot forgive his neighbour. And as it is a little before this text taught of the Gospel, if he should provoke thee to anger even seventy times seven, that is as often as he can offend against thee, thou must yield of thine own right, and cheerfully forgive him all things: why so? because Christ did the same; for he set up and erected such a kingdom, as wherein is only grace, which must at no time cease, so that if thou repent all things will be wholly forgiven thee, as often as thou shalt offend, forasmuch as he hath ordained the gospel, that it might preach no punishment, but only grace and forgiveness of sins. This kingdom standing, thou mayest always rise again, how deeply ever thou fallest, and so often as thou fallest, so as thou repent; for although thou fallest, yet this gospel and mercy seat always continueth. As soon therefore as thou hast risen again and returned, thou hast grace restored; howbeit he requireth this of thee, that thou also forgive thy neighbour all things, which he hath committed against thee, otherwife thou shalt not be in this kingdom of grace, neither shall become partaker of that which the gospel preacheth, that thy sins may be forgiven thee; this briefly is the sum and meaning of this text.

Moreover we must not here omit to declare who they are that receive the gospel, and unto whom it is acceptable; for surely that kingdom and government wherein God reigneth and ruleth by the gospel, is most excellent and gentle, forasmuch as in it meer forgiveness of sins is preached, howbeit it pierceth not into the heart of every one; neither is it considered or esteemed of all; for thou mayest find many light and inconstant men who
who abuse the gospel and lead their life diollutely and loolly, doing what they list, who think that they should be rebuked of none, seeing that the gospel teacheth nothing but forgiveness of sins. The gospel is not preach-ed to these who do so vilely esteem a precious treasure and deal lightly with it: wherefore neither do they certain to this kingdom but to worldly government, that they may be stopped from doing whatsoever they like and list; to whom then is it preached? to them that thoroughly feel such misery, as this servant did here. Wherefore consider what happeneth unto him, the lord taketh pity of his misery and forgiveth him more than he durst desire; but before this is done, the text faith, the lord first took account of his servants, and when he began to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents, and because he had nothing to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, his wife and children and all that he had, and the debt to be payed: which truly were no pleasant words, but even exceeding severity and terrible judgment; then is brought into so great perplexity and distress, that he falleth down on the ground and asketh mercy, and promiseth more than he hath or is able to pay, saying, lord refrain thine anger toward me, and I will pay thee all.

Here is set forth unto us, who they are unto whom the gospel is acceptable; for so cometh it to pass between God and us: when God will take an account of us, he sendeth forth the preaching of his law, whereby we learn to know what we ought to do: as when God faith to the conscience, thou shalt worship no other God, but shalt acknowledge me alone for God, shalt love me with all thine heart, and repose thy trust in me only; this is the book of accounts wherein is written what we owe, which he taking into his hands, readeth before us and faith, lo, this thou oughtest to have done, thou oughtest to fear love, and worship me alone, thou oughtest to trust in me alone, and from me to promise to thyself all good things: howbeit thou dost otherwise, thou art my adversary, thou believest not in me, but reposest thy trust in other things, and in fine thou feest here, that thou dost not observe so much as the least
and Judgment to others. 463

faft point of the law. When the conscience hath heard these things, and the law hath touched one well, he seeth then what he ought to do, and what he hath not done, and findeth that he hath not kept so much as a letter of the law and is compelled to confess, that he hath not performed that obedience and duty which God justly requireth of him; what doth the Lord now? when the conscience is thus touched, and feeleth itself condemned, and is distressed with exceeding great misery, he saith, fell him and whatsoever he hath, and let him pay the debt. This is the judgment which forthwith followed, when the law hath revealed sin and said, This thou must do, that thou oughtest to have done, thou hast done nothing thereof; for to sin is required punishment, that man may be compelled to pray; for God hath not so made his law, that he doth not punish them that transgress it. It is not sweet and pleasant, but bringeth bitter and horrible pain with it, it delivereth us to Satan, it casteth us down to hell, and leaveth us rapped in temptation until we have payed the utmost farthing: this St. Paul hath notably well declared, Rom. iv. 15. ' The law worketh wrath:' that is, when it revealeth unto us, that we have done unjustly, it seemeth nothing before us but wrath and indignation; for when the conscience seeth that it hath committed evil, it seeth that it hath deserved eternal death, after which followeth punishment, whereupon it is compelled to despair.

This is that that the Lord commanded this servant together with all his substance to be sold, forasmuch as he is not able to pay, but what doth the servant say? the foolish fellow thinketh yet, that he shall pay the debt, he falleth down and prayeth that he will have patience with him. This is the wound and cross of all consciences that when sin biteth them so, that they feel in how evil case they are before God, there is no rest in them, they but run hither and thither, seeking about, that they may be delivered from sins, and rashly take upon them as yet to do so great things, as wherewith they shall pay God, as we have hitherto been instructed, whereupon came so many pilgrimages, collegiate houses, monasteries, masses and other trifles; we pined ourselves with fasting, we scourged ourselves with whips, we were
made monks and nuns, for that we went about to lead such a life, and to do such and so many works, as whereby God might have respect, and thereby he pacified, thinking so to appease and make quiet our consciences, so we committed the same things that this foolish fellow did. Such a heart as is touched with the law, and throughly feeleth its own misery and calamity is humbled truly and indeed, whereupon it falleth down before the Lord and craveth mercy, howbeit it is yet defiled with this voice, that it stripeth to help itself, which cannot be taken away from nature, when as the conscience feeleth such misery, it darest presume to promise more than all the angels in heaven are able to perform: then it is an easymatter to persuade it to apply itself to do whatsoever can be required of it; for it findeth itself always in such a case, that it hopeth that it is able by works to satisfy for sins; consider those things which have been hitherto of long time done in the world, then shalt thou find these things to be so; For thus was it preached, give somewhat to the building of a church, get thee to be admitted into a holy monastery, institute masses, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee. And when confciences were urged in confession, they would not stick to say, whatsoever was enjoined us; we have admitted nothing of it, yea, we have given more than we were commanded: miserable men rejoiced that by this means they might provide for themselves, and therefore they mind and afflicted themselves, that they might be unburthened of their sins, yet did it prevail them nothing; for the conscience remained in a doubt as before, that it knew not how it stood before God: but if it were secure and quiet, it fell into that which is worse, to think that God hath respect unto works; neither can reason do any other but depend on works; the Lord therefore is touched with affection and mercy toward that misery wherewith the servant is entangled and snared with sins, is holden, and taking pity upon him, doth forgive and diminish him. Here is now set forth unto us, what is the special office and quality of the gospel, and how God dealeth with us; when thou art so drowned in sins, and wearest thyself; then thou mayst
mayst deliver thyself from them, the gospel cometh to thee, and faith, do not so, dear brother, it prevaleth nothing, although thou afflict and torment thyself even till thou be mad, thy works do not profit, but the mercy of God shall deliver thee, who is touched with thy misery; for he seeth thee wrapped in calamity, wearying thyself, that thou mayest deliver thyself out of the mire, and yet art not able, he, I say, hath regard unto this, that thou art not able to pay, whereupon he forgiveth thee all, and that of his meer mercy; for he doth not forgive thee the debt, either for thy works or merits, but for that he taketh pity upon thy cry, complaint and mourning, and thy falling down before his knees, that is, God hath respect to an humbled heart, as the prophet saith, Psal. li. 17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise.* Such a heart, he saith, as is broken and humbled, which is not able to help itself, but craveth the help of God, and rejoiceth in it, such a heart is an acceptable sacrifice to God, and he that hath it, is in the right way to heaven. Now God having shewed his mercy unto him, and taken pity on his misery, ceaseth to follow his right, and abrogate it, and faith no more. Sell whatsoever thou hast and pay the debt, although he might go forward and say, thou must pay for this, my law requireth, which I will not have abrogated for thy sake, yet will he not deal with him by the law, but changeth the law into grace and favour, taketh pity on him, and dismisseth him, with his wife, children and all his substance, and doth also forgive him the debt. This is that which God suffereth to be preached by the gospel, unto him that believeth is remitted not only the fault, but also the punishment, and that of meer mercy, not for any works sake; for he that preacheth, that by works, the fault and the punishment may be put away, hath even then denied the gospel, forasmuch as these two cannot agree together, that God hath mercy on thee, and yet that thou dost merit something; for if it be grace, it is no merit, but if it be merit then shall it not be grace, but debt; for if thou pay the debt, he...
Of Mercy to men.

if he sheweth thee no mercy, but if he sheweth thee mercy, thou doest not make payment; wherefore we must needs acknowledge his mercy towards us, we must receive of him, and believe in him, which the gospel here requireth. After that this servant is this humbled with the knowledge of his sin, the word is exceeding comfortable unto him, wherein the Lord pronounceth him free, and forgiveth him both the fault and the punishment; whereby is also declared, that it toucheth not sluggish hearts, that feel no sin, neither those that are carried with rashness, but only such afflicted consciences as are pressed with the heavy burthen of their sins, which do greatly desire to be delivered from them, on them God hath mercy and forgiveth them all; wherefore it behoved this servant to receive the word, for unless he had received it, forgivenes had profited nothing, nay there had been no forgivenes at all. It is not therefore enough, that God suffereth remission of sins, and a golden year full of grace to be preached untous, but it is necessary that we receive and believe it in heart; if thou believe thou art free from sins : this is the first part of a Christian life, which both this place and divers others in the gospel do teach us, which consisteth properly in faith, which alone hath to do before God; whereby also is shewed that the gospel cannot be received but of a troubled and miserable conscience. Hereupon now may be inferred that they are plain delusions, whatsoever things are any otherwise taught concerning our works and free-will, viz. that they put away sins, and obtain grace; for the divine majesty alone, beholding our misery, hath pity upon us; for the text sheweth manifestly, that God pardoneth and forgiveth them; that have nothing, and concludes that we have nothing left wherewith we may pay God; howsoever therefore thou hast free-will in temporal matters, yet thou hearest here that it is nothing before God; wherefore if thou desir'st to be delivered from thy sins, thou must cease to trust in any of thy works, must plainly despair concerning them, fly unto Christ, pray unto God for grace, and finally receive the gospel by faith. Now followeth the other part, wherein the fellow-servant also is dealt with: this servant
servant now hath enough, he loveth his body, goods, wife, children, &c. and hath his lord favourable unto him; therefore he should be surely very foolish, if he should now depart, and do what he is able for the reconciliation of his Lord, for his Lord might worthily lay that he is locked of him. He hath need therefore of no work, but that he receive such grace and favour as is offered him, so may be of good cheer, giving thanks to his Lord, and dealing so with others as his Lord hath dealt with him. After the same sort it is with us, for when we believe, we have God favourable and merciful unto us, neither do we need any thing more, but now it were time that we should forthwith die; notwithstanding if we must as yet live still in the earth, our life ought to be ordered so, that we seek not to obtain the favour of God by works. For he that doth his doth mock and dishonour God, as it hath been hitherto taught, that God is to be solicited by good works, prayers, fasting, and such like, until we obtain his grace and favour. We have obtained grace not by works, but by mercy, now if thou must live, thou must have what to do, and where with to occupy thyself, and it is meet that all this be referred to thy neighbour. The servant went out, as Christ's faith, and found his fellow servant, whom he took by the throat and dealt rigorously with him, and will be wholly said of him, chewing him no mercy or favour at all: I have said elsewhere, that Christians must burst forth by works, and by their deeds before men witness that they have a sincere faith. God needeth no works, but faith sufficeth him, howbeit he therefore requireth them to be done of thee, that by them thou mayest shew thy faith, both before thyself and also before the whole world; for he knoweth thy faith very well, but thou thyself and men do not yet thoroughly see it. Thou therefore must direct such works so, that they may profit thy neighbour. Now whereas this servant should have done, what doth he? even the same that we do, who seem unto ourselves to believe, and partly have faith and are glad that we have heard the gospel, whereof we can dispute and talk many things, but no
man goeth about to express it in his life. We have brought the matter so far, that the doctrine and trifles of Satan are somewhat abated and laid aside, that we do now see and know, what is just and what unjust: that we must have to do with God only by faith, and by works with our neighbour. But we cannot bring it to this pass, that love may begin, and do that to anot~h~r which God hath done unto us, as we ourselves complain, that many of us are become worse than they were before. As therefore this servant refused to remit his neighbour the debt, and dealt extremely with him; so also we, saying, it is not meet that I should give that which is mine to another, neglecting mine own right. If this man hath provoked me to anger, it is his duty to pacify me, and to labour by intreaty to put away mine anger. Truly thus the world teacheth and doth, for it affirmeth it to be just and right. Neither will any prince or magistrate inforce thee to give that which is thine unto another, but will suffer thee to do what pleaseth thee with thine own goods. The magistrate indeed restraineth thee from doing what thou liest with the good of another, but he constraineth thee not to give thine own substance to another, for that is against the law of nations, which even reason pronouncing it, giveth to every one that which is his own; wherefore he doth not unequally or unjustly which useth his own things at his will, and taketh not away wrongfully the goods of another. But what doth the gospel say? if God also had held his own right and said, I do well in that; I punish offenders, and take that which is mine own, who shall let me? What I pray you should become of us all? We should be thrust down to Satan. Wherefore he hath left his right toward thee, he will have thee do the same toward other, and therefore thou abrogating thine own right think thus with thyself: If God hath forgiven me ten thousand talents, why should not I forgive my neighbour an hundred pence? God might have exacted his own right, nevertheless he doth not so, but cometh a favourable Lord unto thee, taketh pity upon thee, and forgiveth thee: why therefore shouldst not thou do likewise to thy neighbour? Therefore if thou
houl wilt have to do in his kingdom, thou muﬆ do as he doth, but if thou hadﬆ rather remain in the kingdom of the world, thou shalt never enter into his kingdom. Hereunto pertaineth that sentence, which Christ in the last day shall pronounce upon the unbelievers: ‘I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink,’ Mat. xxv. 42.

But if thou contend here, and say, that God will not have respect unto works, neither will save any because of them, I say he will have them done frankly and freely, not that we may merit any thing thereby, but that we may do them to the profit of our neighbours, and witness our sincere faith by them; for what hast thou that thou mayest give him, and whereby thou mayest deserve that he should pardon whatsoever thou hast committed against him? or what doth he get thereby? nothing truly, but that thou givest unto him praise and thanks. And this is the other part of a Christian life, the name whereof is Love. They therefore that shew not their faith by the works of love are such servants, as will have themselves forgiven, when as they notwithstanding do not forgive their neighbour, neither yield of their own right, with whom it shall likewise fall out as it did with this servant. For when the other servants (that is, the ministers and preachers of the gospel) shall see it, that God hath forgiven them all, and yet they will not forgive any, they are troubled, that they are compelled to see such things, and it grieveth them very sore, that men do so indiscreetly apply themselves to the gospel, and not rightly receive it. What do they then? they can do no other, but come to their Lord, and complain unto him of such things, and say, Lord, thus it is: thou forgavest them both the fault and the punishment, yea pardoneﬆ them all things, and yet we cannot bring them so far, as to deal so with others as thou hast dealt with them. This is the complaint: the Lord therefore will cause them to come before him in the last judgment, and will lay those things against them saying, when thou wast afflicted with hunger, thirst, misery, &c. I did help thee; when thou didﬆ lie drowned in sins, I having mercy
mercy upon thee, did storgive thee. Hast thou done the same to thy neighbour? then he shall pronounce this sentence on him: thou wicked one, I was touched with mercy toward thee, yea I yielded of mine own right, but thou wouldst not take pity on oters, nor forgive them their offence, wherefore thou shalt now pay the debt. Here is no grace and mercy, but most grievous wrath and eternal condemnation, then no prayers help, wherefore he is compelled to hold his peace, and is thrown headlong into pain, until he pay the uttermost farthing. This is that which St. Peter hath spoken of them, 2 Pet. ii. 21, which after they have heard the gospel, notwithstanding go back, it had been better for them, if they had never acknowledged the way of righteousness, than after they have acknowledged it, to turn from the holy commandment given unto them. Why had it been better? because while they go back, it becomes worse with them than it was before they heard the gospel, as Christ faith of the unclean spirit, Mat. xii. which taketh unto himself seven other spirits worse than himself, with which he cometh, and dwelleth in that man, out of whom he before had gone. and so the end of that man is worse than the beginning. After the same manner cometh it to pass with us, and shall hereafter also be usual: so also hath it fallen out with Rome. In the time of the martyrs she was in her best flower, but afterward she fell and abomination was there erected, that Antichrist might reign there, yea she became such a one, that worse she cannot be. The grace of God, which is revealed and preached by the gospel was hidden, that men might not attain unto it: wherefore it could not be but a great and grievous scourge and plague should follow. So we shall also have that great vengeance to come upon us, for that we do not believe nor obey the gospel, which we have and know. For as often as God would send an horrible scourge and plague, he hath first set up a great light; as when he would send the Jews out of their own country into captivity in Babylon, he first raised up the godly King Josiah, who should again restore the law, that the people might amend their life, but
but when they did again revolt, God punished them according to their desert. So when he minded to destroy the Egyptians, he made a light to be set up, and preached unto them by Moses and Aaron. Moreover when he would drown all the world by the flood, he sent the Patriarch Noah; but when men did not mend but became worse and worse, such a sore and grievous plague did follow. Likewise the five cities Sodom and Gomorrah, together with the rest were destroyed, for that they would not hear Lot, who feared God; wherefore a sharp vengeance shall light upon them also, which hear the gospel, but do not receive it; even as the servant here in the gospel, is delivered to the tormentors till he should pay all the debt; which is as much in effect as that he is compelled to suffer punishment for his fault, and is never saved; for unto sin is required death, and when he dieth, he dieth always, neither is there any help or deliverance remaining; wherefore let us receive these things for our own admonition: as for them that will not hear, being hardened and indurate, let them beware of the evil that hangeth over them. This is a very comfortable text, and sweet to troubled consciences, inasmuch, as it containeth in it meer forgiveness of sins. Again, it setteth forth terrible judgment to the unmerciful and hard hearted, especially seeing that this servant is not an heathen, but had heard the gospel, in that he had faith; inasmuch as the Lord took pity on him, and forgave him his offences, without doubt, he was a Christian; wherefore this is not the punishment of Gentiles, nor of the common sort that hear not the gospel, but of them that with their ears hear the gospel, and with their tongue talk of it, but will not express it in their life: we have here the sum of this text. Whereas the schoolmen dispute here, whether sin cometh again, which was before remitted, I let it pass, for they are ignorant what remission of sins is; they think it is a thing that cleaveth to the heart, and lieth quietly, when as notwithstanding it is plainly the kingdom of Christ, which endureth for ever without ceasing; for as the sun nevertheless shineth, although I shut mine eyes; so this mercy feast or forgiveness of sin standeth always, altho' I fall.
SERMON XXXI.
Teaching, that we must cleave wholly to Christ, and look to obtain all good Things from him.

Matthew ix. 18 to the 26. While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, &c.

Dear beloved, ye know that the gospel is nothing else, but a treasure of the only person, whose name is Christ. And altho' there be extant many books and fundry treatises concerning divers men, as well of the Gentiles as Christians, yea, and of the mother of God, St Peter, the angels, and of many other saints beside, yet be they not gospels, but that only is the sincere gospel, which setteth forth Christ unto us, and what good we must hope for from him; sometime in the gospel there is mention made of St. John the Baptist, Mary, and the apostles, howbeit, this is not properly the gospel, but therefore it is written of them, that it might be more perfectly declared, from whence Christ should come, and what is his office; so Luke describeth the history of John the Baptist, even from the beginning, what was done both in his conception and in his nativity, he writeth also of the virgin Mary; all which things were committed to writing, not because of their persons, but because of Christ's person only; in the epistle of St. Paul, there is nothing committed to memory of the saints but all things found plainly of Christ; for God hath so ordained, that all must depend on that one man Christ, must hope in him, must repose their trust in him, if they desire to be saved, for he alone is set forth of God to be a reconciliation for us, as Paul faith, Rom. iii. Hitherto one hath cleaved to this saint, another to that
one chose to himself St. Mary, another St. Barbary, and divers sects and sorts of religion did flourish; but Christ was in no price, for his name only remained: we had many intercessors, all which being neglected, we ought to have cleaved only to Christ. Hereupon St. Paul faith, that the gospel was promised of God by the prophets concerning his Son; he reduceth and bringeth it into such a streight, that in the gospel nothing is of any importance which concerneth not Jesus Christ; he that knoweth this, let him give thanks to God, that he knoweth where he may seek for consolation and help, and in whom he may repose his trust; Christ in this day's gospel is set forth unto us, that he is conversant in the midst of the people, and draweth all the world unto himself with his gentleness and sweet doctrine, that they may cleave unto him in their heart, that they may commit themselves to his goodness, and hope that they shall obtain of him both spiritual and temporal good things. Neither doth he receive any thing of them, upon whom he bestoweth benefits, nay, he obtaineth nothing of them but ignominy and scorn, as is declared in this text. A benefit proceedeth from him, for which he receiveth a mock and reproach; now the gospel is preached and offered to the whole world, that we may learn to know his man well, and how we must be made Christians, and not how we must be made good; other treatises beside the gospel teach those things, whereby men may be made good, as the writings of the philosophers and the rulers of the civil law; the lives also of the saints have especial respect unto this, that men may imitate them; it belongeth not to the gospel to make good men, but to make Christian men; for it is far more excellent to be a Christian, than an honest and good man. A Christian can say nothing of his own goodness or righteousness, for he findeth in himself nothing either good or righteous, but he must fly to the righteousness which is another, and which cometh unto him from another. Hereupon Christ is set forth unto as a continual fountain, which always overfloweth with meer goodness and grace, for which he receiveth nothing of us, but that he godly do acknowledge so great goodness and grace,
do give him thanks for the same, do praise and love him; others in the mean time mocking him, such reward he receiveth of them: Wherefore one is not therefore called a Christian, for that he worketh much, for there is another thing, which is cause thereof, namely, that he receiveth and draweth from Christ; if one receiveth nothing from Christ, he is no more a Christian, so that the name of a Christian cometh only by receiving, and not by giving or doing; if thou think that because of thy works and deeds thou art a Christian, thou hast even then lost the name of Christ. Good works indeed are to be done, counsel thereunto is to be given and received, but no man is therefore called a Christian, neither is any therefore a Christian; wherefore if any will more inwardly weigh this name, in this respect only a Christian is to be acknowledged, inasmuch as he receiveth of Christ alone, even as one is called white of the whiteness that is in him, black of the blackness, great of his stature; so a Christian is called of Christ, whom he hath in himself, and of whom he receiveth that which is good. Now if one be named a Christian of Christ, he taketh not that name of his own works; whereupon it plainly also followeth, that no man is made a Christian by works; which if it be true, as it is true and certain, it shall follow that orders and decrees do nothing pertain to the name of Christ, neither do make a Christian; wherefore they which preach or teach in the church, and ordain precepts, works, and decrees, are deceivers, who although they pretend a Christian name, yet profit they nothing, for under the colour of that name they endeavour to burden and oppress us with commandments and works; of works, giving thy self to fasting and prayers, thou mayst be called abstemious and temperate, but by no means a Christian; for although thou didst lay all thy works together, yea, and joinedst the works of all others to thine, yet neither so hast thou Christ, neither art thou therefore called a Christian; Christ is a more excellent thing, than either the law or man's tradition; he is the Son of God, who is ready to give only, not to receive; when I am such a one that I do receive of him, I have him also, whom if I have, I am by good right called a Christian;
moreover, the gospel preacheth Christ also to be the greatest and most highly exalted person in the world, not that he doth terrify men, but that he poureth forth all earthly and heavenly good things, so that all men must trust in him, must have their hope reposed in him, and always receive only of him; if any sin terrify me in my conscience; and the preachers of the law endeavour to help me with their works, they shall prevail nothing with me; for then Christ alone can help and none beside him, yea, others make the case worse, whether it be St. Peter or Paul, or the blessed virgin Mary her self the mother of God; for Christ only performeth all things, who in his word declareth, that if I believe, my sin is forgiven me freely, without either work or merit, by pure grace through faith in Christ: which word then I shall receive, I receive also comfort, that my sins are forgiven me as well before God as before men, and I therefore give thanks to God through Christ, which giveth the holy Ghost and his grace unto me, that sin may not hurt me, neither here, nor in the last judgment; if I fear death, and would not die willingly, in this Christ I shall find comfort and remedy, that I shall not greatly fear death; if because of the wrath of God I am afraid, he is my Mediator; and to be brief, he that hath not this Christ, the wrath of God always remaineth over him, and in that state he standeth; wherefore he that desireth to have a glad conscience, which is not afraid of sin, death, hell, and the wrath of God, must take heed, that he repose his trust in this Mediator Christ; for he is a fountain abounding with grace, which giveth both temporal and eternal life; endeavour thou to think and feel him even in thy heart to be such a one, then shalt thou obtain all things, for he aboundeth and overfloweth. neither can he but give, flow, and abound, if that thou canst believe; then also shalt thou be a right Christian, howbeit by receiving only of Christ, and not by giving; it is a very rich and precious word, which St. Paul praiseth so greatly, neither can he ever praise it sufficiently, whereby God so gently offereth his Son, that he may pour forth his grace upon all which do not refuse to receive it. Hereupon it more-
over followeth; if so be that a Christian doth good works, whereby he sheweth love to his neighbour, he is not therefore made a Christian or righteous, but he must needs be a Christian and righteous before; he doth good works indeed, but they do not make him a Christian; the tree bringeth forth and giveth fruit, and not the fruit the tree; so none is made a Christian by works but by Christ. Hereof now ye may understand, what kind of people Christians are, namely that they are a company which cleave unto Christ, and are of one spirit and gift with him. Hereupon, it is that all Christians are alike, neither hath one more of Christ than another; St. Peter is not better than the thief on the cross; Mary the mother of God doth not excel Mary Magdalene the sinful woman; there is indeed a difference in outward things and doings, so the work of the holy virgin Mary was greater, than the work of Mary Magdalene; St. Peter had a greater work than the thief, if thou consider the works, but we are not therefore Christians; the holy virgin Mary is not a Christian, because of her great work, for that she did bear Christ, so unspeakable a treasure in her womb, as Christ himself said to the woman, which cried unto him from among the people, Luke xi. 27. 'Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked: But he said, 'Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.' In which place thou seest, that he preferreth the faithful even above his mother; for Christians do therefore bear their name, because they believe in Christ; a virgin and a mother are two notable names, howbeit they are nothing, before compared to the true name of the faithful; wherefore we are all alike in Christ through faith, altho' St. Peter have a stronger faith than I, yet mine is as well faith in Christ as his; for the same Christ is offered of God the Father unto all companies and people, whom he that hath obtained, hath him whole, whether he be strong or weak. The woman mentioned in our text, which was troubled so many years with her disease, doth receive and apprehend Christ as well as the virgin Mary his mother; wherefore there is one Christian spirit, one excel-
and trusting in him.

leth with another in the nobleness of birth, St. Peter is
informed to call me his brother, and I again dare be bold
to call him my brother. Yea Christ himself is touched
with care of us, and counteth us for his brethren, as he
said after his resurrection to Mary Magdalenæ, John xx.
17. 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my
'God and your God.' And St. Paul calleth Christ the first
born among many brethren; whereof also he writeth
excellently in the first epistle to the Corinthians, viii. 9.
where treating of false brethren, he speaketh thus, "But
take heed left by any means this liberty of yours become
a stumbling block to them that are weak. For if any man
see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idols
temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be
emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols:
and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for
whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." Here thou seest, if a Christian be offended, or evil be done
unto him, the face is done unto Christ. This therefore
is the sum of the whole gospel, that we may learn so to
know Christ, that the name only do not remain, but
that we may know that all that we have, we have it
from him; if we be Christians, we have all things; then
God is our father, and we are Lords of all, both heav-
enly and earthly things, which is gotten of us by no
work, be it never so great. Thou seest now how
far they are from the name of Christ, which are under
the kingdom of the pope. They that will preach the
gospel must preach nothing else, beside the only per-
son, which is Christ, not Mary; so far must they be
from preaching the pope, or any work although pre-
cious, they must preach and offer Christ only unto
us, and none beside him: when now he is preached
unto thee as a judge (as he shall come in the last day) and
how that good works are to be done of thee, for which
thou mayest be rewarded of him, and thou shalt so
receive it, surely without all doubt he shall be unto thee
a judge and not a Saviour. And if he be set forth unto
thee as he was wont to be painted; that his mother shew-
eth him her paps, that is, properly to preach Satan and
not
not Christ, who giveth only, and receiveth not. This is certain, when thou shalt have received of him, then good works do flow forth of their own accord, being not compelled, as is set forth in this day's gospel; wherein moreover is declared that Christ preached the gospel to the people; now it is not a common work to preach. For it is a great benefit unto us that he is become our master and instructor, that he teacheth us by what means we may come to the knowledge of him, this is a part of his great goodness and grace; for as long as he was here in the earth, he ceased not to teach, that we might altogether receive him for the Messiah and Saviour; and by his works also did help and relieve every one, when the case so required. Thou findest no man in the gospel to whom help was denied, or which at any time asked any thing of the Lord, which was not given him; for how many soever went unto him that were blind, deaf, lame, sick of the palsy, had the dropsy, he received all, and helped them all, according to their desire, and healed them of all kinds of diseases, as Luke faith, chap. vi. 19. 'And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.' So doth he also to this woman. The woman heareth him preaching, and perceiveth him to be a bountiful and gracious man, which sheweth himself gentle to the whole world, whereupon she hath an affection both to love him, and to cleave unto him; for she maketh account, forasmuch as he putteh away none from him, that he would not deny her his goodness, wherefore leaving all the apostles, she casteth both her heart and confidence upon Christ alone, and thinketh thus with herself; If I may but touch but the hem of his garment, I shall be whole. She thought no other in her heart, but certainly he will help me, if so be that I shall touch his garment with mine hand, yet hath she not so good a courage, that she dare come before his face, the judged herself more unworthy than that she might either talk with him, or look upon him; for she knew that she had deserved nothing, and that she had bestowed no good thing upon the Lord; hereupon it is that she so behaveth herself, she cometh behind his back, she falleth down at his
his feet, and touched only the hem of his garment. In fine, here is nothing but meer bashfulness and want of merit; here is no preparation, here is no work, and yet the miserable woman promiseth herself much goodness from the Lord namely, that he would heal her. She had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve whole years, what should the merit thereby? how could she therefore be worthy of any thing? Nevertheless being unworthy, and having merited nothing, the notwithstanding looketh for help of Christ, feeling herself to have great need thereof. And this is a true preparation, both to the grace and goodness of Christ, when I feel myself to stand in need thereof, and then doth it very well fall out, when these two come together, the rich and the poor, Christ and the sinner. But it is no small matter for men to be persuaded, that they are poor, and stand in need of grace; for that cometh to pass very hardly, Satan also doth not suffer it, but always draweth men back to works, that they may not come so far as to think that they have need either of the grace or mercy of Christ. The text affirmeth that the woman was diseased with an issue of blood twelve whole years, and had spent all her substance upon physicians, and that the more medicines she took, the worse always she was. Luke and Mark doth not a little amplify it, whereby they both signify that the more works are preached, so much the worse it is with us, and that there cometh nothing unto us thereby, but a continual multiplying of our evil. Our conscience cannot be quieted with works, for altho' some sin be driven out of the conscience, forthwith there is another, yea the remedy and work oftentimes do make sin in us, where there is no sin, until such time as we come to Christ, even as it was with this woman, which had been sick so long, neither had she ever been helped, if she had not come to Christ, of whom she obtained health without any works, giving him nothing, but receiveth only of him, and suffereth to be given unto her. Now here is also declared how the word of God is daily to be handled, and without ceasing to be urged, for there are as yet always found such men as have very troubled and afflicted consciences.
480

Of cleaving to Christ

sciences; for this woman is a type and figure of all men, which are diseased with an issue, that is, which feel their sin, the issue whereof doth always run, neither can it be stayed, for flesh and blood doth no otherwise, it is carried away with its own lust and desire. Now if that feeling of sin be great, those wretches come forth and endeavour to help themselves, then one taketh this work in hand, and another that, and yet prevail they nothing; from hence so many orders, so many monasteries have sprung, hereupon so many and so great works have been invented, that they are almost without number. What was the cause of all these? Surely even thy sinful conscience; for we have thought to save our souls by these, and to be delivered wholly from all sins. But Christ was not there present, for we would give and receive. Wherefore our case became always worse, as it fell out also with this woman, who had tried the help of all physicians, and could not find whereby she might be helped; so we also believed all physicians, for whatsoever every one brought, that we by and by received. And was it any marvel? for we desired to be healed and to have a glad conscience. The physicians are the preachers of the law: Now if any desired to be delivered from sins, what did they unto him? They gave him, whereby he became only weaker and feebler, which surely we have seen and felt to our great evil, namely, how they would have men to be justified by works, and by them to be delivered from sins. But it profiteth nothing for we were alway made more weak against sin and death, so that there is never found in the earth a more desperate sort of people, than sacrificing priests, monks and vestal virgins, and they whatsoever they be that trust in works; if there did but a little bile rise upon them, by and by they must run to the apothecary, then is such trying of medicines, such running and haste, as though they had now breathed their last. Neither is any so afraid of the last judgment as this people, which then they very well shew, when they deal so with works, that they rest only upon them, neither do persever the constant in any work, and the more works they do, so much worse is their case, so much
nere are they cast down in mind, and become more deparate, so that it falleth out with them, as with this woman. It is a very goodly fimilitude, which may noft fily be applied to us; for we do not only beftow emortal good things, but our body also by fasting chaftifing, and bearing other hard and intolerable bur- dens, fo that some have thereby become mad, and lefolute of all strength, yea and at the laft loft their ife. And I myself have been fuch a one, and have, without doubt, more reforted to medicines than many others, I could not attain fo far as to leave the Pope's aw. It feemed a hard and fore matter to me to eat lefh on Friday. O good God, how hard a thing was t to me, before I durft attempt to do that? Where- fore if any will be delivered from fuch things, and con- emn the traditions of the Pope, truly he muft have a trong foundation of faith, which if he shall not have, et him look about him again and again before he attempt t: for if faith be wanting, it will fall out with us, as with this woman, who had fpent all her fubfance upon physicians, mending nothing, but rather waxing worse and worse: In like manner all our works, labours and endeavors fhall be loft, all our obedience, with all orders or religions, and whatfoever we have beftowed therein,hall be in vain. Howbeit if we have faith, we fhall at aft fee the decrees of the Pope and Popifh bishops to be nothing, because of which, we have trembled and were troubled, all which did help us fo much, as the physicians did that goodwoman, which had beftowed all her fubfance and riches, yea and her body alfo, that she might be healed. How many kind of medicines and yrups thinkeft thou did that woman ufe? how weak, feeble, and fick was she oftentimes made with them? yea, if she might have been healed, it may feem she would have taken any medicine, howbeit it profited her nothing, she was affifted with her difeafe the space of weleve years. How therefore is this miserable woman t the laft helped? When she did light upon a man whose name is Chrift, and put her hope and truftr in him, she was healed. But who led her to that man? without doubt, not the physicians; for if our preachers should H h preach
Of cleaving to Christ

preach Christ, the merchandize of the Pope, together with his decrees, would be nothing set by; but rather she heard it of some that was also restored to health, who told her without doubt, that there was a certain man, whom his parents had named Jesus, which is a gentle and good man, which helpeth every one, and sendeth away none from him whom he helpeth not, and therefore is without doubt sent of God, that he may help all; which the woman having heard, she left the physicians, and maketh haste unto Christ. So also at this day it falleth out; not Christ, but works only are preached do this or that, nevertheless it is spread among the people what Christ is, what we must look for from him, and that he alone must do all things without our works or merits. This report being heard we follow him, and lay up these words in the depth of our heart, we leave the physicians, nothing regarding the preachers of the law and works, or their commandments and traditions, but run with all desire of heart to this man, which is Christ, saying to the Pope, If I must receive only, of Christ, how unwisely have I dealt, that I have turned so much unto thee; farewel therefore, O Pope, farewel ye beloved bishops, I need no more your medicine, works and merits, precepts and laws, ye have grieved me long enough with them, I have gotten one, which bestoweth upon me freely, whatsoever I paid full dear for unto you before; he giveth that unto me without works and merits, for which I was feign before to bestow my body, strength and health, and yet could not obtain it. Fare ye well, I mind to come no more to you hereafter. Christians therefore are made, not by the decrees of the Pope, not by works, not by the ordinances of men, but by the grace and goodness of Christ. Wherefore if thou hast a disquieted and troubled mind and conscience, so that thou art afraid of sin, dreadful death, or hast some defect otherwise, get thee to that man, and confess what thou wantest, call upon him, then surely he will help thee; 'Pour out your heart before him,' as the 62d Psalm faith, and say thus unto him, Behold here is an empty vessel, which greatly needeth to be filled; I beseech thee, O my Lord, vouchsafe
touchsafe to fill it, I am weak in faith, I pray thee to strengthen me, I am cold in charity, do thou make me hot, and servant, that my love may extend unto my neighbour, I have no firm faith, neither can I sometime trust in God. O Lord help me, and encrease my faith and confidence; in thee have I reposed the treasure of all good things, I am poor, thou art rich, and therefore dost thou come, that thou mightest have mercy on the poor: I am a sinner, thou art righteous, yea I have abundance of sins, but in thee is all fulness and grace. When thou shalt once have learned this, the Pope's ordinances shall not shame thee, by which thou gettest nothing, but confumest all that thou hast, like as this woman did. Then wilt thou say, I will chuse to myself him, of whom I may receive, unto whom I need not give any thing? The other Evangelists write concerning this woman, that after she was healed, Christ perceived virtue to have gone out of him, and turned him about in the press, and asked who had touched him, and that his disciples made answer; that the multitude did throng and thrust him but the Lord would not be content with that answer, but said some one hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me, I know that some one hath received something from me: All which the Lord therefore did, that the faith of the woman might be thankful unto him, which he would therefore have made manifest before all the people, for that nothing is more acceptable unto him, than that we believe and trust in him, and also that the Lord might by this miracle confirm the faith of the ruler. Wherefore Mark faith, that when the woman understood that the Lord knew of her she feared and trembled, and came and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth, how it fell out with her: whereupon the Lord doth deliver her and faith, 'Go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.' Were not these loving words? What great joy did the woman take here, when as Christ had dealt so bountifully with her? This joy and peace all they obtain, which repose their whole hope and trust in Christ Jesus. Where this joy shall be, forthwith works must

needs
needs follow, which may shew forth this joy; as also the faith of this woman must needs come to light. For as soon as she had received of the Lord, she confessed before all the people, neither was she ashamed to declare, that she had received something of him, for which notwithstanding she had given nothing. Now, God requireth of us these works, and this giving of thanks, viz. that we confess and declare, before all men such good things, grace and benefits, that others also may be brought unto him, and suffer a benefit to be bestowed upon them, as it was here done. Wherefore a Christian life enforceth me to do good unto others also even as God through Christ hath done good unto me, but thereby am I not made a Christian, as the woman here is not healed by her confession, for she was healed before any work and confession, but after she had recovered her health, she confesseth Christ, and praiseth him even to the advantage and converting of others. We also, as we are Christians, do so live, that one helpeth and pleaseth another in what thing soever he is at any time able. And as this woman was healed before all works, so we must be made Christians before we do any work. As the gospel is set before our eyes in this woman; so is it also set forth in the daughter of this ruler. This chief ruler of the synagogue, whom Mark calleth Jarius, had a strong faith and confidence, that Christ would raise up his daughter; for unless he had been of that mind concerning Christ, he had not come unto him, neither had desired such a thing of him which exceeded the power and strength of nature. Wherefore by this prayer he shewed his faith, which faith being perceived, the Lord could not but grant his desire, wherefore rising forthwith, he went with him, and in his going this history of the woman came to pass, which had been diseased of an issue of blood twelve years, as we have now heard. When therefore the Lord was entered into the ruler’s house, he saw the minstrels and the multitude making noise, which were there according to the law of Moses, and did sound the trumpet and pipes, as in our country they ring the bells to gather the people together.
together. But he commanded the multitude to go forth, saying, 'The child is not dead, but sleepeth.' And they laughed him to scorn and mocked him. Which giveth us to understand, that when it is preached, that Christ is he which saveth, that our works prevail nothing, then the world cannot contain itself, but that it scorneth and mocketh, for it cannot be persuaded, that Christ doth help and succour, even as this people without all doubt saith after this sort: Behold what an excellent master and a goodly physician he is, what could he have holpen, which knoweth not yet, what it is to sleep, and what to be dead? This title must needs remain to the gospel in the world, that the preaching thereof is counted foolish and contemptible; for Satan cannot abide that honour should be given to this gospel before the world, for it bringeth but small advantage to his kingdom, which forasmuch as he perceiveth full well, he practiseth all crafts and wiles, that he may either altogether hinder it, or at the least make it to prevail little with them that are his, whose hearts he hath wholly blinded and possessed, that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should not shine unto them, as St. Paul faith, 2 Cor. iv. Neither yet can it be, that this preaching of Christ should not be fruitful, forasmuch as it is not uttered in vain: for altho' if he received but of a few, that doth not greatly skill. When therefore Satan perceiveth any thing to be taken from him, and that preaching is ordained plainly against his kingdom, he doth without delay pursue it, contemn it, and af- fail it on every side, that even now he is fierce and rage in the whole world. For the gospel of Christ overthroweth whatsoever the world and Satan delight in, and whatsoever to the world seemeth most holy and goodly. For the world imagineth to itself such a God as hath regard to our good works, and will be pleased with the erecting of masses and vigils for them that are departed, with rosaries, as they call them, habit, shawing, and whatsoever other trifles are used in the papacy. Now if there come any which bringeth the gospel, and envieth against these vain toys of the Pope, and faith that they are nothing worth, but are mere delu-

H h 3
fions, inasmuch as they are repugnant to Christ and the scripture, he is counted a most wicked fellow, and therefore must be punished, he is reproached as an heretic and a seducer of the people: so that they burst forth into great words and say, wilt thou govern all the whole world? dost thou think thyself the wisest man that is? and were our forefathers foolish and without all understanding? many holy men have done these works and have preached of them, and wilt thou come and turn them all into nothing? thou shalt not do it. Then rage and fury beginneth, yea persecution, slaying and murdering, and the devil will seem to have a just cause howsoever the matter goeth. Thus much shall suffice at this time concerning this text. Now ye must take especial heed, that out of the gospels ye learn thoroughly how all things consist in the only person, whose name is Christ, and lay up this in the depth of your heart, that a Christian hath his name of Christ. For I know how much it availeth both in temptation and in adversity to hold that fast. Let us now by prayer call for the grace of God, that at the last we may with most earnest zeal and hearty affection embrace true Christianity. Amen.

SERMON XXXII.
Of the Works which Christ hath wrought for us.

John xx 24. to the 29. But Thomas one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came, &c.

I know nothing more certain concerning St. Thomas, than that which this gospel mentioneth of him. Other things which are written of him in the book of legends, are most impudent lies. And although they were partly true, yet they have no authority, neither make us any thing the better. Wherefore we will leave them untouched, and speak something of this gospel, which those legends. The former part of this gospel fell out about
those legends. The former part of this gospel fell out about the even-tide of the passover, when two had returned from Emmaus, and shewed unto the other disciples, that the Lord was risen again. The latter part fell out the eighth day after the passover. It is marvellous how comfortable this gospel is, shewing unto you, the fruits of faith, namely peace and joy, as St. Paul faith, Rom. v. 1. 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, tho' our Lord Jesus Christ.' But now I will treat in few words, what this is that the Lord sheweth to his disciples, his hands and his feet, whereby is declared unto us, what advantage we have by Christ, whereunto he profiteth us, and what we must look for of him. It is ingrafted in the hearts of all men as it were by nature, to have a certain will to be honest and godly, and every one thinketh how he may come to salvation, whereby it hath come to pass, that one hath invented this thing, another that, being verily persuaded, that thereby he should make God favourable unto him, and obtain heaven, but none such at any time hath stood in the right way, forasmuch as all have had this drift, that they might procure God's favour by deeds and good works. Notable doctors also and holy fathers have written and taught many things, how we might obtain unto godliness. About this they have miserably troubled themselves, but as we see, and to our notable loss have felt, they have done little. Wherefore it is exceeding necessary, that some found knowledge be had thereof, whereby we must endeavour to true godliness, forasmuch as it is a thing of no small importance. For he that is deceived here, loseth the sum and chief point of all Christiand; hereof therefore we must now speak somewhat. True and found righteousness consisteth not in our own works, but in the works of another. Take an example hereof: One building temples, another for religion fake goeth to St. James, to Aquisgrane, to Rome, to the holy sepulchre, the third pineth himself with fastings, prayeth, weareth a cowle, goeth bare-foot, or worketh some other such work whatsoever it be, these are our own works, God hath not commanded them, but men and hypocrites,
justifiers of themselves have invented them, and have thought that they are precious good works, and greatly esteemed of God, sweetly persuading themselves, that they are by them delivered from sins, and that God is pacified towards them. But these works chosen of their own proper will, are nothing worth at all, neither can stand, forasmuch as they proceed not of faith, yea they are sins, as St. Paul faith. Rom. xiv. 23. 'For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.' These our works therefore are defiled and unclean in the sight of God, yea he doth abhor and loath them. Wherefore if we will have to do with God, we must not trust to our own works, but to the works of another. But which are those works of another, that are allowed of God? Truly the works of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God the Father sent down from heaven, that by his death and passion he might satisfy for our sins. This satisfaction fell out upon this occasion: We were subject to great danger, grievous tyrants and power over us, which day and night without ceasing did vex us. The law which God gave unto man, did urge us, and required many things of us, which we were not able to perform, and therefore it condemned us. Sin also did lie upon us as a heavy burden which the law did oftentimes make greater and greater. Death went about to devour us, inasmuch as it is the wages of sin, Satan also endeavoured to throw us down headlong to hell, inasmuch as he would punish us for our sins committed; all things are full of trembling and anguish. God taking pity upon this great calamity, sent his only begotten Son, and that of his mere grace and goodness, without our desert, that he might deliver us out of so great tyranny, which he mightily did after this sort: He satisfied the law, and fulfilled it perfectly. For he loved God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength, he loved his neighbour also as himself, in these the whole law and the prophets do consist. Now whatsoever Christ did, it consisted in these two; he loved God, inasmuch as he obeyed his will, he took upon him the nature of man, and performed in all obedience those things that were enjoined him of the Father, as St. Paul faith,
faith, Phil. ii. 8. He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Secondly, he loved his neighbour; for all the works which he did in the earth, tended unto this end, that he might thereby profit his neighbour, and therefore he so loved his neighbour, that he even died for him, as he faith himself to his disciples, John xv. 13. 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' St. Paul doth more set forth this saying, for his enemies when he writeth thus, Rom. v. 8. 'But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' Forasmuch then as Christ hath fulfilled the law, it could not accuse him, neither was sin of any force with him: he set upon it, and did prevail over it, and swallowed it up, it was enforced to be extinguished of him, no otherwise than a spark of fire in the most wide sea: for in him was nothing but mere righteousness. Death also came, and went about to devour him, it devoured him indeed, but it could not digest him, it was enforced to yield him up again, yea, and this devouring was an utter disadvantage to death, for the case being quite altered Christ devoured death itself; for it had set upon him, against whom it had no right, forasmuch, as not a whit of sin did appear in him; where sin is not, there death hath nothing to do, at St. Paul faith, 1 Cor. xv. 'The sting of death is sin,' with this it killeth, otherwise it should be dull, and have no strength. Satan also made a trial of his strength in him, but in vain, and to his own grief, for he laid hands on him, with whom he had nothing to do; the wretch was overcome in this conflict, and went away with shame, as Christ faith, John xiv. 30. 'The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.' Hell also did open his mouth, and would have devoured Christ, but on the contrary it was devoured of him, and so in this conflict the law, sin, death, satan, and hell were vanquished, over all which he triumphed and gloried with great pomp, as St. Paul faith, Col. ii.

All these things were not only done for our advantage, but also if we believe in Christ, they are given unto us; for whatsoever he hath it serveth for us.
Of the Works which Christ
us, yea, he himself is ours, as St. Paul faith, Rom. viii. 31. 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' So that I may boldly glory of all victory, which he obtaineth over the law, sin, death, the devil, and may challenge to my self all his works, even as if they were my own, and I my self had done them, so that I believe in Christ; otherwise his works shall profit nothing at all, if they were not given unto me: these are the works of another which do commend us before God and save us, our own works shall do nothing, we are weaker than that we can even resist the least sin; of so great consequence is it, that we are able to encounter with death, Satan and hell, wherefore when the law shall come, and accuse thee, that thou dost not observe it, send it unto Christ, and say, There is that man which hath fulfilled the law, to him I cleave, he hath fulfilled it for me, and hath given his fulfilling unto me, when it heareth these things, it will be quiet; If sin come, and would have thee by the throat, send it unto Christ, and say, As much as thou mayst do against him, so much right shalt thou have against me; for I am in him, and he is in me; if death creep upon thee, and attempt to devour thee, say unto it, Good mistress death, dost thou know this man? come and bite out his tooth, hast thou forgotten how little thy biting prevailed with him once? go to if it be a pleasure unto thee, encounter with him again; thou hadst persuaded thy self, that thou shouldst have prevailed somewhat against him, when he did hang between two thieves, and died an ignominious death, which was counted cursed both before God and the world; but what didst thou gain thereby? Thou didst bite indeed, but it turned worst to thy self; I pertain to this man, I am his, and he is mine, and where he abideth, there also will I abide. Thou couldst hurt him nothing, wherefore also let me alone. After the same sort, if the devil, if hell, come violently upon thee, and trouble thee send them unto Christ, and thou shalt easily make them to cease.

And thus you see what Christ is unto us, namely such
such a man as is given unto us of God, that he might extinguih sins, vanquish death, destroy hell, overcome the devil, and all these for our advantage. If he had not done this, nor given unto us these things, we had been for ever under the curse of the law, under sin, under death, under the devil, and under hell, God delivered us from these by Christ. Wherefore St. Paul faith out of the prophet Hosea, 1 Cor. xv. 54. “Death is swallowed up in victory. 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.” Hereof we may easily understand what kind of works those be, which do make us entire and righteous before God; surely they are the works of another, and not our own works chosen of our selves, wherefore the whole papacy falleth here, with all the most precious and holy works thereof, which hath this drift only, that miserable, wretched, and blinded men may be persuaded, that they obtain heaven by their merits, and their own works. Hereupon have sprung so many orders, that they cannot almost be numbered, of which one striveth to be holier than another, according as they exercised harder, greater, and weightier works; but this their miserable labour, anguish, prayer, fastings, chastising of the body, and such like, were vain works, and of no value at all; neither had they so much power, that they were able to take away so much as even the least sin, which they call venial; they were altogether unmindful of this saying, Ifai, xxix. which the Lord repeateth, Mat. xv. 8. “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their hearts is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Hereupon now thou mayest gather with thyself, that all holy men although they be exceeding holy, yet do obtain salvation, not by their own holiness, merits, or works; and not so much as Mary her self the mother of God was made righteous and holy in respect of her virginity, or in that she was the mother of God, but salvation hath come unto all by Jesus Christ, as by the works
works of another; wherefore this is diligently to be noted, that our felicity doth not consist in our own works, but in the works of another, namely, of Christ Jesus our Saviour, which we obtain through faith only in him. This also the history of the gospel seemeth to signify, when as the Lord sheweth to his disciples, but especially to Thomas, his hands and feet; by which deed he declareth, that it was necessary that those hands and feet should do these things, and that no other works, that is, their own, and not the works of another, do pertain unto salvation; for in the scripture, by hands and feet, works and conversation are signified; these hands and feet Christ doth as yet oftentimes shew unto us; and say, behold, I am that only man, whose works and conversation are of force with God, thou shalt labour in vain with thine own works, mine own righteousness maketh nothing hereunto, it hath another end. If thou be righteous, it is profitable to thee among men, here in earth thou hast the glory and praise thereof, as St. Paul faith, Rom. iv. But before God this thy righteousness is of no estimation, thou must set in place thereof another, namely, mine, this God my Father doth allow; for I have delivered thee from sins, death, the devil, hell, and from all evil, thou shouldst never have escaped out of these by thine own power, but hadst lain as yet most deeply drowned in them; I have appeased the wrath of God, and of an angry judge, have made him a gentle, merciful and gracious Father: believe this and it goeth well with thee, thou art then safe, intire, and righteous; beware that thou presume not to deal before God with thine own works, but if thou wilt do any thing with him, creep into me put on me, and thou shalt obtain of my Father whatsoever thou desirest and asketh, as he himself faith unto his disciples, John xvi. 23. 'Verily verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.' Wherefore as from the beginning sin, which was another, hath been derived unto us from Adam, for neither I, nor thou, have eat of the apple; so also by the righteousness of another we must be restored unto righteousness and integrity. This other is Christ Jesus, by whole
hath wrought for us.

whose righteousness and works we are all saved, as I have now sufficiently declared. This St. Paul hath very well comprehended even in one sentence, where 1 Cor. i. 30, he faith thus, "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." And Rom. iv. 25. he faith. ' Jesus Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' In these two little sentences are briefly compris'd, and joined together, whatsoever things we must look for from Christ. Howbeit, all these things are injoined by faith, for he that is without faith, to him they are impossible to be comprehended, yea, they are counted foolishness to reason and to the world, as St. Paul faith, 1 Cor. i. 23. 'We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks, foolishness,' that is, when Christ is preached, that he is our righteousness, that salvation cometh unto us by him, and that by him we are made the children of everlasting life, without our own works and righteousness, then those holy men, and justifiers of themselves are offended, no otherwise than the Jews. Moreover to the prudent and wise men in this world, it seemeth foolishness, and a certain ridiculous thing, that a man being fastned to the cross and put to death, doth perform these things, Whatsoever therefore is counted righteous, holy, wise and prudent in the eyes of the world, it is offended and stumbleth at Christ: but St. Paul faith moreover: 'But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.' He faith also, Rom. i. 16. 'The Gospel of Christ is the Power of God unto salvation, as every one that believeth, to the Jews first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith.' Wherefore the Lord faith, very well to the disciples of John, 'Blessed is he that shall not be offended in me.' So thou seest now plainly, that this faith which we have in Christ, cometh by the preaching of the gospel, as Paul affirmeth, Rom. x. 17. 'Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.' Here.
Here, here I say doth all the force consist, by the word of God, not by the word of man. The word of God doth these things, not when we publish indulgences, or preach of works, as hitherto; alas, it hath been done, to our exceeding los, as well in the good things of the body, as of the soul: We made no account of goods which we bestowed plentifully, unless we had afflicted our body with fastings, chastisement, pilgrimages, and such like trifles. Indeed these things might have been borne with, if they had not with a false confidence in such doing, so miserably and lamentably led us away, and seduced us from a true faith and confidence in God through Christ: but praise be unto God, that we have for the most part perceived such delusions; for the world was so full of this misery and preaching, that it did almost overflow, which surely came by the vengeance and wrath of God, for that we contemned his word, and followed mens fables, yea, our own wits and opinions. Then we were in so great blindness, that we did almost without difference believe every man, what kind of work ever he brought and gloriously set forth. From these deceitful follies our consciences are now delivered and set free, but none doth so much as once give thanks to God therefore. If we shall be contemnuously negligent, a more grievous misery shall light upon us than this was: neither should that come unto us undeservedly, forasmuch as we do greatly procure these evils against ourselves by our unthankfulness. When as before we gave with so great abundance and plenty, that by our liberality they were made almost Lords of the world, how hardly six or seven poor men are maintained in a city, yea, now the minister of a parish church hath not sufficient wherewith to live. Howbeit do not impute this perverse kind of living to the gospel, as our adversaries now impudently do. It is not meet, that thou suffer thy poor neighbour by thee to want: Yea, rather the whole gospel doth especially urge this, that thou have a care of thy neighbour, and that thou be serviceable toward him, that thou help him both with thy council and substance, even as God hath holpen and instucted thee.

Such
Such a one, without doubt, he that is indued with true faith sheweth himself, for he bursteth forth, and behaveth himself so toward others, as he hath tried God towards himself, and as he desireth to be done to himself, if he were pressed with poverty, anguish, and necessity; God needeth not our good works; our prayers, fasting, and building of temples, founding of masses, do displease him, he requireth not our sacrifices, but rather as Isaiah faith, hateth and abhorreth them. He is content with this one thing, that we acknowledge him before our God, trust in him, give him thanks, as he faith, Psal. 1. 7. “Hear, O my people, and I will speak: O Israel, and I will testify against thee: I am God, even thy God. I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulisor drink the blood ofgoats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high. And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” But God sendeth us downward with our works to our neighbours, to the miserable, afflicted, and them that be void of comfort. It is our parts to help them, to comfort them, to teach and instruct them; and whatsoever benefit we shall bestow upon them, that we shall bestow upon God, and his Christ, as he shall say in the last day, ‘Whatsoever ye have done unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done unto me.’ Thus ye now have heard, that we are justified and made righteous by the works of another namely, by the works of Christ, which we enjoy only by faith: the same faith charity doth naturally accompany, whereby we do so to our neighbour, as we do acknowledge that God hath done unto us; Hereof ye have elsewhere heard more; we will now make an end and call for the grace of God.
SERMON XXXIII.

Reason not capable of the Gospel.

Matth. xi. 25. to the 30. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, &c.

This text toucheth as it were, the very pith and marrow of the gospel, other places of scripture wherein the miracles and doings of Christ are rehearsed, have not so much comfort as those in which those sermons of Christ to the people are contained, wherein he doth so lovingly teach us, and allure us to himself. I am not so certain of the favour which I see shewed to others in working miracles, as I have the plain words before mine eyes: it is a far greater comfort also unto me, to hear such loving admonitions and allurements, than the preaching of miracles, altho' they also confirm my faith, and are examples, that as he hath holden them, so also he will help me. This gospel treateth of the knowledge of God the Father, and of Christ his Son, shewing also whereof such knowledge doth consist. Now that the meaning thereof may be well known it is requisite to understand aright these twowords; wise men, children or babes, but left when we hear it, we say this pertaineth nothing to us; it is spoken to others, as the Jews said to the prophets which referred all things to the Gentiles, the words going before do sufficiently shew, untowhom or of whom these words are spoken; for before he speaketh of them that comen the gospel, not vouchsaging to embrace it, whose duty notwithstanding specially was to embrace it inasmuch as they would seem alone to be them that were occupied in the word of God, and were to be counted for the people of God, of such he faith thus, "Whereunto shall I liken this generation? it is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented," which the Lord applieth to himself, and unto John the Baptist, as if he would say, we have preached unto you the gospel, John with a certain severity and austerity,
Austerity, but I with very great clemency and gentleness, and yet ye will not receive it, ye shall at the last feel, without doubt, to your great evil, what it is to despise the word of God. It is very true, however thou preachest to the people, whether thou be fair spoken or severe, gentle or ungentle, they will always seem to have some cause or other to complain of it. These the Lord calleth here wise, and men of understanding, to these the gospel is hid; he meaneth not here those wise men which are truly wise in divine matters, for it is a great commendation if one be worthy to be called wise and prudent; true wisdom is nothing else but the knowledge of God, viz. when I know what we must think of God, and do understand his will: but prudence signifieth ability and knowledge to judge of worldly things, what is right or wrong, which St. Paul often joineth together especially in his epistle to the Ephesians, chap. i. and in his Epistle to the Colossians, chap. i. Of such wisdom Christ speaketh not here, but of worldly wisdom, which puffeth up men, and excludeth the true wisdom of God. We are all of this disposition by nature, often to rise against the wisdom of God. That is called good, by the instinct of human wisdom, which bringeth pleasure, honour and profit, but those things that are contrary to those, as affliction, dishonour, loss, these are called evil: for man's nature can seek nothing else at all, but those things that are his own, that which displeaseth him, he counteth the worst of all things, although it be the best; wherefore as I have said, the Lord speaketh here of those wise and prudent men, with which their own wisdom strive against the wisdom of God; worldly wisdom seemeth to itself to be so great, that it is not content to rule only these worldly and temporal things, but taketh also upon itself to have the oversight of heavenly things, it always searcheth out and imagineth some new things, even in spiritual and divine matters: So man's own wisdom hath invented heaven crowns and cowles, and almost all that wherein the papacy consisteth, every one hath chosen his proper work to himself, this man hath invented this,
another hath invented that, and if this be not abolished, and doth not greatly please, by and by they find out some other thing, as alas! we have seen, and do as yet see, neither is there any measure in these trifles, whereupon it cometh, that we can hardly away with the word of God and the truth, but are always delighted to invent some new thing; for truly this is certain, as often as we ordain a new worship of God contrary to the word of God, we are by and by blinded, and fall from error to error, than which calamity none greater can come unto us, wherefore St. Paul faith, 2Thes. ii. 11. "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Yea and at the last they become so blind, that they understand nothing at all of God, as it is in the 14. Psal. 'The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.' For it cannot be that the natural man, which consists of flesh and blood, and is not instructed by the spirit of God, should judge and understand those things which are of God, as St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 4. '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.' He which will read more hereof, let him peruse the first chapter of the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, there shall he plainly enough perceive what blindness is, and what punishment doth ensue, if the word of God being neglected we follow our own inventions and councils; all which we see in our spiritual monks, nuns, and sacrificing priests, and do too truly try it, God grant they may at the last repent, and give unto God his glory. St. Paul faith of the Gentiles, that they turned the glory of the incorruptible God to the similitude of the image, not only of a corruptible man, but also of birds and four-footed beasts, and of creeping things; so do our Papists also, yea and much more foolishly and madly than the Gentiles, for they make unto themselves a god which is delighted with a shaven crown, with cowles, with eating of flesh and fish, &c. Wherefore God hath given them up through their hearts lusts unto uncleanness,
of as he did the Gentiles, and that so filthy, that it is better to conceal it than to rehearse it; for if such filthy and wicked things were committed among the Gentiles, which had many wives and many concubines, what would the spiritual men commit, which have forbidden the use of woman and matrimony? briefly, so is it wont to come to pass, where Satan beareth the sway, and the word of God is wrested to serve men’s affections, which every man may assuredly persuade himself to be so, yea these things are to known and undoubtedly true, that children in the streets speak and sing of them. Now this is not to be understood of spiritual men only, but even the vulgar sort and common multitude do live so, when the word of God is not admitted: as we see citizens to utter counterfeit wares, merchants to deceive in selling merchandize, and so many crafty practices, so many deceits in subtle dealing, so much regard of usury and private profit, that it cannot be rehearsed. As yet they endeavour again to bring in the mass, to set up their tapers, &c., being persuaded that God is pacified with such trifles, revolting this only in their minds, that their fame may remain untouched and unhurt in the world, howsoever they agree with God. Of such wise and prudent men Christ speaketh here in the gospel, which hear the gospel indeed, and see miracles, but it profiteth them nothing, forasmuch as their heart is not touched. Now Christ faid thus, Ver. 25. ‘I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Ver. 26. Even so, Father for it seemed good in thy sight.’ Christ speaketh not here of very children: there may be some notable doctor, whom he calleth a child in this place. On the contrary, there may be a rustic fellow whom he calleth here wise and prudent; in the 3th Psalm David calleth these infants and children, when he saith, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies.’ They surely by whom God ordaineth strength against his enemies, which should extol his glory through the whole world, were not babes or children in very deed. Those
therefore the Lord calleth children here which count their own works for nothing, attribute nothing to their own wisdom, make nothing of themselves, but think God only to be wise and of understanding. Wherefore they are humble and lowly, and how great soever they are, do submit themselves to God, of whom only they suffer themselves to be taught. Now others are over-wise and will learn nothing of God, yea they presumptuously take to themselves judgment and censure over the doctrine and works of God, whereof thou mayest read in the first and second chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Wherefore Christ faith, Luke xvi.8. 'The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.' But the foolish children of light are of greater estimation before God, than the wise children of this world; of these children the Lord speaketh, 'Thou hast hid those things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' For the wise and prudent know not these things, but the children and fools know them. How cometh it to pass that the wise know them not? because thou hast hidden them from them. How do the children know them? because thou hast revealed them.

What meaneth he hereby, we may gather of those things that were spoken of before, to wit, that he had preached the gospel of the kingdom of God in many cities of Judea, as in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and in his own city Capernaum, which cities, their own wisdom being a hindrance and let unto them, did not receive the foolish preaching of the gospel. The gospel is a good and joyful message which teacheth me to know the glory of God, by which knowledge I obtain pardon of my sins, and life eternal; as Christ faith to his Father in the gospel of John, chap. xvii. 3. 'This is life eternal, that they might know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. He faith also in this gospel, 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.' Here he speaketh of the knowledge both of the Father and of the Son. To whom this is revealed, he knoweth, and obtaineth eternal life; but the Father hath hid these things from the wise and prudent.
dent, that they may not know neither the Father nor the Son, and hath revealed them to children, they have the knowledge both of the Father and the Son, and so do obtain everlasting life. Moreover if those things be thus, as they are indeed, what shall become of freewill. Seeing thou hast such heinous and wicked things to be committed in the body, as it is written, Rom. 5: go thy ways now and glory in freewill. But this is a goodly free will, to live in such a filthy life, which is altogether unworthy of a man, which is known even among beasts that are without reason. Howbeit it is wont so to come to pass, when God forsaketh us, as soon as we are forsaken of God, by and by Satan cometh, and erecteth his kingdom in us, wherein nothing else but such wickednesses are committed, which notwithstanding are so craftily coloured, and commended with such a pretence of honesty, that it seemeth to be a most holy, yea and an angelic life. What I pray you can man's strength do here? Whereby some go about to bring to pass many things, sweetly persuading themselves that they shall ascend up into heaven thereby. But thou hearest here that Christ affirmeth, that the Father doth reveal these things; also that it is the good pleasure of the Father that it should be so. Whereby truly he taketh away all the merits of man, here no satisfactions profit, here is no respect of works, it is done by the will and good pleasure of the Father; for he respecteth not the person, as it appeareth before the world. He doth not contemn and reject the sinner, altho' he came laden with sins. After the same sort Christ saith to his disciples, Luke xii. 32. 'Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' This the hypocrites and justiciaries cannot abide, yea they are driven unto fury, senseliness, and madness, when they see simple receivers of custom and very publicans to go before them into the kingdom of heaven, they themselves with their holiness, andgoodly and plausible works to the world, being excluded: Whom would not this drive unto madness? who would not take it grievously, that he himself and his things should be in such a case, and nothing at all counted of? But what

I 1 3
shouldst thou do, for what shouldst thou murmur? The good pleasure of God is such, to whom he vouchsafe to open, to him they shall be opened; and from whom he hideth, from him they are hidden, which is undoubtedly true; and mark well that Christ faith here, It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such, thy good pleasure I say, before thy world was made, as St. Paul faith, Ephel. i. 4. God hath chosen us in him, (Christ) 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 had made us accepted in the beloved. Here all merit is excluded wherefore let it not come into thy mind, that thou shalt obtain any thing here by thy deserts, neither let thy works, wisdom, and merits puff thee up. Here all rejoicing is taken away, that He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord, as Paul faith, i Cor. i. 31. It followed moreover in the gospel, Ver. 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. Here thou seest the safety which in the kingdom of Christ, by whom we have knowledge and light; if therefore Christ holdeth all things in his hand, and hath power over all things as the Father hath, no man can pluck any thing out of his hands, which he himself also witnessed in John x. 28. I give unto them (my sheep) eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. Wherefore every Christian, when he hath received the gospel, may worthily rejoice that he is now under the tuition of Christ, and is not any thing troubled because of his sins. If he hath embraced the gospel, Christ under whom he fighteth will guide the matter excellently well. Satan indeed will tempt him with this and that vice; as with adultery, whoredom, theft, slaughter, envy, hatred, wrath and other like sins; but let him not therefore be
be discouraged, he hath a King that is strong and mighty enough, by whom he shall be easily defended; notwithstanding it will be very hard to stand strongly, and nothing to yield, wherefore prayer in this case is very needful, others also may by their prayers intreat for thee, that a stout courage and manly heart may be given unto thee to withstand Satan. But it is certain, that thou shalt not be destitute, Christ will easily preserve thee, be not disquieted in mind, let it only be thy care that thou fallest not from his kingdom. Moreover in this Gospel thou seest that Christ is both God and Man; Man, inasmuch as he praiseth God, and giveth him thanks; God, inasmuch as all things are given unto him by the Father; which ought to be great comfort unto us in all things that trouble and afflict us. Whereas he faith, '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.' He in these words overthroweth free will, which will know God and Christ when and how it pleaseth it. Here thou hast plainly from whence the knowledge of God and of Christ is: the Father, faith he, knoweth the Son, and the Son the Father, but how do we know, by this or by that preacher? no truly these are only certain middle instruments, but he only knoweth to whom the Son will reveal. A little before he said that the Father doth reveal or open, here he attributeth the same to the Son. Surely both the Father and the Son do reveal, and as the Father revealeth, so also doth the Son; and Christ also sayeth in John xiv. 26. 'The holy Ghost shall teach you all things.' Wherefore as the Father teacheth, so teacheth the Son, likewise also teacheth the Holy Ghost. And where God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost do not teach, there all things remain void of knowledge. It followeth moreover in the Gospel, ver. 28. 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. v. 29. 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, v. 30. 'For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' Hereunto we have heard how the Lord dealeth with the wise and prudent, namely that he blindeth them...
and hideth the gospel from them. Likewise how he is delighted in children and simple ones, to wit, that he endueth them with the right knowledge of himself, and openeth the gospel unto them. But some man may here say and complain; if the matter be so, surely my conscience shall be in great danger, before I hear and know that the gospel doth pertain unto me. I am a wretched sinner and perhaps the gospel pertaineth not unto me, what if I be unworthy? Christ, that he may comfort these weak dismayed, and troubled consciences, faith, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Here are we called unto comfort. Here forget all thy merit and worthiness, for that he plainly faith, 'ye that labour and are heavy laden,' to wit, with the burthen of the law, the anguish and affliction of sins and wherewithal foever the conscience may be troubled. Therefore he doth not express it by name; for he faith not, ye that are troubled with this or that calamity, but simply, ye that are weary and laden. Neither will he have any here excluded, forasmuch as he faith, all, which is a singular and special comfort, if any thing trouble us, what kind of temptation soever it be. Whosoever therefore is stricken with the feeling of his sin; and knoweth his own weakness to fulfill the law of God, let him come hither with a cheerful and bold courage, and he shall certainly receive comfort. I will refresh you, faith Christ, as those that are pressed and burthened with sore labour and grief. Let this only be thy care, that thou believe such a loving bidding and promise. After this manner Christ cried in the temple at Jerusalem at a certain feast: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive," John vii. 37, 38, 39. Which so cometh to pafs: he cauleth the gospel to be preached unto us, which he that believeth, is endued with the Holy Ghost, and obtaineth pardon of all his sins. This is truly to refresh him, whose conscience is troubled, to wit, when he feeleth that his sins are forgiven, and that he
he is become heir of the kingdom of God. Neither
doth he refresh us only in the anguish and temptation of
sin, but he will also be present with us in other cala-
mities and miseries, in famine, war, dearth of vi\text{c}tuals,
and whatsoever such like can come, in all these he will
not leave us destitute of his help, as he cared for the
Patriarch Joseph, even in a strange country, with whom
he was continually present, as well in prosperity as
in adversity. Now sin is a grievous burden, whereof
no man is eased, but he whom Christ the Son of God
delivereth, and that by the Holy Ghost, whom he
hath merited for us of the Father, which maketh our
hearts cheerful, and ready to do all things which God
requircth of us. But what is this that he faith? ' Take
my yoke upon you.' Is this to refresh, if I take one bur-
den from one, and lay upon him another? this is that
whereof we have oftentimes spoken, the gospel doth
first make astonished and discourage, and is grievous to
the flesh, for it telleth me that all our own things are no-
thing, that our own holiness and righteousness are of no
importance, that all things which are in us are damned,
that we are the children of wrath and indignation. This
is very hard, and an intolerable burden to the flesh, and
therefore he calleth it a burden or yoke. But lest he should
terrify or make afraid any, for that he is of great au-
thority, high and mighty, and therefore cannot suffer sin-
ful and wretched men, to think him tyrannical and
ungentle, he cuts off this suspicion, and faith, ' Learn
of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.' Christ willhere
lovingly allure us to his doctrine, for he had spoken be-
fore of the knowledge of the Father, as if he would
say, Flesh and fearful nature counteth me for an au-
sire, severe and rigorous man, but I am not of such a
nature, yea, I am humble and meek in heart. I do not
terrify men as Moses doth; I do not preach, Do this
or that, but I preach forgiveness of sins; neither do I
preach that they should give any thing, but rather that
they may receive. There is not in me ambition and lofti-
nets, as is in the Pharisees, which desire to be magnified,
but I am altogether gentle, and lowly in heart, ready to
receive sinners. If so be that they fall again into sins,
notwithstanding, I do not yet cast them from me, if they fly unto me for succour, and do with a sure confidence look for comfort and help of me. I do not curse men as the Pharisees do, which curse them even for their own ordinances, and for men's devices, and will sooner suffer all the commandments of God to be neglected, than one of their decrees and ordinances not to be observed. As we see in the Papacy, where it is counted a greater offence to eat flesh on Friday, or for a sacrificing priest to marry, than to commit twenty adulteries, or ten homicides. But here thou seest, that even God doth abrogate even his own law, that he may so much the sooner procure sinners unto him. Christ in a singular signification faith here, that 'he is meek,' as if he said, I know how sinners are to be handled, I have tried what a fearful and an afflicted conscience is, as the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. iv. 15. witnesseth, That 'he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' Wherefore let no man be afraid of me, I will handle all easily and gently, I will say nothing with a lower countenance, I make no man afraid so as they come boldly unto me, they shall find rest to their souls with me. To their souls he faith, as if he would say, outwardly in the body there may be affliction, and trouble, and calamities may overwhelm you, but you ought to bear all these things lightly, as he also faith to his disciples, John xvi. 33. 'In me you might have peace, in the world ye shall have tribulation.' Wherefore altho' outwardly, all things fall out against us, as though they would supprest and devour us, yet are they nothing to be esteemed of: For we have the feeling of peace inwardly in our conscience. And this is the first fruit of faith, as Paul faith, Rom. chap. v. 1. 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Now when our conscience is quieted, and we have peace with God, nothing is able to move us, no nothing shall hurt us, altho' it be evil and against us. Let no man think thus and say, this is not to amend one's state or case, if I take one burthen from his neck, and lay on another, as it is before said. For Christ faith, 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light,'
as if he would say, the yoke of the law, under which ye lived before, was grievous to be borne, but my burden is not so grievous, it is light and tolerable, ye may easily bear it. Our wise men lay now, that the yoke of Christ is more grievous than the yoke of the law was; and they allude the 5th Chapter of Matthew: But Christ doth there interpret the law, how it ought to be understood: he doth not make laws, but faith that murders and adulteries proceed from an evil and unclean heart. And so he doth only expound the law of Moses, and prescribeth not any laws there. But the yoke of Christ is therefore easy, and his burden light, because he taketh away not only ceremonial and man’s laws, but even the whole law, the curse, sin, death, and whatsoever may come unto us from the law, all this Christ taketh away from me, and endueth me with his Spirit, by the motion and instinct whereof I do gladly, willingly, and with pleasure perform all the duties of the law. It is therefore also called easy, sweet, and light, for that he himself helpeth us, and taketh part of the burden, if we be not of strength sufficient. It appeareth indeed grievous and intolerable to the world, but it is otherwise when there is one ready to ease the burden. It is a common saying, it is good to sing with a fit companion; you two will easily bear the burden, although one alone were not of strength sufficient to bear it. Thus much shall suffice for the Exposition of this gospel.

SERMON XXXIV.

Chrift the Way to eternal Life.

John xiv. 1. to the 14. Let not your heart be troubled, &c.

In the beginning of this gospel Christ declareth wherefore he came, and what office he executeth, which is properly the preaching of the gospel: to wit, that it is he which prepareth dwelling places with the Father, and will, when he cometh again, receive us unto himself. Moreover he faith, that he is the way, the truth, and the life, which he afterwards more plainly, expre...
The Lord spake unto his disciples after his Supper, when he was now about to depart from them. Forasmuch as he had said many things unto them of his departure and passion, they were after a sort troubled and terrified, wherefore the Lord beginneth lovingly to comfort them saying, 'Let not your heart be troubled,' as if he would say, I perceive that my departure doth grieve you, and that ye are therefore troubled; but seeing it cannot be otherwise, be not comforted, there is no cause why ye should therefore be troubled, I will come again unto you: Nevertheless ye shall see many things in me before, whereat you will be offended, they shall crucify me, and unworthily handle me: But be not ye troubled because of these things, be not afraid, it will be better shortly after, the will of the Father is such. Howbeit flesh cannot do otherwise but be offended, if it seeth Christ to be crucified, it by and by revoltest from him, it believeth him not, neither counteth him for a Saviour. Which also it doth, when it seeth holy men suffer persecution, to be afflicted and tormented, for then it thinketh that God hath no care of them. Against this offence Christ aforehand confirmeth his disciples, and faith, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me.' That is, ye believe that God loveth you, and will glorify you, believe that he will do it after that sort that ye see me glorified, and believe that this my death is life, to the glorifying both of me and of my whole body, that is, of all Christians, and that this death satisfieth for the sins of the world, as the apostles
Christ the Way to eternal Life.

apostles afterwards witnessed of him in their writings. Thus John faith, 1 John ii. 2. ‘He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.’ Wherefore thou seest that Christ there will have hearts confirmed by faith, and by no other outward thing. He faith moreover, ‘In my Father’s house are many mansions.’ These dwelling places have been prepared from everlasting, neither is there any need that they should be prepared of him. Why therefore doth he say, ‘I go to prepare a place for you?’ This is nothing else but that he goeth and is made Lord of all, whereby he may prepare us unto such dwelling places. For as long as we are not prepared, neither are the dwelling places prepared for us, altho’ they be ready by themselves. Wherefore Christ meaneth thus much: There are dwelling places, but not yet prepared rightly and as they must be. Howbeit then shall they be rightly prepared and appointed, when I have taken away the kingdom of death by my death, and am gone to reign, and that by the Holy Ghost: which by faith shall prepare and wholly make you ready also unto such dwelling places. So that this is the simple and plain meaning of these words: There are dwelling places, to wit, where the Father glorifieth, but those dwelling places are not yet prepared, for that the kingdom of death is not yet taken away. This Christ signifieth when he faith, ‘If it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.’ In these words the Lord declareth how those dwelling places are prepared namely, by the death of Christ as it is said by which he came unto glory, and ruleth over all things, which are in heaven and earth. By which death he hath obtained the Holy Ghost for us, which as is before said, may prepare us unto these dwelling places. For through his preparation and working in us, he maketh us believe the gospel, by which believing of faith we are prepared; which could not be done if Christ should not depart and die, and so possess a kingdom over all. This therefore is the sum of this text; they are foreseen, whom
Chrift the Way to eternal Life.

the Father will glorify, but they cannot be glorified but by Chrift, who unless he take away death and fin, all shall be in vain. Here thou feest that all tend unto this, that Chrift is he which prepareth the dwelling places, and that we cannot be glorified but by Chrift, fo that the whole drift of this text is, that we are not justified by man's strength, nor by our own merits, but by Chrift, which the whole epifte to the Romans effectually declareth, as also which is written to the Galatians, and almost all that Paul doth in his epifles, tendeth to the fame end. It followeth moreover: ' And whither I ' go ye know, and the way ye know.' For ye believe in me, and have shewed signs in my name, whereby ye ought now to be certain who I am, and what I do, and wherefore I am come. Ye have also seen and heard the testimonies of the Father of me. Wherefore ye may now know that the Father will glorify me, and believe that I and the Father are one, it should be therefore superfluous to speak more of these things. But the disciples altho' they were well instructed of the Lord himself, and had seen his miracles, yea and they themselves also had preached the gospel and wrought miracles, were notwithstanding as yet somewhat gross in understanding, neither did they perceive whereof he here spake, and what was that way, and whether the Lord did prepare to depart. Wherefore Thomas bursteth forth into open words and confefseth freely, that he is ignorant hereof, and faith thus unto the Lord: ' Lord, we know ' not whither thou goeft, and how can we know the way?'

Here ye hear and fee, that altho' there was faith in the disciples, notwithstanding they were not as yet persuaded that Chrift should be crucified, and by his death should enter into his kingdom, and that the fame kingdom should be spiritual, which they did not understand even after the resurrection of the Lord: Lordsay they, 'wilt ' thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?' Acts i. 6. Those good men were as yet persuaded, that it should be a carnal and wordly kingdom. Such gross things may here and there be found in the gospels, by means whereof the disciples did sometimes stumble and err. All which were committed to writing, for our comfort and con-
confirmation, that we should not be by and by discouraged, when we have sometimes stumbled in faith, and cannot at the first apply ourselves to the works, and word of the Lord. If this happened to these great men, which afterwards should become pillars of Christianity, there is no cause truly that any should marvel, if we also sometimes faint in faith, yea, and let no man be afraid, altho' it falleth out that sometimes through infirmity he so do. It is the work and matter of the Lord, he will amend these things when it seemeth good unto him.

Now of the words we mind to treat somewhat at large. Not much before, when Christ would confirm his disciples in faith, he promised them that they should be glorified. Here he addeth and declareth how and by what means they must by glorified, affirming that that must be by his departure, that is, by his death, and that by that means he must obtain his kingdom. This he hath often repeated unto them, so that now it did become them to know and understand it. Therefore he faith, ' Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know;' but they did not yet throughly understand it, as the words of Thomas do declare. Now, it is certain that there was faith in the disciples, which the words of Peter prove, who answered Christ instead of the rest, when he asked them, whether they also would go away? Peter said, ' Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God,' John vi. 68, 69. This appeareth also by the words of the Lord which he had said to them a little before at his supper, ' Ye are clean, which he would not have said, if they had not believed; they knew Christ therefore that he is the way to the Father; so they knew the Father also, for that they had seen the miracles whereby he gave testimony of the Son, and had heard the voice of the Father from heaven; Matt. xvii. 5. ' This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.' All these things did greatly increase faith in the Disciples hearts, notwithstanding they did not yet understand, what they should do, and what end concerning the matters of Christ was to be hoped
hoped for. Set before you an example hereof in Abraham, altho' in faith a Son was conceived unto him, nevertheless he was yet ignorant, that he most be offered; neither did faith manifestly shew itself, when a Son was given unto him; so was it also with the Disciples; altho' they had faith, notwithstanding they wanted as yet trial of their faith; now nothing trieth faith better than the cross and persecution; if Abraham had not been commanded to offer his Son, he had had no trial of his faith; when as the Apostles did suffer persecution, they then had a taste and trial of their faith; as long as we may live without temptation, we think that we are induced with a strong faith, but if any adversity cometh to us on any side, we by and by try what faith we reposed upon: wherefore St Paul faith, Rom. v. 3. 'We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience,' and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.' After the same sort Solomon also faith in the Proverbs xvii. 3. 'The sinning-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts.' Such a trial is made by the cross and persecution, when we are as it were, crucified according to our old Adam, by which crucifying our faith is tried, and according to this trial of faith, our flesh mortified: the spirit encreasing in the knowledge of Christ; and then is our flesh truly mortified, when we suffer the will of God to bear rule in us, which is then done when we submit ourselves to his will howsoever he dealeth with us, renouncing our own. This St. Paul will have us to do, when he faith thus, Rom. xii. 1, 2. "I befeech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." When Thomas thus confesseth that he is ignorant whether the Lord goeth, neither knoweth the way, the Lord doth not rebuke him with a stern countenance, neither by and by casteth him off, nor driveth him from him, he calleth him neither an ass or an ox,
Christ the Way to eternal Life.

as we are wont to handle the weak, but answering im very gently, faith, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' I, faith the Lord, am the way, by which the Father is gone unto, altho' I be slain; I carry them that believe and are my sheep, on my shoulders to the Father; no other way besides this leadeth unto heaven: he that walketh not this way, goeth out of the way from the Father; I also am the the truth; for I am the light which lighteth the world, and I teach true doctrine and make true Christians. Moreover, I also am he life, for it is I that quicken, he that believeth in ne shall not die. This, as I said before, is to teach the Gospel rightly, that is, to shew the true and right way, which leadeth unto eternal life. When the disciples knew not the way that leadeth unto glory, the Lord making no delay, affirmeth unto them, that he is the way; as if he should say, if ye desire to know the way to glory, seek not the strength light, and righteousness of creatures, but look unto me, for I am the way, the truth and the life, although I must be put to death, although I am vile, and of no reputation according to the outward appearance; neither let this offend you, that they which are mine, are subject to persecutions; the right way to the Father is found in me, let none remove you from this persuasion; therefore he faith moreover, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.' As if he should say, no man can come to the Father by his own strength or merits; the law terrifieth the conscience that it cannot go to the Father; the word of Christ, which justifieth us by the righteousness of Christ, bringeth us to the Father; whereupon followeth that which he afterwards faith: 'If ye had known me ye should have known my Father also.' For as no man cometh to the Father, but by the Son, so no man knoweth the Father but by Christ the Son: First, the Father's will is not known, to wit, that he will save us unless we see it in Christ: He which is in the bosom of the Father, hath revealed it unto us. Secondly the Father is not believed for reason by itself doth not understand, that it receiveth any thing of God. Wherefore it is needful that Christ declare that bountifulness and goodness

K k unto
unto us: A troubled conscience flieth the Father, neither can it abide to commit itself unto him; but they that are justified by the word of Christ, do not any more contemn the Father, neither fle him, as the Israelites did, but stand before him as Moses, and are inlighted with divine light, that they may know the power of God and the mercy of the Father; hereupon cometh trust and confidence in him, hereby we know that we receive all things at his hands, and look for all as well spiritual as temporal things of him; all these we must acknowledge to be received by faith, reason cannot attain unto them. For it endeavoureth to obtain God by her own strength and merits, but that endevour is in vain; wherefore when it is not able to come to the knowledge of God by her own strength, it utterly denieth God, and faith that there is no God, after when it seeth uncleanness in her works, it despaireth, and is in most great distress; but when we are justified by foolish preaching, we come to the knowledge of God the Father, as soon as we believe the word of Christ, and so we try the power of the Father in affliction and adversities, although they be even great; this was shadowed forth in that, that the people of Israel could not abide to hear the voice of God, but desired that Moses might speak unto them; where Christ also was figured, that he should make intercession for us to the Father, and be our mercy-seat; for nature is more weak and frail, than that it can abide to talk with God; wherefore he hath given unto us this his Son a Mediator, in whom and by whom we must have to do with him; when as the Lord so lovingly and gently dealeth with Thomas, and sheweth unto him, how he must come to the Father, to wit, by the Son, and that the Father is known in the Son, there doth yet happen a groffer thing in Philip, who bursteth forth and will not be content with faith, but will know the thing affuredly by feeling and seeing; Wherefore he faith unto the Lord, "Lord shew us the Father and it sufficeth us." As though he would say, If thou wilt also shew unto us a sign, then will we believe; Philip counteth it not sufficient to believe the word, but goeth about to come to
the knowledge of the Father by another means than by the word: for seeing that reason cannot believe, he requesteth to be certified by another means and way; by the interrogation therefore of Christ that followeth it is shewed, that the conscience is made certain and quiet by no other thing, than by faith, for that we must cleave to the bare word, and look for no other sign; But Philip thought here that he should be much more certified, if he did see the Father, than if he believed the simple and bare word; this incredulity Christ reproveth somewhat sharply, and faith, 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?' As tho' he should say, I teach and preach, and yet thou knowest me not; dost thou not know that the Father will be known by me, that my word is the word and power of the Father, by which alone he will be known, and by nothing else? For thou hast heard the voice of the Father from heaven after this sort; 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.' Dost thou not yet understand how the Father is known? The Father is not seen with carnal eyes, as John in his first chapter faith, 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.' Wherefore the Lord faith to Philip, 'He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.' This saying is like unto that former when he faith; 'If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.' That is, forasmuch as the Father will be known by me, seek no other way to know him, but believe my word that I am he, which sheweth unto you the Father, and will make you to know him in me; believe that by me thou hast access to the Father, by this means thou shalt know the Father, by faith thou shalt understand the power and mercy of the Father, and shalt feel him to be comfortable and gracious; the Father will have my word to be believed, and then that believe it, to be saved and obtain eternal life. Seeing therefore that these things are thus, that we cannot know the Father but in the Son, and when we know the Son, we know also the Father; The Lord faith moreover unto Philip; 'How fayst thou then, shew us the Father?
Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? As if he would say, forasmuch as there is no other way to know the Father but that which I have shewed, why I pray thee, dost thou not believe my words, seeing that I have taught that I am the way, the truth, and the life? Doest thou not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Believest thou not that my divinity, and the divinity of my Father is one? And that the Father will be known by me? But why is the Father known by the knowledge of the Son? Even therefore, for that the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son; for the word by which the Son is known, is the power of the Son and of the Father; wherefore seeing the Son is known, by his word, it necessarily followeth, that the Father also is known thereby; Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: Or else believe me for the very works fake. Here he doth as it were appeal to works, that they may give testimony of the word; as if he should say, seeing that ye cannot be content to believe the word, at the least believe the signs which bear witness of the word, and whereby the Father hath given testimony of me: for the works and signs are testimonies of the word; by these words Christ meaneth nothing else but to confirm the consciences of his Disciples and all of us against the offences of the crofs. For consciences will know and not believe the bare words of God, but do always doubt and say; what if God careth not for thee? and have such like cogitations. Holy and godly men seem for the most part to be neglected, as objects and most contemptible men, insomuch as the world according to the will and lust thereof, rageth and practiseth tyranny against them, and doth almost what it listeth; hereupon they are in anguish and in danger of faith, and desire to know the will of God toward them; these Christ comforteth, that they may seek no other comfort but in him and in his death, and believe that he is life, that he beareth rule, and maketh alive them that are dead; and that they should nothing doubt hereof, he maketh them yet more certain, and faith, Verily verily I say unto you, he that believeth
on me, the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; As if he should say, doubt not any thing but that ye shall know the Father by me, and that my word is the power of God, and that by my word ye shall not only work such works and shew such signs as I do, but even greater; which came to pass after the ascension of Christ, when the Apostles wrought greater miracles as well among the Jews as Gentiles, than Christ himself; but what is the cause hereof? The Lord himself addeth it, saying, 'For I go unto my Father,' That is, I will begin a Kingdom where I will fulfil all things; here the Lord annexeth the conclusion of all the questions and consolations going before; for a little before Christ had taught, that the Father is known by him, and that is because he is in the Father, he therefore is shewed by that word, by which the Father is shewed; but that ye might confirm this, to wit, that his word is the power of the Father, he added and said, 'He that believeth in me, the works that I do, shall he do also,' This is, by faith in me, ye also shall do those works, and know that my word is the virtue and power of God; but why doth he say, 'I go unto my Father?' I answer, because Christ is in the Father, therefore doth he the works of the Father, but we do them not also therefore, but that Christ, who is in the Father, is now in us; for to go to the Father is to fulfil all things, and as Paul according to the saying of the Psalm declareth, to give gifts unto men, to lighten and to sanctify; for this is the kingdom of Christ, whereby he reigneth in earth, in the hearts of the believers, and sitteth upon the throne of his Father David the Lord, also speaketh these words, 'I go unto my Father,' to comfort his Disciples; for as he did before begin to confirm them, that they should not be troubled and offended although he should die, but courageously cleave to him, and believe in him; so here he promiseth them that they shall be glorified, for he goeth to the Father, who shall deliver all things into his hands, that he may mightily obtain a kingdom over all things that are in heaven and earth;
earth; wherefore they ought nothing at all to fear; he yet comforteth them more and faith, 'And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do.' As if he should say, as soon as I come to the Father, there is no cause why ye should be careful; for those things that ye have need of and ask, ye shall obtain, I will do this for you because I obtain a kingdom; and he peculiarly addeth, in my Name, whereby he excludeth all our merits, for by Christ we are heard, as also in Christ we are loved, by whom also we are Priests, as Peter saith, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, and acceptable to God; all these things faith Christ, I will do for this cause, 'That the Father may be glorified in the Son.' The Father is then glorified, when glory is given and ascribed unto him, not unto us; that is when we acknowledge that we are saved not by our own merits, nor by our own wisdom and righteousness, but do put our trust in his mercy; for he hath given his Son for our sins, and whatsoever we purpose to ask, we must ask it by this Son, and we shall obtain it; wherefore he repeateth these words, and faith, 'If ye shall ask any thing in my Name I will do it.' These words tend to this end, that he might make us certainly believe his words, and cleave unto him; this therefore is the sum of this conclusion; he biddeth his Disciples and us therefore believe, for that he goeth to reign; before he affirmeth that he will shew forth a sign, and testimony of his kingdom; and to reign, that he will declare a notable token of his Government, that we may feel and perceive it, to wit, that he will do so great works by us, as he himself hath done, yea and greater also, that he will hear us when we pray and whatsoever we pray for unto the Father in his Name. By these promises the heart must be confirmed and made courageous against the gates of hell. For Christ reigneth by his word, wherefore it is needful, that we exactly know the virtue of the word; for the kingdom of Christ is the power and virtue of God; these things I thought good to treat of concerning this Gospel, let us call upon God for the aid of his grace, that we may be able to understand them, and by them to strengthen our weak Faith.

F I N I S.
CONTENTS.

THE Life of Luther.
  A View of the gracious Spirit of Luther.  3

SERMON I. On the Nativity of Christ.  34
SERM. II. On the Epiphany or appearing of Christ.  58
SERM. III. On the Genealogy, or Pedigree of Christ.  67
SERM. IV. On the Hymn of Zacharias.  76
SERM. V. On Christ's Passion.  99
SERM. VI. On Christ's Resurrection.  106
SERM. VII. On the good Shepherd.  111
SERM. VIII. On the lost Sheep.  124
SERM. IX. Of the Woman of Canaan.  134
SERM. X. Of Salvation by Grace, without Works.  168
SERM. XI. Of the Kingdom of God.  186
SERM. XII. Of Prayer.  194
SERM. XIII. On the bidding of Guests to the great Supper.  198

SERM. XIV. On the Works of Charity.  203
SERM. XV. The Sum of a Christian Life.  215
SERM. XVI. Of the Question of the Pharisees, and answer of Christ concerning giving Tribute to Cæsar.  246
SERM. XVII. Of Salvation by Christ alone.  260
SERM. XVIII. Concerning good Works, the Fruits of Faith.  269

SERM. XIX. Wherein is taught how the faithful ought to rejoice in God, and let their patient Mind be known unto Men.  290
SERM. XX. Concerning them that are under the Law, and them that are under Grace.  315
SERM. XXI. Of Faith and Diffidence in Danger and Trouble.  318
SERM. XXII. Of the Life of a Christian.  366
SERM. XXIII. Of Temptation.  378
SERM. XXIV. Concerning the leading of a godly Life.  393
SERM. XXV. God's Providence and Care for his Children.  405

SERM. XXVI. Concerning trust in God in Penury and Distress.  413
SERM. XXVII. God's punishments against the Contemners of his Word.  421
SERM. XXVIII. The Difference between the Law and the pel.  432
SERM. XXIX. Concerning the exercise and increase of Faith.  447

SERM.
CONTENTS.

SERM. XXX. Of Mercy to some, and Judgment to others. 459

SERM. XXXI. Teaching, that we must cleave wholly to Christ, and look to obtain all good Things from him. 472

SERM. XXXII. Of the Works which Christ hath wrought for us. 466

SERM. XXXIII. Reason not capable of the Gospel. 496

SERM. XXXIV. Christ the Way to eternal Life. 508


A

List of Subscribers Names.

A

The revd. Mr. Arthur, minister of the gospel at Dumbarrow, 26 Copies
The revd. Mr James Alice, minister of the gospel in Paisley
George Austin, 13 Copies
Robert Andrew, Wright in Mairns parish
William Alexander, in Altoa
John Alexander, schoolmaster there
William Aitken, indweller there
Robert Alexander, farmer in Drips
Robert Alexander in hill of Drips
James Allison mason in Flanter
Christopher Armstrong, miller in Glencarn
Alexander Aberdeen, Conveener in Arbroth
John Anderson, wheelwright there
William Anderson, merchant there
Alexander Airth, merchant there
Margaret Alexander, there
John Anderson, taylor there
Charles Allan, merchant there
Alexander Anderson, weaver there
Alexander Anderson, there
John Allan, weaver in Montros.
Robert Adam, weaver there
William Alexander, in Neilston
William Aitken, from Ormiston
James Anderson, master in Kilmarnock
Agnes Auchencilos in Gorbals

John Buchanan, senr. weaver in Glasgow
John Buchanan, junr. weaver there
James Baird, floking-maker there
Thomas Bog, merchant in Greenock
John Buchanan, merchant there
Samuel Buftiel, near Liverpool
James Burns, in Loggie
John Bonner, in Muirtown
Robert Ballow, weaver in Johnston haven
Robert Beedy, weaver there
James Barber, weaver in Glencarn
Robert Brown, gardiner there
William Buchanan, in Smith-parish
Wm. Baird, farmer in Carmunock
Andrew Brown, weaver there
Alexander Buck, weaver there
John Bennerman, weaver there
John Brown, farmer there
William Bennerman, weaver there
John Brown, miller in Kirkton
George Brown, gardiner at Sorncastle
Peter Brown, in Cumnock
Gavin Bell, weaver in Aitkenfom
William Black, weaver in Langtonge
John Brown, weaver at Woodhall
Thomas Brownlee, inn-keeper in Heriton
Robert Bowle, in Balmore
David Black, mason
Robert Bernet, merchant in Falkirk
13 Copies
Alex. Birchet, farmer in Kilmars
John Burns, weaver in Gorbals
James Brook, in Meadowfield
John Boyd, miner in Altoa
Simon Baird, in Bruntwood
Robert Bowie, portioner in Balmore
Thomas Burton
Duncan Brown, shoemaker in Glasgow

B

Provost James Butchart, merchant in Arbroth
James Black, merchant there
William Brownlee, carrier in Cumbsnethan, 13 copies
Dav.Brownlee, mason in Hungryhill
William Brownlee, cooper
Allan Bog, Toll-keeper in Brooms houfe
James Bruce, weaver in Kilmarnock
Adam Boyd, bonnet-maker
James Buchanan weaver in Altoa
Clemon Bruce, weaver
Alexander Bruce, weaver.
David Black, mason

C

John Cree, merchant in Perth, 26 copies
Alexander Cairns, schoolmaster in Kilbride, 13 copies
John Cairns, chap. 13 copies
A List of Subscribers Names.

Robert Crofs, weaver in Glasgow

John Dargavel, weaver in Glen-  
Niel Clark, merchant in Greenock  
Dair, merchant there

Andrew Coke near Liverpool

Margaret Cuts, in Johnshaven

Robert Cowan, weaver in Glencairn

Robert Duncan, tailor in Ricket-  
Robert Collow, farmer there

James Corson, there

Walter Clark, merchant there

John Cowan, there

Suffannah Cowan, there

John Coats, merchant there

John Cumming, farmer in Cath-  

Angus Campbell, workman in  
Thornlown

John Chalmers, farmer in Aver- 

town

David Currie, weaver in Arbroth

Alexander Cuthbert, weaver there

James Couper, merchant there

David Chapel, weaver there

George Clark, merchant there

Robert Cowan, tailor in Ricket-  

Davio Calderwood, wheel-wright  
there

James Cockburn, in Kirk conel  
Robert Campbell, in New-Cum-  
nock

James Craig, weaver in Gorbals

John Clark, weaver there

Andrew Cairns, shepherd in Tilli-  
John Fisher, tobacco spinner in  

Anrew Clemet, carpenter in Aloa

William Finlay, mason in Craig-  
head

Hugh Campbel, in Gawnston

James Calderwood, farmer in Don.

Robert Fleeming, farmer in Wan-  
law

Robert Cochran, farmer in Kilmars

Thomas Finlay, farmer in Drimpill

James Calderwood, farmer in Four-  
trees

William Carr

Hugh Carr farmer, Kilmars parish

D

David Durie, merchant in Montrofe

13 Copies

Thomas Davidson, weaver there

Jean Downers, there

John Ducharis, in Farnel

William Donald, in Gorbals

David Duncan, wright in Kettle

Alexander Dickie, in Gawnston

George Dealy, baker in Arbroth

David Dug, merchant the re  

Thomas Downie, carter in Muir-  
head

William Davidson, in Hill
### G

- **Bailey David Gray**, merchant in Arbroth
- **Samuel Gibson**, taylor there
- **Patrick Gibson**, weaver there
- **David Gibson**, weaver there
- **William Gibson**, weaver there
- **Robert Garthmore of Maribrough**
- **Charles Gibson**, weaver in Aloan
- **Robert Gardener, in Portglaugow**
- **William Gardener, smith in Bridgend**
- **Alexander Gemmill, in Inchgowerick**
- **Thomas Goudie,wright in Glencairn**
- **Thomas Gregrie dyster**
- **Robert Graham, miner in Aloan**
- **John Gordon, weaver in Montrose**
- **Alexander Gibson there**
- **George Gowans, weaver there**
- **John Gilmour, mason in Carmunock**
- **Andrew Gray, weaver in Gorbals**
- **John Grier, in new Cumnock**
- **George Guthrie, in Cragie parish**
- **John Goudie, miller in Rickerton**
- **George Goudie, miller there**
- **John Gilbert, weaver in Aloan**
- **John Gould, tailor in Glasgow**
- **Robert Gen, there**
- **James Glen, there**
- **Alexander Gowan, in Barrony parish**
- **Joseph Gib, in Craighead of Bal dernock**

### H

- **Robert Hood, hammerman in Gla- gow, 2 copies**
- **David Hay, weaver in Arbroth**
- **Patrick Hood, weaver there**
- **James Haffie, farmer in Morden**
- **Wm. Hodge, mason in Rickerton**
- **James Herfants, mason in Glencairn**
- **William Henderson, gardener there**
- **William Hunter, there**
- **John Heddleston, farmer there**
- **John Hamilton, farmer there**
- **John Holiday, there**
- **James Henderon, farmer in Aloan**
- **Andrew Henderson, there**
- **John Hedridge, weaver there**
- **Francis Horn, merchant there**
- **Hugh Hamilton, in Tillicoultry**
- **Andrew Harro, miner there**
- **George Hall, servant there**
- **Alexander Hall, indweller there**

### I

- **John Hutchison, tailor in Montrose**
- **David Hinton, thread dresser there**
- **William Hinton, weaver in Brotherton**
- **Jean Hall, in Montrose**
- **William Howie, in Brotherton**
- **William Hamilton, weaver in Woodhall**
- **John Hamilton, in Muirhead**
- **Robert Hamilton, in Montrose**
- **John Hamilton, mason in Carluke**
- **Fergus Hathorn, schoolmaster in Carmunock, 6 copies**
- **George Hamilton, farmer in Ne thertown**
- **Wm. Howie, farmer in Gaulton**
- **John Ha, weaver in Arbroth**
- **George Hill, merchant there**
- **Nathaniel Hodge, weaver in Kilmarnock**
- **John Hodge, in Brotherton**
- **John Hamilton, there**

### J

- **The revd. Mr. Wm. Jamieson mi nister of the gospel in Kilwinning**
- **Robert Jamieson, tailor in Arbroth**
- **David Inverarity, Cooper there**
- **John Irvin, weaver in Glasgow**
- **John Jeffry there**
- **Alexander Ingles, farmer in Car munock**
- **John Jamieson, porter in Thorne town**
- **Thomas Inglis, merchant in Benhol men, 9 copies**
- **Janet Jamieson, in Tillicoultry**
- **William Johnston, mason in Glen cairn**
- **James Johnston, porter in old Monkland**
- **John Inglis, of Shortridgehead**
- **John Jefson, schoolmaster in Kil marnock**
- **John Jervey, weaver in Glasgow**
- **John Johnston, in Bransdebl**

### K

- **David Kilmonth, weaver in Dinning**
- **James Kilmonth, weaver there**
- **John Kennedy, in Gaulton**
- **Quentin Kilpatrick, tailor in Mauchlin**
- **David Kirkland, tailor in Carm unock**
- **John King, turner in Greenock**

| Name               | Description                              | Location
|--------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------
| David Kilmonth    | weaver in Dinning                         | Dinning   |
| James Kilmonth    | weaver there                              | Montrose  |
| John Kennedy      | in Gaulton                                | Gaulton   |
| Quintin Kilpatrick| tailor in Mauchlin                       | Mauchlin  |
| William Kirkland  | tailor in Carmunock                       | Carmunock |
| John King         | turner in Greenock                        | Greenock  |
A List of Subscribers Names.

John King, Robert Kirkland, weaver in Calder
William Kirkland, farmer
John Kennir, in Montrose

L
James Lochart, chap. 13. copies
Matthew Lyle, tailor in Arbrot
Helen Law, there
James Law, Clock-maker there
James Lelly, land labourer there
George Louden, weaver in Burnhead
John Lourie, workman at Roshall
George Luke, in Gorbals
James Latto, in Kettle
John Leckie, collier in Dunfcone
David Laurie, Wright in Glencairn
David Lauchlane, bond maker in Kilmarnock
Robert Legate, weaver in Crosshill
John Limburner, coal-master
William Lockhart, in new Cumnock
George Lomer, in Drambowie
Thomas Little, weaver in Glasgow
William Lawman, shoemaker there

M
The revd. Mr. Colin Mackie, minister of the Gospell in Montrose.
Gilbert M. Kcenel, student of philosophy, 13 copies
Margaret Myres, in Montrose
John M'Ky, weaver there
Alexander Mafon, there
Iobel Mitchel, there
James Morris, in Benhollen
John M'Gilchriff, tenant in Langshot
Hugh M'Crow, in Craigs
John M'Niel, schoolmaster in Hamilton
John Marshall, weaver in Glasgow
James M'Whiney, in Cumnock
William Millar, weaver in Langlone
James Morison,
Peter Mather, grieve in Brotherston
Patrick Moodie, tailor in Montrose
John M'Laren, in AYloa
Alexander Morrifen, miner there
William Montieth, weaver in Tillicoultry

James Muir, coalmaster
Andrew M'Ljohon, miner there
Edward More, tailor
Walter Monteith, weaver
Walter Muirhead, dyker in Glencairn

James M'Laucherie, officer there
John Martin, schoolmaster there
Joseph Matthielon, dyker there
Thomas Milligan, there
James M'Whier, there
Georg Mitchel, from Sunbeg
David M'Milian, in Dalsgray
William Moore, of Bruntwood
John Martin, wright in Gawston
Alexander Mitchell, Porterion
John Meuros, in Gawston
John M'Millan
John Murdoch, in Shawhead
Hugh Mitchell, in Craigman
William Mitchel, in Rage
James M'Kiney
John M'Jore, merchant in Greenock
Archibald M'Keller, cooper there
William Millar, Shoemaker there
Daniel Millar, merchant there
David M'Call, ropmaker there
Archibald Miller, cooper there
David Millar, merchant in Turrence

13 copies
James M'Jofon, smith in Milgie
William More, shoemaker in Cumnock
Robert Minzies, farmer there
Robert Morice, farmer
William Mike, miller at Woodhall
John M'Dougal, weaver in Gorbals
Aula M'Aula, weaver there
Hugh Millar, weaver there
George M'Ljohn, weaver there
Richard M'Lean, tailor in Langlone

William Millar, weaver there
John Morton, farmer in Damhead
William M'Lean, porterion in Medrox
Ann M'Ldow, there
James M'Farlan, in Calder parish
John M'Lean, mason in Hartube
James Marshall, in Dunflane
James Martin, carrier in Littlehenchy
James Mackie, there
Robert Moffat, wright in Sandyhills
James Mafon, miler in Carnbrae
A List of Subscribers Names.

James Mackie, Heel-maker in A Aloa
Alexander Muovere, wright there
William M'Gowan, merchant there
Andrew Mathie, taylor there
William Matthie, weaver there
William Morrison, taylor there
John Mitchell, smith there
Robert Morris, farmer in Dinning
Alexander M'Killop, dyer in Glasgow
Murdock Morphy, Vintner in Mihivie, 13 Copies
Katherine Monro, there
Samuel Neilson, in Townhead
Joseph Nivison, in Glencairn
William Nivison, taylor there
George Niven, weaver in Dinning
Margaret Niven, there
David Niel, weaver in Symenter
David Niel, taylor there
William Neil, weaver there
John Nimmo, portioner in Blackty
James Nimmo, gardiner in Old Monkland

O
Hendry Orr, farmer in Shots
Thomas Orr, portioner there
Thomas Orr, farmer in Nether-town
Hugh Orr, weaver in Glasgow

P
John Park, mason in Glasgow
Alexander Purvey, mason in Port-glasgow
Hugh Paton, farmer in Hill
James Paterfon, in Brownridge
James Pender, portioner in Netherhouse
John Paterson, weaver in Kilmarnock
John Piersen, in Kettle
William Pete, farmer in Herft
James Paton in Mauchlan
Allan Park, weaver in Dow-hill
Thomas Paterfon, taylor
Iofbel Philip, in Arbroth
John Pounder, hecker there
David Petrie, hecker there
Archibald Prentice, in Davisdykes
James Polock, in Hamilton parish
Robert Paterfon in A Aloa
Robert Petticrew, gardiner in Gorbals
James Parker, dyer in Busbie
George Park of Waterside
James Pedan, flax-dresser in Thorn-

town
Robert Paton, mason in A Aloa
Thomas Primrose, farmer in Gel-

Robert Portious, smith in A Aloa

R
John Rankin, in Kilsynth parish,
13 Copies
Robert Reid, mason in Montrose
John Reid, weaver there
John Reid, shoemaker there
Alexander Ronald, there
James Ritchie, land labourer in Arbroth
James Ramsay, merchant there
William Robertson, merchant there
William Rait, there
James Ramsay, in Monikie
Robert Rodgerfon, taylor in Glencairn
William Reid taylor there
John Reid, hammerman in Car-

manock
John Robertson, weaver in Gorbals
George Reid, weaver in Mauchlan
John Rankin, wright in Bathgate parish
James Rankin, farmer in Langrock
William Ross, farmer in Wineyedge
Alexander Rankine, in Granguary
Thomas Robertson, in Medrox
John Ritchmond, collier in Dun-
donald parish
William Ronald, weaver in Glasgow
Archibald Ruthven, weaver there
William Riddale, brewer at Rins
William Ruffell, smith at Cranbrae
Francis Rae, taylor there
John Richmond
William Ruffell, portioner in Broad-

ridgend, Slamaman parish
John Ruffell, tenant in Pleasance
Newmonkland parish

S
Alexander Somervel, Stocking ma-
ker in Glasgow
Hugh Sawyer, farmer in Craft head
James Smith, merchant in Dinning
George Smith, taylor in Johnshaven
William Stewart, weaver in Nielsie
William Stirling, farmer in Auch-
enroch
David Smith, in Farnel

Thomas
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Trade/Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Tode</td>
<td>farmer in Govan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Thomson</td>
<td>weaver in Haining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Thomson,</td>
<td>portioner in Carmunock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Turnbul</td>
<td>farmer in Caflleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan Turner</td>
<td>smith there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Thomson</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Turndale</td>
<td>merchant in Inchbreak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Terrie</td>
<td>weaver in Farneef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Turner</td>
<td>mealman in Gatehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Thomson</td>
<td>maltster there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The revd. Mr. Watson</td>
<td>minister of the gospel at Errol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Walkinshaw</td>
<td>Merchant in Greenock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Watson</td>
<td>mariner there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Wair</td>
<td>in Cumbusnethan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Winton</td>
<td>carrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Wilton</td>
<td>in Townend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gavin Walker</td>
<td>miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Watton</td>
<td>weaver in Calder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wilton</td>
<td>miller in Stewartown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Waddle</td>
<td>carrier in Gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Waddle</td>
<td>portioner in Aitkenfon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Wilton</td>
<td>weaver in Craighead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Wark</td>
<td>millwright at Dripmil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wilton</td>
<td>weaver in Glasgow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Walker</td>
<td>from Drummond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Wallace</td>
<td>portioner in Barrgour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Wallace</td>
<td>farmer in Gawston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Wallace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Wilton</td>
<td>farmer in Craigie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Wallace</td>
<td>weaver in Glencair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wallace</td>
<td>weaver there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Wilton</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Wilton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Watson</td>
<td>merchant in Arbroth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnes Wood</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Webster</td>
<td>wright there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Webster</td>
<td>farmer in Newbigon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Wilton</td>
<td>weaver in Montrose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Watson</td>
<td>weaver there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Wilhelma</td>
<td>weaver in Brachhead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Watt</td>
<td>mason in Johnshaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Wardop</td>
<td>ditcher in Broodhill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wardop</td>
<td>ditcher there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Wallace</td>
<td>gardiner in Shaws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Walker</td>
<td>in Crook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A List of Subscribers Names.

Robert Witherspoon, weaver in Newmonkland
William Waddle of Bridgend
Alexander Wright, shoemaker in Aloo
Hanah Welch
William Whyte, bookseller in Beith

26 copies

Additional List of Subscribers Names.

James Meusos, bookseller in Kil-marnock, 30 copies
James Kiffon in Dundonald parish
James Niel, there
William Dickie, portioner there
John Andrew, there
David Hunter, there
William Andrew, in Symenton parish
David Guthrie, there
David Niel, in hillhouse there
Matthew Dicky, there
James Andrew, there
David Niel, there
John Dayl, in mountain hill
Robert Andrew, in mountain parish
James Dugel, carrier in Dinning
James Craw, farmer there
William Gedes, weaver in Kyle
James Mc'John, weaver in Milgie, new Kilpatrick parish
George Miller, wright there
William Herwy, inn-keeper there
John Boyd, wright there
James Weir of Baranchan
John King, farmer in Barnbrae parish
Robert Boyd, wright in Badernock parish
John Steven, wright there
John Millar, in the parish of Markinch
James Renwick, weaver in Glasgow
Thomas Sawers, tobbacconist there
James Tochock, weaver there
Andrew Hanah, wright there
William Somervell wright there
John Hurn, there
Wm. Buchanan, accountant there
John Richmond of Carlile in Sorn parish
John Richmond, there
William Maitemalk, there
James Paton, in Mauchlan parish
Thomas Hillop, in Cogshed there
David Ferguson, in Machiniparish
Andrew Allan, in Gawston parish
William Clark, in Whitehill Kirkkonel

Subscribers in the parish of Obtrairder.
Joseph Cunningham, farmer in Woodside
James barnet, farmer at the castle
John Smithton, farmer at the Westkirktown
John Stewart, wright at Ladywell
James Reid, weaver at the Clune
Thomas Boywal, clothier at the wkmill
William Roy, servant at eastmollen
John Riddoch, servant at Pouhillock
Subscribers in the town of Ochtrairder.
John Graham, shoemaker
John Gardener, couper
James Binning, shoemaker
James Stewart, Vintner
Alexander Millar, Schoolmaster
William Reid 6 copies
James Symm, flax-dresser
Robert Carrick, of Keeldes Muth
eal parish
John M'Foil, mason there
William M Lief, mason
Thomas Alice, wright at Glaine eagles, Blackfoord parish
James Mitchel, weaver in Dalbeth Barrony parish
Hugh Glasford, miller there
Rachel Glasford, in Paisley
John M'Cavin, chap. 20 copies
John Graham, in QuarterSanquar
Thomas Carson, in Scroggithil
Durie depper parish
Robert Rampgey there
Thomas Balantine, in Balagin there
William Haining, there
David Williamson, in Holouse there
William Dalziel, in Meyers there
John Gibon, in GlenwhernSan
quair parish
James Paton, in Mauchlan parish
Thomas Hillop, in Cogshed there
David Tait, in Bandleys there
John Richmond of Carlile in Sorn parish
William Clark, in Whitehill Kirkkonel
PROPOSALS
For Printing by Subscription,
AN EXPOSITION
Of the whole Book of the
SONG OF SOLOMON.

BY
That laborious and faithful Servant of JESUS CHRIST,
Mr. JAMES DURHAM,
Late Minister of the Gospel in GLASGOW.

CONDITIONS.
I. THE Book will be printed on a new Type, consisting of about 460 Pages, in a neat Pocket Volume.

II. The Price of the coarse Copies to Subscribers will be only 1s. and 6d., and the fine 2s. to be paid on the delivery of the Book, neatly bound and lettered on the Back.

III. Those who subscribe for 12 Copies shall have one gratis.

IV. The Subscribers Names will be printed, if not forbid.

N. B. Those who intend to encourage this Undertaking, are earnestly desired to forward their Names betwixt and the first of May, to the Publisher, as the Book will be put to the Press, as soon as a sufficient number are obtained.

Subscriptions are taken in by John Bryce, Printer and Publisher; and all others entrusted with Proposals.

GLASGOW, March 2d, 1767